

**Position Announcement 26-12**  
**INVESTIGATOR – CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT**

Office of the Federal Public Defender  
Western District of Texas (Austin)

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**THE FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER** for the Western District of Texas is now accepting applications for the position of Investigator for the Capital Habeas Unit in Austin, Texas. The Capital Habeas Unit (CHU) represents indigent, death-sentenced Texas prisoners in federal habeas corpus proceedings in the four United States District Courts in Texas, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, and the United States Supreme Court.

**Requirements.** To qualify for the position, a person must be a high school graduate or the equivalent and must have at least three years of general experience in litigation support and/or three years specialized experience as an investigator performing progressively responsible investigative duties. *Candidates must also have:*

- comprehensive knowledge of investigative principles, practices, methods, and techniques to assist in a team approach for planning and developing litigation strategies in capital cases, including trauma-informed interviewing, sentencing, and mitigation;
- knowledge of or ability to learn legal and factual issues that recur in capital post-conviction cases;
- knowledge of or ability to learn court rules, local practices, and the practice of federal habeas corpus litigation;
- excellent oral and written communication and interpersonal skills, especially listening;
- a high level of organizational skills including the demonstrated ability to gather, maintain, and manage documents, and information for assigned cases;
- ability to obtain and verify documents and evidence, report findings, and assist attorneys in preparing for written court filings and evidentiary hearings.

Applicants must possess a valid driver's license, insurance, and own/operate a personal vehicle for business purposes (mileage is reimbursable). Significant travel is required, including night and weekend work. Above all, applicants must have a strong commitment to providing first-rate representational support to indigent, death-sentenced persons in federal proceedings. Fluency in Spanish is required. Employment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation including but not limited to an FBI fingerprint and name check.

**Duties.** The investigator plays an integral role in the development and work-up of a client's case. Related duties include forming trusting relationships with clients, locating and interviewing witnesses, serving subpoenas, photographing/videotaping crime scenes and evidence, locating and retrieving documents and other tangible evidence, talking to clients' family members, and working with experts. The investigator will use computer software for word-processing and accessing databases and graphics to assist attorneys in developing evidence for use in litigation. The investigator is expected to keep current on new developments in litigation support technology, recommend additions and modifications to current tools, and testify in court as required. The full position qualifications statement and position description is available in this office.

**Salary and Benefits.** The starting salary will be commensurate with the experience and qualifications of the applicant within a range of \$76,777 (JSP-11, Step 1) to \$129,311 (JSP-14, Step 1) per annum. The position is in the excepted service and does not have the tenure rights of the competitive Civil Service. The position does offer federal government employment benefits, including health and life insurance programs, retirement, and the Thrift Savings Plan. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).

**How to Apply.** Qualified persons may apply by sending a letter of interest addressed to Federal Public Defender Maureen Scott Franco (mentioning announcement 26-12), a résumé, 3 professional references, and representative writing sample. Send completed application in a **single PDF document named with applicant's "last name, first name-Announcement 26-12 CHU Investigator"** by email to [TXW\\_Employment@fd.org](mailto:TXW_Employment@fd.org). Electronic submissions sent directly to the Defender will not be considered. For applicants with disabilities, this organization provides reasonable accommodations, which are decided on a case-by-case basis. To request a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application or interview process, contact personnel administrator Victoria B. Longoria at (210) 981-2081. More than one position may be filled from this announcement. Position announced February 9, 2026, subject to the availability of funds; open until filled.

*The Office of the Federal Public Defender is an Equal Opportunity Employer.*