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Federal Public Defender

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Federal Public Defender

WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT RESOURCE COUNSEL

Position: CJA Resource Counsel

Application Deadline: May 30, 2025 (or until closed)

Office Website: <https://paw.fd.org/>

Location: Pittsburgh, PA

Posted: May 22, 2025

Salary Range: \$108,000- \$195,000

The Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Pennsylvania is accepting applications for the position of **Criminal Justice Act Resource Counsel** to join our Pittsburgh office.

The Criminal Justice Act (CJA) Resource Counsel will assist the Federal Public Defender in administering and managing the Western District of Pennsylvania's CJA panel attorney program. CJA Resource Counsel reports to the Federal Public Defender and will work closely with members of the CJA panel to ensure high quality representation and to assist in efficient management of CJA resources. Duties include recruiting panel attorneys, providing training and assistance to panel attorneys, identifying and sharing information about experts and other service providers, consulting about case budgets and funding requests, advising the CJA Panel Committee on the selection and retention of panel members, and other duties consistent with the mission of the position.

The ideal candidate brings superior legal skills, as well as the ability to train and support other attorneys in the areas of investigation, use of experts and service providers, research, writing, and oral advocacy. A deep commitment to client-centered advocacy is essential.

About Us:

The Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Pennsylvania provides legal representation to persons financially unable to retain counsel in federal criminal and related proceedings. We handle federal trials, direct appeals to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, petitions for writ of certiorari to the U.S. Supreme Court, habeas corpus petitions, and related proceedings on behalf of our clients. Representation includes legal, investigative, expert, and other services as necessary to meet the demands of the case and the needs of the client. We are involved in the recruitment, selection, and retention of CJA panel attorneys, and provide training and support to them.

Our office includes the Federal Public Defender and attorneys known as Assistant Federal Public Defenders. In addition to our attorneys, we have a group of talented administrative staff, paralegals, investigators, and information technology experts. The Federal Public Defender's main office is located in Pittsburgh, with branch offices in Erie and Johnstown.

Pittsburgh is a vibrant and livable city known for its rich history, thriving arts scene, and strong sense of community. Once an industrial powerhouse, it has transformed into a hub for healthcare, education, technology, and innovation. With top-ranked universities, a low cost of living, and easy access to parks, rivers, and diverse neighborhoods, Pittsburgh offers a high quality of life for professionals and families alike.

Duties and Responsibilities:

The CJA Resource Counsel will collaborate with the Federal Public Defender and Federal Public Defender staff on the following:

- Provide training, assistance, and mentoring to CJA panel attorneys.
- Identify and share information about experts and other service providers with CJA panel attorneys.
- Consult about case budgets and funding requests.
- Assist with the timely assignment of cases to panel members using a system that ensures appropriate panel appointments.
- Maintain records of current panel attorneys, case assignments, attorney acceptance and availability data, and substitutions of counsel.
- Develop and maintain internal systems to protect the confidentiality of CJA panel client matters and avoid conflicts of interest.
- Assist with managing the district's CJA panel, including the recruitment, selection, and retention of panel members.
- Consult with the CJA Panel Committee regarding panel-related matters.

The CJA Resource Counsel will not be involved in the direct representation of individuals. This attorney will not appear in court or be permitted to engage in the private practice of law.

Qualifications:

Qualified Candidates must have graduated from an accredited law school, be licensed by the highest court of a state, federal territory, or the District of Columbia; and be a member in good standing in the courts where admitted to practice. Qualified candidates must have a minimum of five years' experience as a criminal defense attorney. Appointment is subject to a satisfactory background check. An applicant must be a U.S. Citizen or meet the other requirements of the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts. The

successful candidate will have superior legal skills, a reputation for integrity, and a commitment to providing high quality representation to indigent defendants.

Benefits

This position is full-time with a comprehensive benefits package that includes:

- Generous Health/Vision/Dental/Life Insurance Coverage
- Dependent and Long-term Care Insurance Programs
- Flexible Spending Accounts
- Commuter Benefit Program, including Mass Transit and Parking Reimbursement Accounts
- Earned paid time off, including paid sick leave
- 11 Paid Federal Holidays
- Up to 12 weeks of Paid Parental Leave
- Mandatory participation in the Federal Employees Retirement System
- Optional participation in the Thrift Savings Plan retirement account with up to 5% agency matching contributions
- Eligibility for Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)
- Employee Assistance Program (confidential counseling and assistance)
- Credit for prior federal service

Accessibility:

We are committed to an inclusive and accessible application process. If you need an accommodation due to a disability during any stage of the application or interview process, please contact Joe Pisciotta at Joseph_Pisciotta@FD.org. If hired, we are dedicated to providing reasonable accommodations to support your success and ensure equal access to opportunities in the workplace.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:

Our office values diversity, is committed to equity and inclusion, and aspires to create a culture of mutual respect, collaboration, openness, and humility that honors the people we represent. We believe representation is better when members of the defense team have diverse backgrounds and experiences. We seek an individual who shares this belief and commitment. We embrace the unique contributions our employees can bring to the Federal Public Defender because of their backgrounds, social identities, and lived experiences. We are interested in applicants' talent, intelligence, dedication, persistence, and desire to see that all people are treated fairly and respectfully. The Federal Public Defender seeks applications from a diverse group of qualified individuals

in terms of race, ethnicity, nation of origin, culture, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual identity, education, opinions, age, languages spoken, veteran status, disability, religion, and socioeconomic circumstance. We especially encourage applications from members of the BIPOC community, people affected by the criminal legal system, and people from other underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.

Application Process: We aim to make the hiring process as transparent as possible. Below is an overview of the key steps:

- **Application Submission: May 22- 30, 2025**
Interested applicants are invited to apply by submitting a single pdf document that includes a cover letter, resume, and writing sample via email to the attention of: Elisa A. Long, Federal Public Defender
paw_employment@fd.org, Subject: 2025-04
- **Application Review: May 22 –30, 2025**
Our hiring committee will review applications and select candidates to be interviewed based on qualifications and experience.
- **Initial Interviews: June 2 – 13, 2025**
Selected candidates will be invited for an initial interview, which may be conducted virtually or in-person.
- **Second Round Interviews/Assessments: June 16 – 27, 2025**
Finalists will be invited for a second round, which may include a more in-depth interview or skills assessment.