

**OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

**FIRST ASSISTANT FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA**

The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Middle District of Pennsylvania is seeking a First Assistant Federal Public Defender. We are a mission-driven office that represents people facing serious charges in federal court, and our work requires leaders with clarity of purpose who will clear the path for client advocacy by safeguarding our operational integrity and serving as careful stewards of public funds and client trust.

This is a full-time position based in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

While every leader in our office remains connected to client work, the First Assistant is the Defender's principal partner in managing our office, and this position requires full engagement in the mechanics of running our organization. That includes approving expenditures, reviewing travel and procurement decisions, overseeing compliance systems, maintaining internal controls, supervising administrative and personnel staff, and sharing responsibility for stewardship of public funds. The First Assistant also plays a critical role in shaping the office's structure and culture by mentoring staff, addressing workplace concerns early and constructively, supporting performance management systems, and ensuring that expectations are clear and consistently applied.

Applicants should have strong professional judgment and a demonstrated commitment to client-centered advocacy. This role demands exacting attention to detail and adherence to rules-based systems. Supervisory or management experience is strongly preferred, as is experience with budgeting, administrative oversight, or roles involving oversight of public funds. Meaningful litigation experience and deep knowledge of defense work is also critical.

We believe defense work is strongest when it reflects a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, and we're committed to building a workplace grounded in mutual respect, collaboration, and humility. The successful candidate must be steady under pressure, fair in judgment, comfortable balancing warmth with accountability, and reliable in modeling the standards we expect from others. Above all, we're seeking a leader who models professional excellence and who brings integrity and respect to every interaction.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

This is a full-time position. Salary is commensurate with experience and education and matches that of Assistant United States Attorneys with comparable experience. The selected candidate will also receive a comprehensive benefits package that includes generous insurance coverage, dependent and long-term insurance programs, flexible spending accounts, commuter benefits program, earned paid time off, mandatory participation in the Federal Employees Retirement System, optional participation in the Third Savings Plan retirement account with up to 5% agency matching contributions, and an Employee Assistant Program. This position is subject to mandatory electronic transfer of pay (direct deposit).

Because the First Assistant serves as a daily leadership partner with the Defender and shares responsibility for personnel and operations, the role requires a significant on-site presence and immersion in the life of the office. Limited telework may be available in accordance with office policy, but telework is not an entitlement and will always be subordinate to client needs, court coverage, and the leadership demands of the position.

Employment is contingent upon the successful completion of an FBI fingerprint and background check.

HOW TO APPLY

We strive to make the hiring process transparent. We intend to conduct a thoughtful and deliberate nationwide search for this position. Here's what you can expect:

- 1. Application Submission:** Interested applicants should submit a single pdf document that includes a cover letter, resume, list of references, and a writing sample to Lorianne Link, Personnel Administrator, at lorianne_link@fd.org.
- 2. Application Review:** Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and will remain open until the position is filled. Because this is a senior leadership role with substantial operational and personnel responsibilities, we anticipate a multi-stage selection process that may include screening interviews, in-person interviews, and reference checks.
- 3. Timeline:** We're committed to selecting the right leader and will take the time necessary to identify a candidate prepared to shoulder the full responsibilities of the role.

**The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the
Middle District of Pennsylvania is an Equal Opportunity Employer.**