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

Vacancy Announcement #2027-009 | **Posting: November 19, 2026**
Position Title: Legal Assistant (CHU) | **Closing Date: December 10, 2026**
Duty Station: Tampa, Florida | **Permanent Full-Time**

The Federal Public Defender for the Middle District of Florida (MDFL) is accepting applications for the position of Legal Assistant for the Capital Habeas Unit (CHU). The CHU's dedicated team of attorneys, mitigation specialists, investigators, paralegals, and legal assistants advocate for individuals who have been sentenced to death by the state of Florida and are pursuing federal habeas corpus relief. CHU attorneys regularly litigate in federal district courts, the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court, including for clients under active death warrants. The CHU legal assistant must work in our office in Tampa, Florida. However, CHU staff are permitted to work from home up to three days a week.

Duties: The CHU Legal Assistant will provide administrative and litigation support to attorneys, paralegals and mitigation specialists handling complex federal habeas corpus cases. Responsibilities will include administrative support to the CHU Chief; scheduling legal visits/calls; drafting correspondence; client communication; processing and routing mail; preparing, processing, and monitoring vouchers and expert contracts; and maintaining office databases and electronic calendars. Other duties include maintaining electronic and physical case files, assisting with organizing legal documents and records, filing, overseeing our library and office supplies, photocopying, scanning, answering incoming calls, and general court-related support.

Qualifications:
Education and Experience - A high school diploma. A minimum of three years of administrative experience, at least one year of which was providing administrative support in a law office, legal organization, court, or other legal setting. A bachelor's degree, or post-secondary education coursework may be substituted for some experience.
Confidentiality and Professionalism - Demonstrated ability to exercise sound judgment, maintain strict confidentiality, and handle sensitive and privileged information with discretion.
Computer Proficiency - A strong command of Microsoft Office applications (particularly Word, Outlook, Excell and Teams) and Adobe PDF management software. The ability to learn and use federal and state electronic filing systems and court databases (e.g., PACER/ECF), case management and legal databases, and document-indexing software.
Communication Skills - Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to communicate professionally with attorneys, clients, courts, investigators, experts, correctional personnel and other individuals involved in the litigation.
Organizational Skills - Exceptional attention to detail and the ability to prioritize assignments, manage competing deadlines, maintain accurate records, and work independently. Ability to analyze, interpret and apply organizational policies and procedures to ensure compliance with applicable requirements.
Dependability - Demonstrated reliability, initiative, flexibility and the ability to work effectively under pressure in a dead-line driven environment.
Teamwork - Ability to work collaboratively with attorneys, paralegals, investigators, mitigation specialists and other members of a multidisciplinary team. A reliable vehicle and a valid driver's license

are required, as some in-state travel may be necessary. Ability to work long hours, weekends and holidays as needed (particularly when our client is under a death warrant).

Selection Criteria: The successful applicant will possess excellent communication and interpersonal skills and will be self-motivated and capable of working in a high-demand, high-volume law office. The successful candidate will also have strong organizational and time-management skills, a demonstrated work history of dependability and responsibility, and the ability to be a team player. Experience in the criminal legal system is a plus. We will expect the successful applicant to demonstrate professionalism, maturity, and sensitivity when working with individuals facing execution, their families, and others involved in capital post-conviction litigation.

Salary and Benefits: The starting salary for a Legal Assistant falls within a range of **$45,409 to $72,644 per annum for Fiscal Year 2027**. The salary of the successful applicant will be commensurate with the person's qualifications and experience. This is a full-time position with federal government employment benefits, including 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"** and can be terminated with or without cause. Employees are not covered by the Civil Service Reform Act.

How to Apply: Qualified persons may apply by submitting **a letter of interest, resume and three professional references in a single Adobe PDF format**. **Preference will be given to applications received by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 10, 2026.** An email confirming receipt of the required PDF will be sent to all applicants. Submissions that are incomplete or fail to follow the instructions above will not be considered.

Please send your submission to the attention:
Office of the Federal Public 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 accommodation 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.