

Federal Defenders Of New York, Inc.

Vacancy Announcement Paralegal Salary: \$72,017 Application Deadline: February 2, 2026

Federal Defenders of New York (FDNY) has an opening for a Paralegal position in the Eastern District of New York (EDNY), in the Brooklyn office. More than one paralegal position may be filled from this job opening. This job is an extraordinary opportunity to gain substantive exposure to criminal law and direct service work. This position is for a term of three years, but paralegals may be able to extend their terms, if desired, depending on the needs of the office and the availability of funding.

Who are we?

FDNY is a community defender organization that provides legal representation to indigent people accused of federal crimes in the Southern and Eastern Districts of New York and in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. We are not a government agency, and our employees are not government employees. Our mission is straightforward: although we provide our services free of cost, our clients should receive the finest legal representation available at any price. We are looking for someone who is committed to equal justice and willing to fight vigorously for those accused of crimes.

About the role: primary responsibilities

As a paralegal, you will work closely and collaboratively with a defense team made up of trial attorneys, investigators, social workers and administrative staff to support clients at every stage of their federal case. Your responsibilities will include:

- Assisting with mitigation work and the collection of supporting documents.
- Reviewing evidence, organizing case materials, and preparing bail packages.
- Conducting client interviews and speaking with witnesses.
- Preparing documents for hearings and filings, as well as drafting routine correspondence.
- Communicating with clients, families, service providers, hospitals and treatment programs.

Paralegals will also attend court proceedings and visit clients at federal jails, sit at counsel table during trials and hearings, and participate in field investigations.

Who you are

Ideal candidates have an interest in and commitment to the FDNY mission. They are self-directed learners who demonstrate initiative, critical thinking and time management and organizational skills. The ability to work well both independently and in collaboration with others are important criteria. Communication skills and interpersonal sensitivity are key competencies for the job, along with a commitment to timeliness and completing the highest quality of work. Familiarity with legal terminology and practice or working one-on-one with clients are desirable but not required. Fluency in another language, especially Spanish or Arabic, is highly desirable but not required.

Minimum Qualifications

- A bachelor's degree or higher (awarded no later than June 2026)
- Basic understanding of Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- NY City area residence (at start of employment)
- Ability to regularly work 40+ hours per week, 9am – 5pm EST, including some nights and weekends (eligible for overtime pay)

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Additional Information

This position is covered by a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with 1199 SEIU. Salary and benefits are consistent with the CBA. Federal Defenders is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply, as FDNY is dedicated to promoting a work environment that supports and respects all employees and applicants without regard to race, color, gender identity, national origin, religion, or disability. Our office is committed to building a workplace that embraces different identities, voices, and worldviews—valuing equity and the richness of varied lived experiences.

Ready to join us in the fight for justice? To apply, all interested applicants must electronically submit one (1) combined PDF file to: <https://airtable.com/appGnyq6zh13uC0Pt/pagVt7W30f4yK4y7x/form> – this PDF file should contain both a one-page cover letter addressed to **Michelle Gelernt, Attorney-in-Charge**, and your resume.

Your cover letter must include:

- Your interest in public defense
- Your unique qualifications for the paralegal position.
- Any relevant experience working with court-involved or marginalized communities

To be considered, your combined PDF file should be named: **FirstName LastName—EDNY Paralegal Application Materials**. Materials not submitted in this format may not be reviewed.

The deadline for application is February 2, 2026. FDNY will not confirm the receipt of applications, and phone calls will not be accepted. Please note that only applicants selected for an interview will be contacted. Interviews may be conducted in-person or virtually. Interviews may be conducted via Zoom and/or in-person in late January. Hiring decisions will be made no later than March 2026. Employment onboarding will be scheduled based on employee availability ideally no later than June 2026. The position announcement is subject to the availability of federal funds.