



FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER

Northern District of Ohio



CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT MITIGATION SPECIALIST/INVESTIGATOR

\$62,630 – \$165,918

Plus Excellent Benefits

Apply by

April 1, 2024

(First Review, Open Until Filled)



WHY APPLY?

This is an exciting opportunity for anyone with heart for public service and a background in criminal investigation or criminal investigative work to join a dedicated team of professionals in one of the most vibrant cities in the country, Cleveland Ohio! Located on the shores of Lake Erie, not only does Cleveland offer professional sports,



but also the second largest theater district in the country, a world-class art museum, a world-class orchestra, and a national park with hiking, biking, kayaking, and fishing opportunities. If you are an investigator interested in a rewarding career in public service, want to work as part of a team of professionals dedicated to a cause, hope to have a tangible impact on your community, and share our belief that no one should be defined by their worst day, this job is for you! We currently have one CHU Mitigation Specialist & Investigator position available in our Cleveland office. Anyone interested in public defense should therefore apply now!

Our Capital Habeas Unit (CHU) is in Cleveland and focuses on the representation of State prisoners sentenced to death who have exhausted their claims through the State court appellate processes and who are seeking a final review of their claims in federal habeas corpus. Our habeas representation covers all stages of representation in federal court from the initial petition through the Circuit and Supreme Court stages of appeal and State clemency.

WHAT WE DO

Our mission at the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Ohio is to zealously represent and defend indigent citizens in order to preserve, protect and defend the principle of equal justice for all.

We do this in accordance with the Criminal Justice Act. We provide representation to individuals in federal criminal cases or under federal criminal investigation who are financially unable to retain counsel.



WHO WE ARE

We serve the northern 40 counties of Ohio along the coast of Lake Erie, from Pennsylvania to Indiana, providing free legal defense to those who cannot afford it on their own.

We are attorneys, paralegals, investigators, office administrators, information technology specialists, and legal assistants, dedicated to defending our fellow citizens by providing them with legal counsel. We are zealous advocates for our clients, providing independent trial defense services free from outside influence. We represent every client within the guidelines of the laws, consistent with our professional ethics, and in accordance with all applicable rules of practice. We work together as a team of legal professionals to uphold every person's right to be presumed innocent, and when required to a fair sentence. Our defense is vigorous at trial, sentencing, on appeal, and in state capital post-conviction. We advocate for humane sentences by showing judges, prosecutors, and the Ohio Parole Board that we represent people, not criminals.

We are committed to cultivating a culture of acceptance and connectedness that honors the diverse backgrounds of the people we represent. We value diversity, and

believe better legal representation occurs when members of the defense team have diverse backgrounds. We seek out and embrace the unique contributions that you can bring, including your culture, ethnicity, education, opinions, race, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, nation of origin, age, languages spoken, veteran's status, religion, disability, or economic status.

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WHO YOU ARE

You are a trusted and reliable individual with demonstrated commitment to working with marginalized communities and with clients from a range of backgrounds. You put the client first while standing on your values, your personal and professional ethics, and your professionalism. You use sound judgment to carry out your responsibilities. You appreciate the importance of diversity. You always partner with other members of the office, seek out the opinions of your colleagues, and love to work as a team. You are candid in your advice, but respectful of others. You don't just recognize problems but identify solutions. You harness your creativity, legal acumen, and writing skills to overcome difficult problem sets. Above all, you maintain your high standards while treating our clients and your co-workers with empathy and understanding.

RESPONSIBILITIES

As a Mitigation Specialist/Investigator in our Capital Habeas Unit, you will collaboratively work with a team of Assistant Federal Public Defenders, Research and Writing Specialists, Investigators, a Mitigation Specialist, Paralegals, and a Legal Assistant. Your responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Identifying and interviewing significant family members and social informants, performing extensive, reliable, and multi-generational psycho-social histories, and developing themes for mitigation based on a client's psycho-social development.
- Identifying and collecting records pertaining to client and his/her/their family and prepare written reports/memoranda on all clients.
- Obtaining, understanding, and analyzing all medical and mental health history including complete prenatal, pediatric and adult health information; exposure to harmful substances in utero and in the environment; substance abuse history; history of maltreatment and neglect; trauma history; educational history; employment and training history; military experience; multi-generational family history, genetic disorders and vulnerabilities, as well as multi-generational patterns of behavior; prior adult and juvenile correctional experience; religious, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic, racial, cultural and community influences; socio-economic, historical, and political factors.
- Advising counsel on appropriate medical, mental health and other expert assistance.



THE ORGANIZATION

Established in August of 1973, the Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Ohio operates four offices, including a main office in downtown Cleveland and branch offices in Akron, Youngstown, and Toledo. Our staff of 51 employees is split between the Trial Unit, performing traditional indigent criminal defense and appeals, and the Capital Habeas Unit, providing post-conviction representation to inmates sentenced to death. There are currently 22 Capital Habeas Units throughout the country. Our CHU was opened in 2008 with a staff of two attorneys and a Paralegal. It has grown to a Unit currently comprised of 14 members, including five Assistant Federal Public Defenders, two Paralegals, three Research and Writing Attorneys, two investigators, a Mitigation Specialist, and a Legal Assistant. We represent approximately 32 clients in varying stages of litigation, including 30 from Ohio and 2 from Arizona.



IDEAL CANDIDATE

Interested applicants must be able to demonstrate a firm commitment to providing representation of the highest caliber to indigent persons facing execution in a diverse, **team-oriented**, work environment. Experience in post-conviction or capital investigation is a plus. Criminal defense experience is helpful but not mandatory. *If you do not have criminal defense experience, please explain why you are now interested in working in this area of law.*

A Master's degree in Social Work is preferred. A Bachelor's degree in combination with relevant experience can be substituted for a Master's degree. We welcome applicants from a variety of different disciplines to ensure we get the best and most creative talent on our team.

The successful candidate must be able to identify, locate and interview relevant people in a *culturally competent manner* that produces confidential, relevant, and reliable information. The candidate must be a skilled interviewer who can recognize and elicit sufficient responses to overcome barriers those individuals may have against disclosing sensitive information and to help the client with the emotional impact of such disclosures.

Applicants must be proficient in relationship building and working as part of an interdisciplinary team. The position will require developing positive and sustaining relationships with clients and their families, working with a team of lawyers, investigators, paralegals, and other experts, and helping in the development and integration of mitigation themes as well as the preparation and implementation of field investigations.

The candidate must be able to provide information in a form useful to counsel and any experts through methods including, but not limited to genealogies, chronologies, social histories, and studies of the cultural, socioeconomic, environmental, political, historical, racial, and religious influences on the client to aid counsel in developing an affirmative case for sparing the client's life in habeas and/or clemency.

COMPENSATION & AVAILABLE BENEFITS

- \$62,630 - \$165,918
- Health & Life Insurance
- FERS Retirement
- Social Security
- Thrift Savings Plan
- Transit Subsidy Voucher or Paid Parking
- 12 Holidays
- Telework Days
- Annual Leave
- Sick Leave





How To Apply

All qualified candidates are strongly encouraged to apply by **Monday, April 1, 2024** (first review, open until filled). Applications, supplemental questions, resumes, and cover letters will only be accepted electronically. Only applicants selected for interviews will be contacted. To apply send a single Adobe .pdf document via email which includes a letter of interest, your resume, a completed AO78 Application for Judicial Employment, three (3) references to: **ohn_employment@fd.org**, subject line: **"2024-02 CHU Mitigation Specialist & Investigator"**.

This is an exciting opportunity for anyone interested in a challenging and rewarding career in public defense! Come join our team! Apply now!



NOTICE

Employees are considered at-will and are not covered by the Civil Service Reform Act. This position offers responsibility, independence, dynamic teamwork, and generous federal benefits. The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Ohio is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Employment is provisional pending the successful completion of a required background check. You must be a United States citizen or eligible to work in the United States. You must possess a valid driver's license. Travel by a personal vehicle may be required. This position precludes the private practice of law.

FEDERAL JUDICIAL BRANCH
APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

If you need additional space, continue under "Remarks" listing item number

1. Name (Last, First, Middle Initial)	2. Phone Number
3. Present Address (Street, City, State, Zip)	
4. Email Address	
5. Other Names Previously Used for Employment Purposes	6. Date of Birth (complete only for law enforcement positions)

GENERAL

7. Are you a U.S. Citizen?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	If no, give the Country of your citizenship
8. a. Were you ever a federal civilian employee?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	If yes, give highest civilian grade: _____ / _____ / _____ Pay Plan Grade Step
b. Are you receiving a federal civilian annuity payment?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	
c. Are you receiving federal severance pay?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	If yes, give former agency contact/telephone: _____
d. Have you received a federal separation incentive payment in the past 5 years?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	If yes, state mo/yr received and former agency contact/telephone: _____
9. Do you have any relatives who are Judges, Officers or employees of the United States Courts?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	If yes, give their names, positions, and relationships to you. _____
10. Have you ever served on active duty with the military?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	(If selected, you will need to provide your DD-214 (copy 4), Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, so that your service may be verified and credited)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

11. During the last 5 years, have you been fired from any job for any reason, did you quit after being told that you would be fired, did you leave any job by mutual agreement because of specific problems, or were you debarred from Federal employment by the Office of Personnel Management or any other Federal agency?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	If yes, provide in Section 17 the date, explanation of problem, reason for leaving, and employer's name/address.
12. Are you delinquent on any Federal debt? (Include delinquencies arising from Federal taxes, loans, overpayment of benefits, and other debts to the U.S. Government, plus defaults of Federally guaranteed or insured loans (e.g., student loan, home mortgage loan)).	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	If yes, provide in Section 17 the type, length, and amount of delinquency/default, and steps being taken to correct the error/repay the debt.

EDUCATION

13. a. Do you have a high school diploma or G.E.D. equivalent? ☐ YES ☐ NO

b. Name and location of colleges or universities attended (<i>including law schools</i>)	Dates Attended	Credit Hours		Degree	Date Received	Grade Point Average and/or scholastic standing
		Quarter	Semester			

14. c. Other schools or training attended (*list name/location of school, dates attended, subject studied, certificates received, and other pertinent data*):

JOB RELATED SKILLS, AWARDS, SPECIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

15. List any skills (e.g., language, computer, keyboarding speed), honors, awards, or special accomplishments (e.g., memberships in professional/honor societies, leadership activities, performance awards) that you believe are relevant to your ability to perform the job:

APPLICANTS FOR LEGAL POSITIONS

16. a. Are you admitted to the Bar? ☐ YES ☐ NO If yes, list the Bar(s) to which admitted and date(s) of admission. If no, skip to

18b.

Is your Bar membership

☐ ACTIVE ☐ INACTIVE

b. What was your scholastic standing in law school?

☐ UPPER ½ ☐ UPPER ⅓ ☐ UPPER ¼

c. Were you a member of an editorial board of law review or a moot court participant?

☐ YES ☐ No

17. REMARKS (*Use this space for continuation of answers. List the item number being explained.*)

WORK EXPERIENCE

(Start with your present position and work back 10 years. Include any military service. Use additional page if necessary.)

A

Dates of Employment (<i>mm/dd/yyyy</i>) From: _____ To: _____	Number of hours worked per week:	Exact Title of Your Position
Salary or Earnings Starting \$ _____ Per _____ Final \$ _____ Per _____	Pay Plan/Grade (<i>If in federal Service</i>)	Place of Employment City _____ State _____
Name and Title of Immediate Supervisor Business Telephone: (<i>Area Code and Phone Number</i>)		Name and Address of Employer (<i>firm, organization, etc.</i>)
Reason for Leaving		
Description of Work		

B

Dates of Employment (<i>mm/dd/yyyy</i>) From: _____ To: _____	Number of hours worked per week:	Exact Title of Your Position
Salary or Earnings Starting \$ _____ Per _____ Final \$ _____ Per _____	Pay Plan/Grade (<i>If in federal Service</i>)	Place of Employment City _____ State _____
Name and Title of Immediate Supervisor Business Telephone: (<i>Area Code and Phone Number</i>)		Name and Address of Employer (<i>firm, organization, etc.</i>)
Reason for Leaving		
Description of Work		

C

Dates of Employment (<i>mm/dd/yyyy</i>) From: _____ To: _____	Number of hours worked per week:	Exact Title of Your Position
Salary or Earnings Starting \$ _____ Per _____ Final \$ _____ Per _____	Pay Plan/Grade (<i>If in federal Service</i>)	Place of Employment City _____ State _____
Name and Title of Immediate Supervisor Business Telephone: (<i>Area Code and Phone Number</i>)		Name and Address of Employer (<i>firm, organization, etc.</i>)
Reason for Leaving		
Description of Work		

D

Dates of Employment (<i>mm/dd/yyyy</i>) From: _____ To: _____	Number of hours worked per week:	Exact Title of Your Position
Salary or Earnings Starting \$ _____ Per _____ Final \$ _____ Per _____	Pay Plan/Grade (<i>If in federal Service</i>)	Place of Employment City _____ State _____
Name and Title of Immediate Supervisor Business Telephone: (<i>Area Code and Phone Number</i>)		Name and Address of Employer (<i>firm, organization, etc.</i>)
Reason for Leaving		
Description of Work		

OPTIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION – RESPOND ONLY IF REQUIRED BY THE VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Answer questions 18, 19, and 20, only if required by the vacancy announcement. Your answers should include convictions resulting from a plea of nolo contendere (no contest), but omit (1) traffic fines of \$300 or less, (2) any violation of law committed before your 16th birthday, (3) any violation of law committed before your 18th birthday if finally decided in juvenile court or under a Youth Offender law, (4) any conviction set aside under the Federal Youth Corrections Act or similar state law, and (5) any conviction for which the record was expunged under Federal or state law.

18. During the last 7 years, have you been convicted, imprisoned, on probation, or on parole? *(Include felonies, firearms or explosives violations, misdemeanors, and all other offenses)*

☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, provide in Section 21 the date, explanation of violation, place of occurrence, and name/address of police dept or court.
19. Have you been convicted by a military court-martial in the past 7 years?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, provide in Section 21 the date, explanation of violation, place of occurrence, and name/address of military authority or court.
20. Are you now under charges for any violation of law?

☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, provide in Section 21 the date, explanation of violation, place of occurrence, and name/address of police dept or court.

21. REMARKS *(Use this space for continuation of answers. List the item number being explained.)*

APPLICANT CERTIFICATION

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information on and attached to this application is true, correct, complete and made in good faith. I understand that false or fraudulent information on or attached to this application may be grounds for not hiring me, or firing me after I begin work, and may be punishable by fine or imprisonment. I understand that any information I give may be investigated.

SIGNATURE _____

DATE SIGNED _____