



MIDDLE DISTRICT of ALABAMA

## FEDERAL DEFENDER PROGRAM, INC.

*Protecting Rights • Pursuing Justice*

**CECILIA VACA**  
**FEDERAL DEFENDER**

### **POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT** **Investigator– Capital Habeas Unit**

The Middle District of Alabama Federal Defender Program, Inc., in Montgomery, Alabama, is accepting applications for a full-time Investigator in the Capital Habeas Unit ("CHU"). The CHU represents people under state-imposed sentences of death in federal habeas corpus proceedings. Our office also provides legal representation to indigent persons in federal criminal cases and collateral challenges.

CHU Investigators are integral members of multidisciplinary case teams, working alongside attorneys, paralegals, and experts to conduct comprehensive fact and mitigation investigations in complex, post-conviction capital cases. This role requires resourcefulness, initiative, and a commitment to client-centered advocacy. Investigators locate and interview witnesses, experts, and family members; develop social histories and case narratives; visit crime scenes; gather and analyze records; and develop mitigation themes. Investigators also serve subpoenas, testify in court, and assist with preparation for hearings and other court proceedings. The role requires individuals who are comfortable working independently in the field while also collaborating closely with a team to develop thorough, creative, and effective case strategies.

This program values diversity and encourages applicants of any age, gender, race, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, primary language, religion, neurodiversity, and persons with a disability.

#### **Primary duties include:**

- Building and maintaining productive, respectful working relationships with incarcerated clients and their support systems, including through written correspondence, telephone and video calls, and in-person visits.
- Conducting an ongoing, exhaustive, and independent fact and mitigation investigation.
- Locate, interview, and evaluate witnesses, including family members, past and present law enforcement personnel, and others with knowledge of the case or client.
- Gather, organize, and analyze records relevant to the client and case; review and analyze case documentation and discovery.
- Preparing timely and comprehensive written reports and spreadsheets.

- Using appropriate computer software and databases to organize investigative information.
- Working collaboratively as a member of the case team.

**Requirements and qualifications for this position include:**

- Ability to establish rapport and maintain productive, professional relationships with incarcerated clients, including individuals who have experienced significant trauma.
- Demonstrated interest in the criminal legal system, post-conviction, and capital defense.
- Commitment to obtaining justice for indigent persons.
- Prior investigative experience is highly desirable.
- Experience working with justice-involved individuals, including individuals with mental health needs or substance use issues, is highly desirable.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Ability to work effectively and collaboratively as a member of a case team, as well as independently.
- Applicants must have a driver's license, access to a car, and appropriate motor vehicle insurance. This position requires extensive travel, including overnight and out of state.

A degree in Social Work, Criminal Justice, Journalism, or other related fields is desirable. While we value experience in criminal investigation or information gathering, **education or varied prior experience** (including non-legal fields) may be substituted.

Salary depends on experience. This office provides excellent benefits, including flex time, the ability to work remotely up to two days per week, health insurance with supplemental GAP coverage for most deductibles, and generous contributions to a 401(k).

**To apply:**

To apply for this position, email a letter describing your interest in the position including your experience with investigative or criminal case work and your particular interest in death penalty representation. Applicants are encouraged to draw on relevant professional or lived experiences that inform their interest in this work. Please write your cover letter in your own words and do not use AI writing tools.

Please submit your cover letter and resume together as a **single PDF document** to [ALM\\_Employment@fd.org](mailto:ALM_Employment@fd.org).

This program is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We provide equal opportunity for all qualified people who desire to use their skills and abilities in our workplace on behalf of our clients, regardless of age, gender-identity, race, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. This program

is committed to a diverse staff that reflects the community we serve.