



**FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
WESTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA**

129 West Trade Street, Suite 300
Charlotte, NC 28202
(704) 374-0720
Fax (704) 375-2287

John G. Baker
Federal Public Defender

Megan C. Hoffman
First Assistant

Joshua B. Carpenter
Appellate Chief

**Position Announcement
Assistant Federal Public Defender (Appeals / Research and Writing)
Western District of North Carolina**

Posted: February 17, 2026

Closing date: Applications received by March 27, 2026, will receive priority consideration. The position will remain open until filled.

The Federal Public Defender for the Western District of North Carolina seeks an Assistant Federal Public Defender to join our appellate unit.

Job Description: The mission of our appellate unit is to provide high-quality representation to our clients at every stage of a federal criminal case. In addition to handling direct appeals after final judgment, we collaborate extensively with the Asheville and Charlotte trial units to provide legal, strategic, and practical support in pending trial-level cases. We also pursue post-conviction relief in appropriate cases. The duties of this position may include: (1) researching, briefing, and arguing cases in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals and, in appropriate cases, seeking or opposing Supreme Court review (and litigating before the Supreme Court if review is granted); (2) assisting the office's trial units by researching and drafting motions, objections, and memoranda in pending trial-level cases; (3) litigating post-conviction motions arising from retroactive judicial decisions, legislation, or Sentencing Guidelines amendments; and (4) monitoring relevant legal developments and helping to train the office's lawyers, and other criminal defense practitioners, on the impact of those developments. The balance of responsibilities between these duties will vary depending on the office's needs at any particular time.



Requirements: To apply, you must be a graduate of an accredited law school and a member in good standing of the bar of any state or the District of Columbia. Two years or more of attorney experience is preferred. The successful applicant must demonstrate excellent research and writing skills, strong oral advocacy, as well as a commitment to the representation of indigent defendants. To succeed in this position, an applicant must be team-oriented and willing to collaborate with other attorneys and team members to advance each client's best interests through zealous and compassionate representation.

The physical demands of this position are those required to successfully perform the duties described above. Reasonable accommodations will be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform these essential functions.

While the preferred duty station for this position is Charlotte, we may consider alternative arrangements for highly qualified candidates. Depending on organizational needs and the candidate's experience, options such as placement in our Asheville office or remote work – either on a temporary or long-term basis – may be considered.



Salary and Benefits: Salary is based on federal pay schedules and is commensurate with experience and qualifications. The current starting salary range for this position, if based in the Charlotte office, is \$78,459 to \$184,093 per annum. This is an excepted service position with federal employee benefits, including health and life insurance and the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) pension, Social Security, and Thrift Savings Plan. We observe Federal holidays and provide generous annual and personal leave. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit). Telework and flex scheduling, consistent with court obligations and position duties, are available to all employees after successful completion of a probationary period.

Conditions of Employment: All application information is subject to verification. Applicants must be United States citizens, or persons authorized to work in the United States. Appointment to the position is provisional pending the successful completion of a background check. A prior criminal conviction is not necessarily disqualifying. Employees are members of the judicial branch and considered “at will” employees. This position may require occasional travel by a personal vehicle. This position will also require occasional work outside of business hours, including weekends and holidays.

About Us: Our mission is important: We are committed to excellence and the quest for justice of the indigent accused, focusing on our clients' needs with innovation, passion, and through dynamic advocacy.

Our vision is client-centered: Advocacy requires engaging with every aspect of our clients' lives. We will defend our clients with purpose, compassion, and courage; identifying inequities that deny them of freedoms, drive their prosecutions, and inflate their sentences. We will work to reform the criminal legal system that is too often blind to these realities. We will partner with those who serve our community to help secure a future for our clients and their families. And we will strive to provide aid to and set an example for the present and future generations of our professions.

We recognize that we cannot serve the distinct needs of our clients without assembling a diverse team of dedicated professionals who work and advocate collaboratively on their behalf. We welcome applicants of any race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, disability, age, and status. We are committed to ensuring an inclusive and equitable workplace. Click [here](#) for more information about our office. We have attached our Mission, Vision, and Values statements to this announcement to provide additional insight into the work that you will be asked to perform as an employee of this office.

How to Apply. Please submit your resume, a letter of interest, and an unedited writing sample **in .pdf format** to:

Amanda Buckner, Personnel Administrator

WDNCAapplication@fd.org

Subject: Assistant Federal Public Defender (Appeals / Research and Writing).

We welcome requests for accommodations from applicants with disabilities. Please submit any such requests to Amanda Buckner at WDNCAapplication@fd.org or 704-374-0720.

Interviews may be conducted in person or virtually.

Multiple positions might be filled from this posting.

This position is subject to the availability of funds.

The Federal Public Defender is an Equal Opportunity Employer



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Mission Statement

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Vision Statement

Advocacy requires engaging with every aspect of our clients' lives. We will defend our clients with purpose, compassion, and courage; identifying inequities that deny them of freedoms, drive their prosecutions, and inflate their sentences. We will work to reform the criminal legal system that is too often blind to these realities. We will partner with those who serve our community to help secure a future for our clients and their families. And we will strive to provide aid to and set an example for the present and future generations of our professions.

Values Statement

We are a diverse office motivated by our devotion to represent the indigent accused with respect and dignity, serving them with dynamic advocacy, excellence, and compassion. We are client-centered and driven by our passion and dedication to our clients. We are unwavering and purposeful in the representation of each client.

- **Dynamic Advocacy:** We are passionate about advocating for our clients. We listen to their stories, address their concerns, and advise them with compassion and expertise. We are innovative, intentional, and creative in our legal strategies. We are tenacious in our efforts to ensure that our clients' needs are always addressed, regardless of income or abilities.
- **Client-Centered Representation:** Clients' voices are at the core of every decision we make. We will represent and connect with our clients with integrity, dignity, and respect and be their voice. We embrace diversity and ensure that those we serve are the experts in their own life stories.
- **Excellence:** We seek the best practices and embody the highest standards of professionalism in all aspects of our representation. We are unafraid of innovation and embrace collaboration within and outside our discipline. We work with our colleagues and peers to hone our skills, challenge our practices, and raise the bar for our professions. We are tireless advocates for the indigent, dedicated and committed, accepting nothing less than excellence.
- **Diversity:** Diversity is essential to advocacy. We cannot represent our community unless we reflect its cultural differences. It makes us better advocates and is at the core of who we are. Diversity is fundamental to building strong relationships with our clients and colleagues. Our office encompasses and embraces people of different races, ethnicities, gender, ages, religious beliefs, sexual identities, etc. We are dedicated to having staff from all walks of life and will continue to recruit diverse talent.