



**FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
WESTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA**
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Position Announcement Trial Unit Investigator – Asheville, North Carolina

Posted: October 22, 2025.

Closing date: Applications received by November 12, 2025, will receive priority consideration. The position will remain open until filled. ***This is an authorized backfill position.***

About Us: Our mission is important: We are committed to excellence and the quest for justice of the indigent accused, focusing on our clients' needs with innovation, passion, and through dynamic advocacy.



This position is located in Asheville, North Carolina, a flourishing mountain city with an eclectic downtown, hundreds of studios and art galleries, a world-class culinary culture, a thriving live music scene, and awe-inspiring scenery and outdoor activities. The Asheville office of the Federal Public Defender is a branch office that serves the 18 furthest Western Counties of North Carolina south to the Tennessee and Georgia borders. Half of the great Smoky Mountains National Park, approximately 800 square miles, is in the Asheville Division of the Western District of North Carolina as well as hundreds of the 469 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Pisgah and Nantahala Forest cover over one million acres of the Western District. The largest Native American Community in the eastern half of the United States, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, is in the Asheville Division.

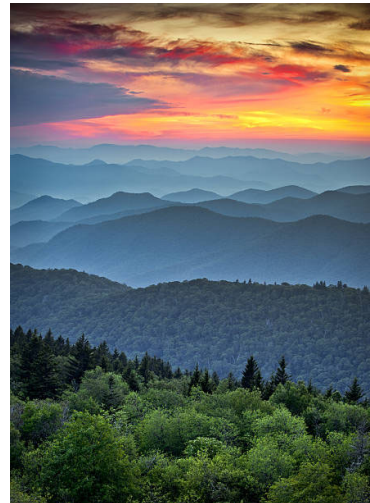
Job Description: Because of the unique territorial makeup, the Asheville branch office is routinely assigned to major criminal cases occurring in federal territorial jurisdiction. These cases are fact investigation intensive and require substantial field work involving witness interviews and crime scene investigation in a large geographic area. The investigator plays an integral role in the development of our clients' cases and assists in all aspects of our cases including sentencing mitigation. The ideal applicant should have excellent interpersonal and communications skills, as the position requires frequent interactions with people from all backgrounds, many of whom have substance abuse and mental health issues. An investigator should be able to both respond to assignments but also become invested in the case and be proactive in independently providing feedback and suggestions on other leads or issues to pursue. The Asheville Investigator may also be called upon to provide support for the Charlotte office.

The investigator performs many duties and responsibilities, including:

- Gathering medical, mental health, education, work, and court records on a regular basis;
- Locating, viewing, and retrieving tangible evidence; photographing crime scenes and evidence; maintaining and organizing investigative materials;

- Locating witnesses; conducting open-ended interviews with sources to develop facts, other leads and information; and serving subpoenas;
- Locating and working with experts;
- Reviewing and organizing discovery; assisting the attorneys with developing investigative plans or leads; typing detailed, comprehensive reports on discovery review and investigative actions;
- Utilizing computer applications, including cell phone forensics, records databases, i.e. DMV, ACIS, Accurint, and social media applications; and
- Assisting the attorneys at hearings and trials by evaluating testimony and coordinating witnesses; testifying in court regarding their investigative actions and/or witness interviews.
- Investigating the client's background for medical, psychological, criminal and other areas that may justify a departure from applicable sentencing guidelines. When appropriate, researching and developing possible alternative sentencing plans.

Requirements: Applicants must be high school graduate or the equivalent and must have a minimum of six years of related investigative experience (three years of general and three years of specialized). Education above high school level in accredited institutions may be substituted for general experience. Commitment to the indigent and personal integrity are essential. Experience working as a criminal defense investigator with a Public Defender office or similar organization is preferred. Comprehensive knowledge of fact and mitigation investigation principles, methods, and techniques are imperative, as is the ability to identify and evaluate pertinent facts. The applicant should possess the ability to write clearly and present complex and interrelated concepts and ideas. Must have computer skills and social media literacy, familiarity with Windows operating systems, and proficiency with Microsoft Office applications and Adobe Acrobat. Familiarity with digital forensic review tools such as Cellebrite is preferred. The applicant selected for this position must demonstrate a willingness to become proficient with new computer software. Applicants with law enforcement experience and/or experience working with attorneys in preparing cases for litigation, including identifying, locating and interviewing witnesses are encouraged to apply. A working knowledge of the criminal justice system is strongly preferred. The position requires frequent travel and occasional work outside of business hours, including some weekends and holidays.



Salary and Benefits: This is an “Excepted Appointment” full-time position with federal benefits and salary commensurate with experience and qualifications within the range of JSP-11, Step 1 to JSP-14, Step 1, currently yielding a starting salary of \$73,939 - \$124,531. Among the many benefits are the Federal Employees Retirement System, the Thrift Savings Plan (401k), paid annual and sick leave, 11 paid federal holidays, and health, life, disability, dental, and vision insurance. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).

Conditions of Employment: The employee will be located in the Asheville office full-time, less a reasonable telework schedule. All application information is subject to verification. Applicants must be United States citizens or eligible to work in the United States. Applicants must have a valid driver’s license, vehicle, and motor vehicle liability insurance. Employment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation, including an FBI name and fingerprint check.

A prior criminal conviction is not necessarily disqualifying. Employees are members of the judicial branch and considered “at will” employees.

How to Apply. Qualified persons should submit a letter of interest and résumé **in .pdf format** to: WDNCapplication@fd.org Subject: Investigator – Asheville.

We recognize that we cannot serve the distinct needs of our clients without assembling a diverse team of dedicated professionals who work and advocate collaboratively on their behalf. We welcome applicants of any race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, disability, age, and status. We are committed to ensuring an inclusive and equitable workplace. Click [here](#) for more information about our office.

We also welcome requests for accommodation from applicants with disabilities. Please submit any such requests to WDNCapplication@fd.org.

The Federal Public Defender is an Equal Opportunity Employer