



Federal Public Defender District of Puerto Rico

Rachel Brill
Federal Defender

Position Announcement # 2026-06

ASSISTANT PARALEGAL

WORK THAT MATTERS. DEFENSE THAT CAN'T BE BOUGHT.

The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the District of Puerto Rico is accepting applications for the Assistant Paralegal position. More than one vacancy may be filled from this announcement.

WHY THIS OFFICE IS DIFFERENT

We're not a bureaucracy pretending to care about indigent defense. We're people who've chosen this work because we believe everyone deserves a fierce advocate, regardless of their bank account. Our 30+ attorneys range from brilliant lawyers fresh from clerkships to seasoned litigators, and they're backed by investigators, mitigation specialists, and administrative staff who are equally as invested in our clients' outcomes. We're serious about growth: mentorship, training, and collaboration aren't perks here, they're how we work. We don't practice in isolation, we brainstorm theories together, workshop suppression hearings as a team, and run mock trials. We test our themes, challenge each other's assumptions, and refine our narratives. We present context alongside facts, humanity alongside allegations, and complete narratives instead of piecemeal arguments.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Assistant Paralegal position provides a range of legal support services to staff attorneys. These duties include but are not limited to: providing support to Assistant Federal Defenders, maintaining attorneys' calendars of court hearings and filing deadlines, assisting in preparing legal documents, filing documents electronically, maintaining case files, assisting with the electronic management of discovery, answering telephone calls, facilitating client communication, and other duties as assigned.

Attorney Support: Provides comprehensive day-to-day support to Assistant Federal Defenders, including anticipating workflow needs, preparing materials in advance of hearings and meetings, and assisting with research and case preparation tasks as directed. Acts as a reliable point of coordination between attorneys, clients, courts, and external parties.

Calendar and Deadline Management: Maintains and monitors attorneys' calendars, tracking court hearing dates, filing deadlines, pretrial conference schedules, sentencing dates, and other deadlines. Proactively alerts attorneys to upcoming obligations and assists in prioritizing competing demands to ensure no critical deadline is missed.

Legal Document Preparation: Assists in the drafting, formatting, proofreading, and finalization of a variety of legal documents, ensures documents conform to local court rules, formatting requirements, and office standards.

Electronic Court Filing: Files documents with federal courts through the CM/ECF (Case Management/Electronic Case Filing) system and other required electronic platforms, ensuring timely and accurate submission. Monitors filing confirmations and maintains records of all filed documents.

Case File Management: Creates, organizes, and maintains physical and electronic case files in accordance with office policies. Ensures that all case materials, including pleadings, discovery, correspondence, and investigation records, are accurately catalogued and readily accessible to attorneys and staff. Closes cases at the conclusion of representation.

Discovery Management: Assists attorneys with the organization, review, and management of discovery materials in electronic format, including large volumes of documents, audio/video recordings, and digital evidence.

Telephone and General Office Communication: Serves as a point of contact for clients and their families. Liaises with courts, government agencies, co-counsel, investigators, and other parties as needed.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for the position of Assistant Paralegal, a person must be a high-school graduate or equivalent and have a minimum of three years of general experience and two years of specialized experience. Some higher education may be substituted for specialized experience. Legal experience, computer literacy, advanced word-processing skills, and proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, and Adobe Acrobat are required.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Appointment to this position is contingent upon the successful completion of an FBI name and fingerprint check. Federal Public Defender employees are members of the judicial branch of the government and are considered "at will." This position is in the excepted service and does not carry the tenure rights of the competitive Civil Service. You must be a U.S. citizen or person authorized to work in the United States.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

The starting salary is commensurate with experience, qualifications, and education. Entry Level is Judiciary Schedule Plan (JSP) 9-1 (\$61-722) plus Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) and is subject to mandatory Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit) participation for payment. The position is in the excepted service and does not carry the tenure rights of the competitive Civil Service. This position is full-time with a comprehensive benefits package that includes health and life insurance, vision and dental benefits, flexible spending accounts, paid time off, sick leave, paid leave for all federal holidays, and participation in the Federal Retirement System and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP with up to 5% government matching contributions).

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

In **one** PDF document, please submit a letter of interest, résumé, and three references to:

Federal Public Defender, District of Puerto Rico, Selection Committee

At: Candy_Carbaugh@fd.org

Email subject line should read: **2026-06 – Assistant Paralegal**

Applications to be considered must be received by May 30, 2026. This position will remain open until filled and is subject to the availability of funding. As stated, multiple positions may be filled from this vacancy announcement.

The Federal Public Defender for the District of Puerto Rico Is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We seek to hire individuals who will promote the diversity of the office and federal practice.