

FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
MIDDLE and WESTERN DISTRICTS OF LOUISIANA
LAFAYETTE HEADQUARTERS
102 Versailles Boulevard, Suite 816
Lafayette, Louisiana 70501

Cristie Gautreaux Gibbens
Federal Public Defender

Phone(337) 262-6336
Fax (337) 262-6605

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT
Research & Writing Specialist

Posted: March 26, 2026

Closing Date: Open until filled, preference given to those applying by April 20, 2026

The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Middle and Western Districts of Louisiana is accepting applications for an entry level Research & Writing Specialist position to be stationed in the **LAFAYETTE OFFICE**, which is located a 102 Versailles Blvd, Suite 816, Lafayette, LA. The Office of the Federal Public Defender, which has staffed offices in Baton Rouge, Lafayette and Shreveport, operates under the authority of the Criminal Justice Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, to provide court-appointed defense services in federal criminal cases to individuals unable to afford counsel.

Requirements. A Research and Writing Specialist (R&W) is an attorney position. Applicants must be: (1) a graduate of an accredited law school and admitted to practice and in good standing before the highest court of a State; (2) licensed to practice in the U.S. District Courts for the Middle and Western Districts of Louisiana and the U.S. Fifth Circuit by the time of entrance on duty; and (3) licensed to practice law in the State of Louisiana, or must become so licensed at the earliest opportunity after entrance on duty. Appointment is subject to a satisfactory FBI fingerprint 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, sentencing, and appeal. A research and writing specialist may have to perform general paralegal duties, and the training and continuing legal education and supervision of legal interns as appropriate. The research and writing specialist is not an assistant federal public defender and does not sign pleadings or make court appearances. The position requires occasional travel.

Selection Criteria. The successful applicant will have: an established capacity or clearly demonstrated aptitude for excellence in criminal defense practice; a commitment to the representation of indigent accused persons; a reputation for personal and professional integrity; strong legal research, word processing, legal analysis and writing skills; an established capacity to communicate effectively with clients, witnesses, colleagues, office staff and court personnel; an established capacity to complete assignments timely; and an established capacity to work both independently and collaboratively. Experience in handling federal criminal cases including the federal sentencing guidelines is preferred.

Salary and Benefits. The position is a full-time position with federal benefits and salary commensurate with professional experience and qualifications. Salary dependent upon applicant's qualifications and experience. Benefits include health and life insurance, retirement, and the Thrift Savings Plan. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).

How to Apply. Qualified persons may apply by sending the following, in **one** PDF document, to cristie_gibbens@fd.org: (1) letter of interest; (2) resume with two professional references familiar with applicant's legal skills; (3) recent writing sample that has not been edited by others; and (4) completed AO78 Application for Judicial Employment found here: <https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/ao078.pdf>

This position is contingent on the availability of federal funding. Only those granted an interview will be contacted. No phone calls.

The Office of the Federal Public Defender is an equal opportunity employer.