

FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
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Collaborative Courts Chief

Vacancy Announcement

Position: Social Worker

Location: Los Angeles, Riverside, or Santa Ana, CA

Deadline: March 22, 2026

The Federal Public Defender's Office for the Central District of California is accepting applications for a full-time social worker position. The social worker will be stationed in Los Angeles, Riverside, or Santa Ana, but travel across the district may be required. The Federal Public Defender's Office is committed to the client-centered pursuit of justice by aggressively advocating for the constitutional rights and inherent dignity of indigent individuals who are accused or convicted of crimes.

Job Duties: Social workers provide intensive clinical case management services and advocacy for clients at all stages of their criminal case. Core job duties include preparing clinical needs assessments, mitigation materials and reports, biopsychosocial evaluations, and re-entry plans; providing client-centered support, crisis intervention, and case management assistance; meeting with clients, including with those who are incarcerated; working with mental health experts, community treatment providers, the Federal Bureau of Prisons and other local detention facilities, pretrial services and probation officers, the court, and prosecutors; collaborating with attorneys and other staff regarding client needs, including on an after-hours and emergency basis; supervising interns/externs; participating in our Collaborative Courts (CASA and STAR).

Requirements: All applicants must have an MSW and at least 2 years of post-masters experience. Experience with forensic social work, mental health and addiction treatment, trauma, and social service systems is a plus. The ability to speak, read, and write in Spanish is preferred, but not required. This position may require extensive travel. Applicants must possess a valid driver's license. This is an in-office position. Telework is not available.

Varying hours including nights, weekends, and holidays may be required. A background investigation is required as a condition of employment. In line with current 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 have a demonstrated commitment to forensic social work or social justice in the criminal justice system; must have superior oral and written communication and advocacy skills; must be able to develop a rapport with people of different backgrounds; and can work well independently and in teams. A background investigation is required as a condition of employment.

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. For more information on benefits, see <http://www.uscourts.gov/careers/benefits>.

How to Apply: Apply by submitting a letter of interest, résumé, a 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 an Equal Opportunity Employer. All applicants, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or age, are encouraged to apply.