

FEDERAL DEFENDERS OF SAN DIEGO, INC.

THE COMMUNITY DEFENDER ORGANIZATION FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Position: Investigator

Location: San Diego, CA

Application Deadline: February 27, 2026

Posted: February 3, 2026

Office Website: www.fdsdi.com

Salary Range: 11/1 \$85,307 to 14/10 \$186,785

Federal Defenders of San Diego, Inc. (FSDSI) is seeking qualified candidates for one or more full-time Investigator positions to join our defense team. FSDSI is the Community Defender Organization for the Southern District of California, serving San Diego and Imperial Counties, and operates under the authority of 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(g)(2)(B) to provide federal criminal defense services by court appointment to individuals who are unable to afford counsel.

Investigators play a critical role in supporting attorneys by conducting thorough investigations in federal criminal cases, including immigration-related offenses, drug offenses, fraud, bank robbery, forgery, and internet-related crimes. This position requires initiative, sound judgment, discretion, and the ability to analyze complex information while working collaboratively in a fast-paced legal environment.

Investigators regularly engage with clients, witnesses, experts, law enforcement, and court personnel, and are responsible for developing factual records that support effective defense representation. This role requires domestic and international travel, including occasional overnight travel, and may include court testimony as part of investigative duties.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Under the supervision of the Chief Investigator, the Investigator will:

- Serve as a critical member of the defense team by conducting thorough and independent investigations in support of federal criminal defense cases.
- Review, analyze, and evaluate discovery materials, facts, and evidence to identify relevant information and investigative leads.
- Locate, interview, and gather information from witnesses, alleged victims, experts, and law enforcement personnel.
- Locate, obtain, and analyze records and documentary evidence from governmental and private sources.
- Prepare clear, detailed, and comprehensive written reports, including documentation of witness interviews, investigative findings, and case analysis.
- Locate, retrieve, and maintain tangible evidence and personal property in accordance with established procedures.
- Prepare and serve subpoenas and assist with evidence and records collection.
- Visit and process crime scenes as needed, including photographing and documenting physical evidence.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with attorneys, courts, law enforcement agencies, and other governmental and private organizations.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Qualifications:

- A high school diploma or equivalent is required.
- A minimum of three years of investigative or comparable specialized experience and three years of general work experience. Education above the high school level in an accredited institution may substitute for general experience.
- Strong organizational skills and broad familiarity with computer programs and investigative technology.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to clearly and effectively convey information.
- Ability to speak, read, and write Spanish fluently.
- Ability to work flexible hours, including evenings and weekends as required.
- Valid California driver's license and access to an insured vehicle.
- Successful completion of a background investigation.

Preferred Qualifications:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.
- Experience conducting investigative interviews with witnesses, alleged victims, experts, or law enforcement personnel.
- Experience locating and gathering records, documents, and other investigative materials.
- Experience preparing clear, comprehensive written reports and investigative work product.
- Demonstrated ability to establish rapport and maintain effective working relationships with individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Salary and Benefits:

Salary will be commensurate with experience. The starting salary range is: JSP 11/1 (\$85,307) to JSP 14/10 (\$186,785). The position does include employee benefits including health and life insurance as well as a 401k plan. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit). This position is at will and is subject to the availability of funds. Employment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation. This position offers one day of telework per pay period. Full-time telework is not available.

Accessibility:

We are committed to an inclusive and accessible application process. If you need an accommodation due to a disability during any stage of the application or interview process, please contact our Personnel Administrator at Kym_Bryant@fd.org. If hired, we are dedicated to providing reasonable accommodations to support your success and ensure equal access to opportunities in the workplace.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:

Our office values diversity, is committed to equity and inclusion, and aspires to create a culture of mutual respect, collaboration, openness, and humility that honors the people we represent. We believe representation is better when members of the defense team have diverse backgrounds and experiences. In our hiring, we seek individuals who share this belief and commitment. We embrace the unique contributions our employees can bring to the office because of their backgrounds, social identities, and lived experiences.

How to Apply:

Interested applicants are invited to apply by submitting a single pdf document that includes a cover letter, resume, and three references via email to the attention of:

Sherry O’Sullivan, Chief Investigator
[hiring@fdsdi.com](mailto: hiring@fdsdi.com)
Subject: Investigator Position – San Diego

Hiring Timeline:

We value transparency in our hiring process and want applicants to know what to expect. Below are the key dates:

- **Application Deadline:** February 27, 2026 (priority consideration given to applications received by this date; applications will remain open until filled)
- **Interviews:** Conducted on a rolling basis
- **Anticipated Start Date:** On or around March 31, 2026 (tentative)