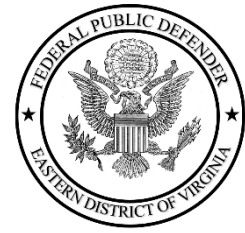


POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT 26-07

Assistant Federal Public Defender (AFPD) | Norfolk

Office of the Federal Public Defender

Eastern District of Virginia



The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Eastern District of Virginia is accepting applications for an Assistant Federal Public Defender (AFPD) position in our Norfolk office. Pursuant to the Criminal Justice Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, our office provides legal representation to indigent defendants in federal criminal cases and related matters.

AFPDs represent clients in federal court at every stage of the federal criminal process, prepare written submissions, work collaboratively with other attorneys and staff, conduct client interviews and direct defense investigation in the representation of indigent federal criminal defendants in the Norfolk and Newport News divisions of the Eastern District of Virginia. This position may require work on holidays, evenings, and weekends, as the nature of assigned cases require. This position may require work outside normal business hours, including evenings, weekends, and overnight travel, as case needs require.

Requirements: A successful applicant must be an attorney who demonstrates strong oral communication, research, and writing abilities and has experience in criminal law, including familiarity with federal sentencing guidelines. Applicants must have a reputation for personal and professional integrity, as well as a demonstrated commitment to indigent criminal defense and possess the ability to communicate effectively with clients, colleagues, and court personnel. Applicants must be licensed by and have good standing before the highest court of any state, the District of Columbia, or the Supreme Court of the United States. Applicants must also be authorized to work in the United States.

The physical demands of the 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. The AFPD will spend most of their time in an office environment consistent with the telework policy. The individual must occasionally lift and/or move up to 25 pounds. Travel within the state will be necessary and a valid driver's license is required.

Starting Salary and Benefits: Starting salary will be commensurate with the experience and qualifications of the applicant, within a range from \$77,889 – \$197,100 per annum. The position offers federal employment benefits that include, in part, paid vacation, paid sick time, paid holidays, health insurance, life insurance, retirement plan and participation in the Thrift Savings Plan (401k). 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.

How to Apply: To be considered for this position, email a **single PDF** containing a completed AO78 Judicial Branch Application, cover letter, resume, and a writing sample that is approximately 10 pages or less and contains legal analysis to FPDedva_hiring@fd.org. This position will remain open until filled with preference given to those who apply by July 31, 2026. You must include the job announcement number (26-07) in the subject line. For required documents or additional information, visit the Employment section of <https://vae.fd.org>. Only those selected for an interview will be contacted; please do not contact the office.

This position is “at-will” employment in the excepted service and does not carry the tenure rights of a competitive civil service position. The final candidate will undergo an FBI background check and employment is conditional upon its completion. Further background investigation may be required. This position is subject to the availability of funds and is open until filled. All responses will remain confidential. More than one position may be filled with this ad. Applicants under Vacancy No. 2026-03 will be considered under this vacancy and do not need to reapply. Incomplete applications, or those not adhering to the application instructions will not be considered.

The Federal Public Defender is an equal-opportunity employer.

Working for the FPD & Living in Coastal Virginia

At the Office of the Federal Public Defender, we are excited to be hiring two new attorneys to join our team in Norfolk, Virginia. The formal job announcement (attached) explains the positions. But we also want to share with you a bit about our office and our home in Coastal Virginia.

Our Office & Mission

Two new AFPDs will join our team of nine attorneys, two investigators, a mitigation specialist, two paralegals, a case manager, and a branch administrator in the Norfolk Office.

Our goal is simple: we provide clients with legal services of the highest quality. How we accomplish that goal depends on the needs of the case. AFPDs may work on large teams with multiple colleagues and outside experts; or they may work a case mostly solo with informal collaboration as needed. Most AFPDs focus exclusively on trial-level work. But, at your option, you can also litigate cases on appeal in the Fourth Circuit. Although misdemeanors and supervised release violations will be part of your caseload, most of your time will be spent representing folks facing felony charges. Written advocacy is a critical part of our work. If you don't enjoy digging in on a complex research project, this may not be the place for you.



Limited experience? Don't let that stop you! Unlike many Defender offices, we hired our last AFPD straight out of a federal clerkship. If you have strong academic credentials and commitment to the mission, join us now – we'll coach you up!

Our newly renovated office space in downtown Norfolk boasts private offices with large windows for natural light and multiple group-work spaces for collaboration and high-tech conference rooms. We meet regularly to strategize over lunch. We discuss cases and other developments at our case every other week consultation meetings. The office supports training and professional development by hosting our own events as well as sending our team members to conferences around the country.

We value diversity, creativity, and compassion. This work is demanding – physically, mentally, and emotionally. We are looking for folks with the strength and passion to thrive in this challenging, high-stakes litigation environment, but who also understand the need to care for themselves and their colleagues. If you join our office, we're in this fight together.

Our docket in the Eastern District of Virginia is unique. This district has multiple military bases and other sensitive federal enclaves. That leads to our office being appointed in cases rarely charged in other parts of the country, including piracy, espionage, and many traditionally state offenses rendered federal because they allegedly occurred on federal land.

Our clients come from rural communities in Courtland, fishing towns on Virginia's Eastern Shore, and urban centers in Newport News and Norfolk. Whoever the client, whatever the charge, we stand with them to fight for them. We hope you'll join us.

Life in Coastal Virginia (CoVa)

You've never been to Coastal Virginia? You're missing out! The Coastal Virginia metro area – Norfolk, Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach – was found by TIME Magazine to be *the* top spot in the country for millennials to move.¹ In 2023-2024, "U.S. News analyzed the 150 most populous metro areas to find the best places to live.



Ocean View Fishing Pier in Norfolk, Virginia
(photo from oceanviewfishingpier.com)

To make the top of the list, a place had to have good value, be a desirable place to live, have a strong job market and a high quality of life."² Virginia Beach ranked 30th in the country, ahead of Portland, OR (36th), Washington, DC (39th), Austin, TX (40th), Richmond, VA (42nd), and Charleston, SC (53rd). The next year, Virginia Beach jumped to #8 in the country.³

When you visit, you'll see why. Home to 31 breweries,⁴ art museums,⁵ music venues,⁶ historic movie theatres⁷, hiking trails,⁸ future Baltimore Orioles,⁹ and all the water-related activities you could imagine, the area offers lots of different ways to escape and relax.



Virginia Beach oceanfront
(photo from visitvirginiabeach.com)

If you want to get out of town, Norfolk International Airport offers nonstop flights to some 40 airports around the country.¹⁰ But the Norfolk Office is a short drive from your next adventure:

- Atlantic Ocean (Va. Beach) – 20 mins
- Chesapeake Bay (Norfolk) – 20 mins
- Williamsburg, VA – 55 mins
- OBX (Kitty Hawk) – 80 mins
- Richmond, VA – 90 mins

You're also three-hours from the Appalachian Trail, Charlottesville, Raleigh, or Washington, DC.

The Norfolk FPD Office is a great place to make your next professional home and the surrounding area won't disappoint.

¹ David Johnson, *The 25 Cities Where Millennials Are Moving*, TIME (June 13, 2017), <https://tinyurl.com/bdzdza3k>; see also Simply Business Editors, *15 American Cities Where Younger Business Owners Are Thriving*, MoneyTalksNews (Jan. 3, 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/yyp6hn8h>.

² U.S. News, *Best Places to Live in the U.S. in 2023-2024*, <https://tinyurl.com/yibvk7xx>.

³ Maddie Miller, *Virginia Beach cracks top 10 on list of best U.S. cities to live in*, WTKR (May 22, 2024) <https://tinyurl.com/3tbswz7t>

⁴ Virginia.org, *Breweries & Craft Beer*, <https://tinyurl.com/5ah729mn>.

⁵ See <https://chrysler.org/>; <https://barryartmuseum.odu.edu/>; <https://thehermitagemuseum.org/>; <https://www.portsmouthartcenter.com/>.

⁶ See <https://www.thenorva.com/>; <https://www.chartwayarena.com/events>; <http://www.virginiabeachamphitheater.com/>; <https://www.pavilionconcerts.com/events>; <https://www.elevation27.com/event/>.

⁷ See <https://narocinema.com/>; <https://www.commodoretheatre.com/index.php>.

⁸ See <http://www.first-landing-state-park.org/first-landing-trails.html>; <https://elizabethrivertrail.org/>.

⁹ See <https://www.milb.com/norfolk>.

¹⁰ See <https://www.norfolkairport.com/where-we-fly/?nonstop-destinations>.