

**FEDERAL COMMUNITY DEFENDER OFFICE
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

DEFENDER ASSOCIATION OF PHILADELPHIA
FEDERAL COURT DIVISION
CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT

LISA EVANS LEWIS
Chief Federal Defender

The Curtis - Suite 545 West
601 Walnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Phone: 215.928.0520
Fax: 215.928.0826

JENNIFER CHICCARINO
First Assistant

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT

PARALEGAL

At least one position

Posting Date: September 24, 2026

Closing Date: Until Filled

The Federal Community Defender Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania has an opening in its Capital Habeas Unit (CHU) for one or more Paralegals. The CHU represents indigent, death-sentenced prisoners in federal habeas corpus proceedings throughout the United States in all stages of litigation. Our office is located in Philadelphia's vibrant Center City district, in the historic Curtis building, close to the federal courthouse and across from Independence Mall, the Liberty Bell, and Washington Square Park.

The Paralegal is an integral member of the Capital Habeas Unit. Core duties include meeting with clients; gathering, reviewing, summarizing, organizing, and indexing the numerous electronic and paper documents comprising the investigative files and court records relevant for our work; maintaining electronic databases of those case records; assisting with the preparation of case-related forms, memoranda, and appendices; preparing exhibits for evidentiary hearings; and supporting the presentation of evidence during evidentiary hearings. Additional duties may include facilitating client contact and correspondence and traveling to various other jurisdictions in which we practice for record collection and client meetings.

Candidates with a minimum of three years of experience—preferably in criminal practice, federal court practice, or document-intensive litigation—are strongly preferred. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university or relevant knowledge and skills may substitute for experience. Candidates must have strong oral and written communication skills and strong interpersonal skills. Candidates must be able to work well independently and on teams, exercise mature judgment, meet deadlines, work on multiple projects simultaneously, and work well with clients, their families, and others. Candidates should possess a demonstrated commitment to social justice and/or indigent defense. Advanced proficiency in Microsoft Word, Microsoft Outlook, and Microsoft Excel is required. Experience with computer-assisted research is desired.

While performing the duties of this job, the Paralegal must occasionally lift and/or move up to twenty-five pounds. Travel to court locations and detention facilities may be required. Candidates must possess a valid driver's license. Fluency (oral and written) in the Spanish language is helpful but not required.

Interested applicants should apply at [Federal Community Defender Careers](#). Candidates' application must include a cover letter, resume, writing sample and three references. Candidates will be interviewed on an ongoing basis until the position is filled. **Applications received by Thursday, October 22, 2026, will be given priority consideration.** Salary will be based upon experience consistent with federal guidelines and regulations. Kindly note that the filling of this position is subject to the funding restrictions and approval of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts.

The Federal Community Defender Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania is an equal opportunity employer. We are dedicated to promoting a professional work environment that supports and respects all employees and applicants without regard to race, color, gender identity, national origin, religion, or disability. All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply.