

**FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER  
DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO**

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**POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT  
2026-10**

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**Position:** CJA Panel Assistant/Administrative Assistant

**Location:** Las Cruces, NM

**Opening Date:** June 10, 2026

**Closing Date:** July 5, 2026

**Target Start Date:** August 2026

**Office Website:** <https://nm.fd.org/>

**Salary Range:** JSP 6 – 12 (Salary commensurate with experience)

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The Federal Public Defender for the District of New Mexico is seeking a full-time Criminal Justice Act (CJA) Panel Assistant or Administrative Assistant to the CJA Coordinating Attorney (CJACA) for the District of New Mexico in our Las Cruces Office. The CJACA oversees the administration and management of the district's CJA panel attorney program.

**Duties and Responsibilities:**

This position provides support services to the CJACA, CJA panel members, service providers, and the District Court. The assistant will provide support in a variety of areas including assisting the CJACA with all aspects of program administration and management; facilitating communications between CJA panel attorneys and their clients; assisting the CJACA in designing and presenting training programs for CJA panel members; assisting panel members and the Court with the efficient processing of vouchers for reimbursement and authorizations for service providers, travel and other case-related expenses; preparing and assisting in the preparation of various CJA forms and verifying their compliance with requirements; contacting panel members to determine availability for the expeditious assignments of counsel in criminal cases; monitoring court dockets to determine changes in representation of CJA clients; assisting in the maintenance of lists of panel members and service providers to assist the CJACA; disseminating information to the panel and service providers regarding CJA policies and procedures; maintaining internal records and statistics regarding CJA appointments for use by the clerk's office, the court, and others; maintaining updated information regarding the CJA Guidelines, federal travel guidelines, local rules of the court for the District of New Mexico; assisting with coordination of travel for panel attorneys and service providers in accordance with federal travel regulations; and other duties as assigned consistent with the mission of the position.

**Required Qualifications:**

Applicants must have a reliable and motivated work ethic, a reputation for personal and professional integrity and an ability to work well with the CJACA, the Federal Public Defender, the Court and members of the CJA panel. Applicants must have a high school degree or equivalent and the requisite experience. Must have a valid driver's license and ability to travel as needed to field offices and/or for training. Must possess excellent oral and written skills, and strong interpersonal and organizational abilities. Spanish language proficiency required.

**Preferred Qualifications:**

Substantial experience with federal criminal practice; and substantial experience with various computer programs, including word processing, spreadsheets, PACER and CM/ECF, and billing and timekeeping programs. There is a preference for applicants with a working knowledge of the electronic CJA eVoucher system, either as an administrator or from the perspective as a user.

**Salary and Benefits:**

This is a full-time, at-will position within the federal judiciary. The starting salary range is JSP 6/1 at \$45,409 to JSP 12/1 at \$89,508, based on experience and qualifications. The position includes a comprehensive benefits package, featuring health, dental, vision, and life insurance; 13 to 26 days of earned annual leave depending on years of service; 13 days of earned sick leave per year; and 12 weeks of paid parental leave after one year of service. Employees also receive 11 paid federal holidays, participate in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), and may contribute to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) with up to 5 percent government matching. The position is eligible for Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), access to wellness resources and programming, credit for prior federal service, and regular continuing education opportunities. A one day per week telework option may be available depending on workload and office needs.

**How to Apply:**

Interested applicants should submit a single pdf document that includes a cover letter, resume, and three references via email to the attention of:

Michelle Dworak, Administrative Officer

[FDNM-HR@fd.org](mailto:FDNM-HR@fd.org)

Subject: 2026-10 CJA Panel Assistant

**Application Deadline:** Applications reviewed on a rolling basis and the position may close before the deadline of July 5, 2026. The position may remain open until filled and is subject to funding availability. Please, no phone inquiries. Only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

**Conditions of Employment:**

Employment is subject to a background check, including fingerprinting. This position is part of the excepted service and does not carry Civil Service tenure. U.S. citizenship or authorization to work in the U.S. and receive compensation as a federal employee is required. Salary is paid via direct deposit.

**Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:**

Our office values diversity and is committed to equity and inclusion. We aspire to embody values of mutual respect, collaboration, openness, and humility that honor the people we represent. Our representation is better when members of the defense team and staff members have diverse backgrounds and experiences. In our hiring, we seek individuals who share these values. We embrace the unique backgrounds, social identities, and lived experiences our employees bring to our office. We are interested in applicants' talent, diligence, and desire to see that all people are treated fairly and respectfully – no matter the allegation or circumstance.