

FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
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Vacancy Announcement

Position: Capital Habeas Paralegal
Location: Los Angeles, CA
Deadline: October 23, 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 attorneys in all federal litigation related to post conviction, capital and noncapital cases. CHU paralegals must be available to work during regular business hours, and when necessary, during holidays, evenings and weekends. General areas of responsibility are noted below.

Paralegal Job Duties	Software & Technical Responsibilities
• Assist attorneys in case preparation for filings, depositions and hearings • Maintain high volume cases using various databases and programs • Identify documents to support and develop investigation plans and legal claims • Prepare, organize, and track discovery requests and responses for compliance • Prepare expert productions, including reports/declarations	• Use databases and programs to review ESI and present to case teams • Use forensic tools to review, extract and preserve data • Edit and ingest load files, tag, and export content • Use digital presentation tools in the courtroom • Experience with online databases (e.g., PACER, State Court databases, Westlaw, LexisNexis)

Paralegal Job Duties	Software & Technical Responsibilities
• Cite check briefs, summarize legal research and procedural history of cases • Create, maintain, and update case databases, chronologies, and witness files • Have a solid understanding of state and federal court rules • Travel to all courts and agencies to reproduce records	• Proficiency with Office 365 applications (Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Teams, OneDrive), Adobe Acrobat, and dtSearch

Requirements: All applicants must have a bachelor's degree and five (5) 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. Preference will be given to applicants with experience in legal document management databases used to manage and review electronically stored information (ESI). Applicants must have the ability to lift and move boxes and be willing to travel to various locations to complete required tasks.

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, 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 October 23, 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.