

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Mitigation Social Worker

Salary Range \$85,326 to \$121,485 Annually Depending on Experience

Overview: Federal Defenders of New York (“FDNY”) is seeking a social worker with at least two years of post-master’s degree experience for our Long Island office, located in the United States District Courthouse in Central Islip, New York. FDNY is a community federal public defender office that provides legal representation to indigent persons accused of federal crimes in the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York and in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. We are not a government agency, and our employees are not government employees. Our mission is straightforward: although we provide our services free of cost, our clients receive the finest legal representation available at any price.

Our Long Island office is a small, collegial office, staffed by three attorneys, an investigator, and an office administrator. The mitigation social worker’s caseload will be comprised almost exclusively of clients with cases pending in the Federal District Court in Central Islip. The mitigation social worker will work closely with a defense team including attorneys, investigators, and administrators, and will collaborate with mitigation staff in our Brooklyn, Manhattan, and White Plains offices. FDNY social workers support clients throughout the duration of their criminal cases, assist with reintegration into the community, and collaborate with attorneys on mitigation, expert evaluations, and case strategy.

Responsibilities of the Mitigation Social Worker include, but are not limited to:

- Prepare written mitigation materials, re-entry support plans, and alternative disposition requests through client and family interviews, records collection, and social science literature research. Propose alternatives to incarceration where appropriate.
- Maintain individual client caseload serving as advocate and providing intensive case management services including vocational and educational development; criminal legal and supervision involvement; community integration; substance abuse and mental health treatment; family and interpersonal relationship support; and facilitate referrals for community-based services for clients out on bail, as well as incarcerated clients.
- Gather and summarize the client’s psychological, educational, and medical records for mitigation development, program referrals and benefits advocacy.
- Meet with clients in the office, in the community, in the jails and at court.
- Develop and maintain professional relationships with community service providers, probation officers, psychologists and psychiatrists, attorneys, and Federal Bureau of Prisons staff.
- Assist in data collection, program development and program evaluation initiatives.
- Stay abreast of local and national public policy, public benefits, community resources and processes.

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Qualifications: The position requires an LMSW or LCSW, a minimum of two years post-master's degree experiences and S.I.F.I. certification or that the candidate be S.I.F.I. eligible. The candidate must have:

- Two years of social work or mitigation experience within one or more of the following:
 - criminal defense (federal, state, or capital defense)
 - civil defense (family court on behalf of clients charged with abuse or neglect, housing court on behalf of clients facing eviction, immigration on behalf of clients facing deportation)
 - impact litigation (human rights, Section 1983 litigation)
- An understanding of the intersectionality of the criminal legal system and the lived experiences of our clients. They will embrace the significance of providing advocacy and support using a social justice framework, recognizing the diverse needs of criminal legal system involved populations. Experience in the application of knowledge and engagement in dialogue around race, implicit bias, power & oppression.
- Knowledge of programs and services in NYC and Long Island that address the needs of our clients – including housing/shelter, mental health, substance use, vocational/educational, and reentry – and how to access those services. Experience with addiction and mental health treatment, trauma, and social service systems a plus.
- The ideal candidate will be a motivated and organized self-starter with excellent communication, writing and advocacy skills. We are looking for an individual who can communicate well with clients, attorneys, prosecutors, judges, experts, BOP staff and community providers. Candidate should be comfortable with public speaking and training.
- The ability to work both independently and in an interdisciplinary legal setting and to relate well to incarcerated individuals, formerly incarcerated individuals, and their families is critical.
- Travel to prisons in the NYC area as well as Long Island is required. Candidate will also be expected to visit clients in the community and establish an ongoing relationship with community-based programs.
- Bilingual in Spanish highly desired.

Please submit your resume, a one-page cover letter describing your interest in and particular qualifications for this position and two writing samples using [Airtable](#). The cover letter may be addressed to Tamara Giwa, Executive Director, Federal Defenders of New York, 52 Duane St., New York, NY 10007.

The writing samples must be mitigation reports or pre-pleading investigation reports (PPIs) that were submitted in actual cases, with names/identifying information removed.

Applications will be accepted through August 5, 2024. Only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted. No telephone calls please.

Additional Information

FDNY's salaries are consistent with the federal pay scale with excellent benefits. The salary range for the Mitigation Specialist/Social Worker position is **\$85,326 to \$121,485** . We are an equal opportunity

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employer and are actively engaged in creating and maintaining a work environment characterized by diversity, equity, and inclusion.