

Position Announcement 17-15
PARALEGAL – CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT

Office of the Federal Public Defender
Western District of Texas (Austin)

THE FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER, for the Western District of Texas is now accepting applications for the position of Paralegal for its newly forming Capital Habeas Unit in Austin, Texas. The Capital Habeas Unit (CHU) is responsible for representing death-sentenced prisoners in federal habeas corpus proceedings in the United States District Courts in Texas, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, and the United States Supreme Court. There are several CHUs in operation across the country and this position will be in one of two CHUs established for the first time in Texas. The CHU will represent indigent, death-sentenced prisoners in all four federal districts in Texas.

Requirements. To be considered for a CHU paralegal position, candidates must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university or have a paralegal certificate from an accredited paralegal program. *Candidates must also possess:*

- a strong legal, administrative, or paralegal background;
- excellent organization, communication, and administrative skills;
- computer proficiency with word processing; email (Lotus Notes and Outlook); legal research, and database maintenance, using Word, Adobe Acrobat, Excel, Westlaw and Lexis;
- excellent command of English grammar and spelling; and
- three to five years of relevant experience, preferably handling complex litigation and/or managing voluminous case files.
- Employment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation, including an FBI name and fingerprint check.

Duties. The paralegal provides assistance in the representation of death sentenced clients in federal habeas corpus proceedings. The paralegal's duties include: extensive document analysis, including the location, assembly, summarization, compilation of documents; maintenance of document management database; extensive use of computer software; assistance in case preparation and incarceration issues; assistance in the drafting of habeas pleadings, including motions and petitions; assistance in collaboration with outside consultants/experts, investigators, attorneys and clients; and assistance to attorneys in file organization, preparation and exhibits for evidentiary proceedings. The paralegal also assists with client contact; interviewing witnesses; providing litigation support services using advanced software programs; and other duties as assigned. This position may require work on holidays, evenings, and weekends, as the nature of the cases require. Frequent and extended travel also may be required. The full position qualifications statement with position description is available upon request.

Selection Criteria. The successful applicant will have a working knowledge of law office operations, legal practices, methods and techniques, and an understanding of criminal law, procedure and evidence. Applicants must possess a strong analytical ability, the ability to work collegially and a reputation for integrity. Must be able to travel overnight and work non-traditional hours. Prior federal court litigation experience and Spanish-language fluency are preferred for this position.

Salary and Benefits. The starting salary of a paralegal salary will be commensurate with the experience and qualifications of the applicant, within a range from JSP-11, Step 1, to JSP-14, Step 1, and currently yielding \$60,686 to \$102,211 per annum. The position is in the excepted service and does not carry the tenure rights of the competitive Civil Service. This position offers federal government employment benefits, including participation in health and life insurance, retirement, and the Thrift Savings Plan. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).

How to Apply. Persons may apply by forwarding a letter of interest (mentioning announcement number 17-15), a résumé, references, and representative writing sample to: Maureen Scott Franco, Federal Public Defender, Western District of Texas, 727 E. César E. Chávez Boulevard, Suite B-207, San Antonio, Texas 78206-1278. No electronically submitted applications will be considered. For applicants with disabilities, this organization provides reasonable accommodations, which are decided on a case-by-case basis. To request a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application or interview process, contact Personnel Administrator, Victoria B. Longoria, at (210) 472-6700. More than one position may be filled from this announcement. Position originally announced September 19, 2017, modified and re-announced December 21, 2017; subject to the availability of funds, and is open until filled.

Federal Public Defender is an equal-opportunity employer.