The Federal Community Defender Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania has a vacancy for an Assistant Federal Defender in its Non-Capital Habeas Unit. Our office is located in Philadelphia’s vibrant Center City district, in newly renovated office space in the historic Curtis Center in Philadelphia, close to the federal courthouse and across from Independence Mall, the Liberty Bell and Washington Square Park.

The Non-Capital Habeas Unit (NCHU) conducts post-conviction litigation for indigent individuals challenging state and federal convictions and sentences. The NCHU’s attorneys examine the records of their clients’ cases, and they do careful research and writing to support a wide variety of legal claims. The NCHU’s attorneys undertake factual investigation as needed; conduct evidentiary hearings in the United States District Court; present oral argument to the District Court and the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit; and seek or oppose writs of certiorari from the United States Supreme Court. The NCHU uses a collaborative approach to its cases, and its members work closely with one another and with members of the Office’s other practice groups (including the Trial, Appeals, and Capital Habeas Units) to provide the highest level of legal representation to its clients.

Candidates must have a minimum of three years of criminal post-conviction or appellate experience and/or complex federal court civil litigation experience; at least five years of such experience is preferred. Candidates must have excellent analytical skills and research and writing capabilities and must be able to undertake representation of petitioners currently litigating in every stage of the habeas proceedings. Candidates also must be able to communicate effectively with clients, colleagues, staff, government, and court personnel and must have a commitment to the representation of the indigent. The position requires occasional travel.
Candidates must be members in good standing of a state bar and, if hired, must become a member of the bars of Pennsylvania, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and the United States Supreme Court, if not already admitted in those jurisdictions.

Salary will be based upon experience consistent with federal guidelines and regulations. Kindly note that the filling of this position will be subject to the funding restrictions and approval of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts.

Interested applicants should submit a cover letter, resume, and writing sample to Tracey Baez via e-mail at EmploymentPAE@fd.org, or by regular mail to Suite 540 West, The Curtis Center, 601 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106. Candidates will be interviewed on an ongoing basis, and the position will remain open, until filled.

The Federal Community Defender Office is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All interested and qualified applicants are encouraged to apply.