

FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
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Vacancy Announcement

Position: Capital Habeas Paralegal

Location: Los Angeles, CA

Deadline: March 22, 2026

The Federal Public Defender's Office for the Central District of California is accepting applications for a full-time paralegal position in its Capital Habeas Unit (CHU) stationed in Los Angeles, California. The CHU advocates for the constitutional rights and inherent dignity of indigent persons sentenced to death. We provide the highest quality representation in post-conviction proceedings through diversity of experience, collaborative and thorough case development, focused litigation strategies, and skilled courtroom advocacy.

Job Duties: CHU paralegals provide a full range of paralegal assistance to CHU attorneys on death penalty and non-death penalty habeas cases. General areas of responsibility include: managing high volume cases by organizing case files using various databases; identifying important documents and assisting in developing factual support for claims; cite checking; summarizing legal research and procedural history of cases; assisting attorneys with materials for experts; drafting and editing expert declarations; preparing, organizing, and tracking discovery requests; assisting with depositions and hearings; preparing documents for filing and service; and traveling to various courts and law enforcement agencies to scan, copy and reproduce records and exhibits.

Requirements: Applicants must have an undergraduate degree and five or more years of paralegal experience in complex civil or criminal litigation under the direct supervision of attorneys. A paralegal certificate from an ABA approved program is preferred but not required.

Proficiency with Office 365 applications (Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Teams, OneDrive), and Adobe Acrobat. Preference will be given to applicants with experience legal document management databases used to manage and review electronically stored information (ESI) (e.g., CaseMap, Summation); editing and ingesting load files, tagging, and exporting content; presenting digital evidence in the courtroom using Trial Director; and editing/converting audio and video files, and online research databases (e.g., Westlaw, LexisNexis). Applicant must have a solid

understanding of California civil litigation (state and federal rules). The ability to lift and move boxes and willing to travel to various locations to complete required tasks.

Varying hours including nights, weekends, and holidays may be required. A background investigation is required as a condition of employment. In line with current federal appropriations law, applicants must be United States citizens or permanent residents seeking citizenship as described here: <https://www.uscourts.gov/careers/search-judiciary-jobs/citizenship-requirements-employment-judiciary>.

Selection Criteria: Candidates must possess a commitment to the defense of individuals convicted of a crime and sentenced to death; have excellent oral and written communication skills; have strong legal research and writing skills; have strong organizational and analytical skills; be able to work independently, be flexible, and take initiative; and work well in teams.

Salary/Benefits: This is a full-time, at-will position. Salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience and is subject to direct deposit. Benefits include health and life insurance, retirement, and a Thrift Savings Plan. After successful completion of a probationary period, eligible employees may elect to telework up to two days per week, subject to certain conditions. For more information on benefits, see <http://www.uscourts.gov/careers/benefits>.

How to Apply: Apply by submitting a letter of interest, résumé, a representative writing sample, and three references through our website at <https://fpdcdca.org/careers/current-openings/>. We will accept applications until March 22, 2026, or until filled. Interviews will occur on a rolling basis and the open position may be filled before that date. Priority will be given to early applicants. The Federal Public Defender's Office may fill current and future positions from this vacancy announcement. Please, no phone calls.

The Federal Public Defender's Office for the Central District of California is committed to equal opportunity in the workplace. All applicants, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or age, are encouraged to apply.