Office of the Federal Public Defender
Middle District of Florida
Charles L. Pritchard, Jr.
Federal Public Defender

Vacancy Announcement #2027-004
Position Title: Legal Assistant
Duty Station: Ocala, Florida

Posting: October 30, 2026
Closing Date: November 25, 2026
Permanent Full-Time

The Federal Public Defender for the Middle District of Florida is accepting applications for the position of Legal Assistant to be stationed in our Ocala office. Currently there is no physical office, although a new office site has been identified. Initially, the successful applicant will telework full-time, though some tasks may require occasional travel to a temporary workspace in the Ocala federal courthouse. When the new office opens, the successful applicant will be required to work in the office. At that time, some telework may be available subject to supervisor determination of office requirements.

Description/Duties: The Legal Assistant provides secretarial and clerical support services to the office's attorneys. The Legal Assistant will also be assigned to one or more attorneys and will be required to assist with overflow coverage when needed. The Legal Assistant's duties include, but are not limited to: formatting, proofreading, editing and electronic filing of case documents including notices, motions, memoranda, and briefs; knowing legal terminology, principles, and court procedures; maintaining client electronic files and case history; case management under attorney direction; preparing client correspondence; maintaining attorneys' court and office calendars; scheduling meetings between attorneys and clients; processing expert contracts, requesting purchase orders, and coordinating expert evaluations with the county jails; answering general telephone inquiries; and receiving and routing mail. The Legal Assistant's responsibilities also include communicating with clients as advised by the attorney; going to court to pick-up/deliver documentation; photocopying, scanning, and shredding; and other case-related duties as assigned. During full-time telework, the Legal Assistant must be able to conduct telephonic reception promptly and efficiently; when the physical office opens, the Legal Assistant will also serve as the front desk receptionist.

Requirements: To qualify for this position, an applicant must be a high school graduate or equivalent, with a minimum of two years general secretarial experience and one year of specialized legal secretarial experience (criminal preferred). Education beyond high school may be substituted for some experience. Candidates should possess proficiency in word processing; proficiency at typing with a preferred minimum rate of 60 wpm; knowledge of criminal legal terminology; excellent communication skills; and a professional demeanor. The successful candidate will also have a demonstrated work history of dependability and responsibility. Our ideal candidate will be highly motivated and able to work independently (including remotely) and as a part of a litigation team. Selected candidates may be subject to typing and written skills tests. Spanish-language proficiency is desirable but not mandatory.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE AND PROVEN SKILLS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS ARE REQUIRED:

- Broad familiarity with computer programs including, but not limited to, Microsoft Outlook, Word, Excel, Adobe, and PowerPoint; familiarity with PACER, Westlaw, and LexisNexis is preferable
- Knowledge of the criminal justice system

- Ability to exercise good judgment in a mature and diplomatic manner
- General understanding of office confidentiality issues, such as attorney/client privilege and ability to maintain such confidentiality
- Comprehensive knowledge of legal secretarial principles, practices, methods, and techniques
- Ability to identify and evaluate pertinent facts, regulations, policies, and procedures
- Skill and judgment in the analysis of prioritizing assignments

Physical Requirements: Prolonged periods of sitting at a desk are necessary and an applicant must be able to occasionally lift and or move up to 25 pounds. A personal car for travel between the office and the courthouse is necessary.

Salary and Benefits. The starting salary for a Legal Assistant falls within a range of **$45,409 to $72,644 per annum (including locality pay)**. The salary of the successful applicant will be dependent upon and commensurate with the person's qualifications and experience. The position offers federal government employment benefits, including participation in health and life insurance, retirement, and the Thrift Savings Plan. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).

Conditions of Employment: Applicants must be U.S. citizens or eligible to work in and for the United States. Appointment to this position is contingent upon successful completion of an FBI name and fingerprint check. Employees of the Federal Public Defender are members of the judicial branch of government. They are considered at-will, are not covered by the Civil Service Reform Act, and can be terminated with or without cause. Hiring is subject to the availability of funds.

How to Apply: Qualified persons may apply by submitting a **letter of interest outlining their experience, resume, and three professional references in a single Adobe PDF format**. An email confirming receipt of the PDF will be sent to all applicants. **Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 25, 2026.** Submissions that are incomplete or fail to follow the instructions above will not be considered.

Please send your submission to attention:

Office of the Federal Defender, Middle District of Florida
Jesus DeJesus, Human Resources Assistant
FLM_HumanResources@fd.org

Only those selected for interview will receive further communication.

The FPDO provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. The decision on granting reasonable accommodations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

The FPDO is a branch of the U.S. Courts, an **Equal Opportunity Employer**, and operates under authority of the Criminal Justice Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, to provide indigent defense services in federal criminal cases and related matters in the federal courts. We provide equal opportunity for all qualified people who desire to use their skills and abilities in our workplace on behalf of our clients, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or disability.