

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT No. 24-05H
Research and Writing Specialist
Southern District of Texas
Houston, TX Division

The Federal Public Defender, Southern District of Texas, is accepting applications for the position of Research and Writing Specialist to be stationed in the Houston office. The federal defender organization operates under authority of the Criminal Justice Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, to provide defense services in federal criminal cases and related matters by appointment from the court.

Requirements. A research and writing specialist is an attorney position. Applicants must be: (1) a graduate of an accredited law school, and admitted to practice in good standing before the highest court of a state; and (2) licensed to practice in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas by the time of entrance on duty. Appointment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation, including an FBI name and fingerprint check and an IRS tax check.

Duties. The primary duties of a research and writing specialist include: (1) drafting motions, memoranda, briefs, and petitions to be filed in the U.S. district court; and (2) consulting with attorneys on legal issues arising in discovery, motion practice, trial, and sentencing. A research and writing specialist may be required to perform general paralegal duties, as well as other duties as assigned. The research and writing specialist is not an assistant federal public defender and does not ordinarily sign pleadings or make court appearances. The position requires occasional travel.

Selection Criteria. The successful applicant for research and writing specialist will have an established capacity or clearly demonstrated aptitude for excellence in criminal defense practice, a commitment to the representation of indigent accused persons, and a reputation for integrity. Applicants must also possess the ability to communicate effectively with clients, witnesses, colleagues, and court and agency personnel. The successful applicant will have strong legal research and word processing skills, will be able to analyze legal issues from complex records, and will write clearly and concisely. Writing experience or experience in handling federal criminal cases is preferred.

Salary and Benefits. The starting salary for a research and writing specialist falls within a range of \$69,154 (JSP-9, Step 1) to \$165,761 (JSP-15, Step 1). The salary of the successful applicant will be commensurate with the person's qualifications and experience. The position is in the excepted service and does not carry the tenure rights of the competitive Civil Service. The position does offer federal government employment benefits including health and life insurance, retirement, and participation in the Thrift Savings Plan. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).

How to Apply. Qualified people may apply by forwarding a letter of interest (mentioning announcement number 24-05H), résumé, and representative writing sample. Legal experience should be described in detail. Send completed application to: Marjorie A Meyers, Federal Public Defender, Southern District of Texas, 440 Louisiana Street, Suite 1350, Houston, TX 77002, or email in PDF format to TXS_Employment@FD.org. For applicants with disabilities, this organization provides reasonable accommodations, determined on a case-by-case basis. To request a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application or interview process, contact Administrative Officer Laura Dusthimer at (713) 718-4600. Position announced March 14, 2024; open until filled.

Subject to the availability of funds.

The Federal Public Defender is an equal-opportunity employer.