



Office of the
FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
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Federal Public Defender

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CHU Chief

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

RESEARCH & WRITING SPECIALIST – CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT

Posted: November 6, 2025

Closing Date: Applications accepted until December 5, 2025, and will be considered on a rolling basis.

The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Florida is accepting applications for a Research & Writing Specialist position in the Capital Habeas Unit, located in Tallahassee, Florida. The CHU represents indigent, death-sentenced prisoners in federal habeas corpus proceedings.

About Us: Our office is based in [Tallahassee](#), the capital of Florida, and home to the Florida State University Seminoles and the Florida A&M University Rattlers. The Capital City has something for everyone, whether it be the annual North Florida Fair, nature trails, breweries, state parks, museums, college football, and more. We're home to two of the largest literary and Shakespeare festivals in the south, as well as the historic [Railroad Square District](#), a WWII-era industrial warehouse park turned art district. Railroad Square Art District hosts the First Friday Monthly Festival, an opportunity for Tallahasseeans to explore art galleries, thrift, vintage, book and antique stores, and indulge in live music and food. You'll find that the Capital City affords a small town feel within a vibrant city.



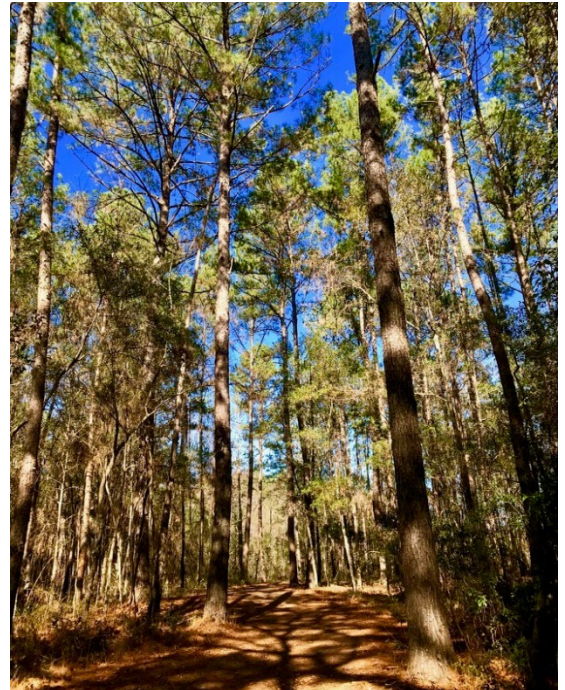
The Capital City is a short drive away from several beaches including St. George Island, which was recently awarded [“Best Beach in the U.S.”](#), St. Andrews State Park, Shell Island Beach, Bald Point State Park, and St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. Our unique location in the Florida Panhandle allows Tallahasseeans access to various gems including seafood festivals, holiday festivals, pumpkin patches, theme parks, natural springs, and ghost tours. We are less than a four-hour drive south to Universal Studios and Disney World, and only a four-hour drive north to Atlanta. From college students, to working twenty-somethings, to settled families, Tallahassee is a place where anyone can find community.

CHU Values: We value serving our clients through skilled collaboration, compassionate advocacy, and creativity. We value having a staff that reflects the community we are serving and encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply. We value working with resiliency, initiative, and enthusiasm. 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.

Job Description: CHU Attorneys provide advanced legal research, writing, and case development advocacy. The duties of our attorneys include analyzing the latest developments in habeas corpus and criminal law and applying this knowledge to develop case strategies; drafting petitions, motions, memoranda of law, and appellate briefs; analyzing transcripts and other records; maintaining client contact; assisting with case investigation by digesting records and interviewing witnesses; and working with expert witnesses.

Requirements: Applicants must be a United States citizen or eligible to work in the United States. Applicants must possess excellent legal research and writing skills and a strong work ethic. Bar admission and good standing in a state bar, including the District of Columbia, are required. The willingness to engage in overnight travel and work long and non-traditional hours is required, as is a valid driver's license. While preference will be given to applicants with experience in one of the following areas: capital litigation, federal habeas corpus litigation, state postconviction proceedings, appellate practice and procedure, criminal defense, or complex federal civil or criminal litigation, our office will consider applications from 2025 graduates who have passed a Bar examination. A background in mental health and/or social work is also helpful but not required. Maturity, good judgment, and the ability to treat others with respect in times of high stress are necessary for this position. Empathy and dedication to the cause of our clients are essential traits.



Salary and Benefits: Salary is commensurate with experience and qualifications. This position comes with federal employee benefits, including health and life insurance and the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) pension, Social Security, and a Thrift Savings Plan. We observe Federal holidays and provide generous annual and personal leave. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).

Application Process: To apply for a Research & Writing Specialist position, applicants should email a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and three references **in .pdf format** to FLN_Resumes@fd.org, and a copy to john_abatecola@fd.org. Please address the cover letter to Linda McDermott, CHU Chief. The email subject should be as follows: CHU Research & Writing Specialist Application.

Defender Services has provided an exception to the current hiring freeze for this position. Employment is conditioned upon a favorable background check.

The Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Florida is an equal opportunity employer.