



OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL DEFENDER

Eastern District of California
801 I Street, 3rd Floor
Sacramento, California 95814-2510

HEATHER E. WILLIAMS
Federal Defender

Jerome Price
Chief Assistant Defender

David Harshaw
Supervisor, Capital Habeas Unit

Position Announcement No. 23-005

Position: Assistant Federal Defender, Capital Habeas Unit
Location: Sacramento, CA
Deadline: Open until filled. Preference given to applications received by 2/24/2023.

Who We Are

The Federal Public Defender's Office, Eastern District of California Capital Habeas Unit (CHU) is home to a dedicated team of attorneys, investigators, paralegals, and assistant paralegals who advocate for indigent prisoners sentenced to death. Our staff has extensive and diverse experience in life, law, and capital habeas litigation. Skilled collaboration, strategic litigation, compassionate representation, and unique approaches to issues affecting our clients are among the values reflected in our CHU.

The Job

Our attorneys represent death-sentenced prisoners in their federal habeas corpus proceedings. CHU attorneys carry a full caseload, representing clients in all stages of their federal court litigation, including clemency. Regular responsibilities include: working with clients; digesting large case files and investigative materials; developing litigation strategies; drafting pleadings; conducting evidentiary hearings; presenting oral arguments; working with experts and other witnesses; and supervising teams of investigators, paralegals, and legal assistants. This position may require work on holidays, evenings, and weekends. Frequent travel within the United States also may be required.

Requirements: All applicants must be a member in good standing of a state bar of one of the United States. Desired candidate will have a minimum of five years' experience in habeas corpus litigation. Applicants must have an established capacity or clearly demonstrated aptitude for excellence in capital defense, strong written and oral advocacy skills, work well in teams, and be effective organizers. Applicants will be expected to possess excellent on-line research skills in either Lexis or Westlaw.

Our Ideal Candidate

Our ideal candidate has strong communication skills, works well in teams, is an effective organizer, has an eye for detail, demonstrates compassion for our clients, and understands the work we do. Experience with Adobe Acrobat Professional, MS Excel, and CaseMap is a plus. Membership in the California and/or Arizona Bar is also a plus. The Federal Defender strives for staff diversity and plurality, encouraging women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, and veterans to apply.

Salary and Benefits

The Office of the Federal Defender operates under authority of the Criminal Justice Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, to provide legal representation in federal criminal cases and related matters in the federal courts. This is a full-time permanent position. **Salary depends upon the number of years legal experience since graduating law school and ranges match those of Assistant U.S. Attorneys with similar years' experience.** Federal government benefits apply, including retirement; health, life and long-term insurances; a thrift savings program; and flexible spending

accounts. Direct deposit of pay required. Federal Defender employees are considered “at-will” and are not covered by the Civil Service Reform Act.

Must be a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident in the process of applying for citizenship. <https://www.uscourts.gov/careers/search-judiciary-jobs/citizenship-requirements-employment-judiciary> All final candidates are subject to FBI fingerprints and background investigation, including criminal history. The individual hired to perform the duties for this position may be subject to further background investigations when necessary.

Employees are expected to adhere to the *Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees* ([guide-vol02a-ch03.pdf \(uscourts.gov\)](#)) and *Code of Conduct for Federal Public Defender Employees* ([Code of Conduct for Federal Public Defender Employees \(Guide, Vol. 2A, Ch. 4\) \(uscourts.gov\)](#)).

Applicants will need to be up-to-date on their COVID vaccinations (per the Centers for Disease Control’s definition of “up to date,” <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>) by their start date, with proof provided.

How to Apply

Email as a single file your cover letter, résumé, three references, a writing sample, and a completed *Application for Judicial Branch Employment* form (AO78) at [AO_078_revised_2021-12-15.pdf](#) to:

cae_hr@fd.org.

The Office of the Federal Defender is an equal opportunity employer. We encourage all qualified applicants - without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law - to apply. This agency provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities.

If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, please notify the agency. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be on a case-by-case basis.