

FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
Western District of Washington

Rene L. Valladares
Interim Federal Defender

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POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT
Assistant Federal Public Defender – Seattle and Tacoma, Washington

Position No. 26-01

Announced: February 9, 2026

Closes: Open until filled. Priority given to applications received by March 9, 2026

The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Washington (FPD) is accepting applications for full-time Assistant Federal Public Defenders (AFPDs) for our Seattle and Tacoma offices. The FPD is dedicated to providing zealous, client-centered advocacy with a team approach. We are looking for AFPDs with a demonstrated commitment to the same.

Responsibilities: AFPDs advocate for clients charged with federal criminal offenses or involved in habeas proceedings in the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington and the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. AFPD caseloads depend upon the needs of the office. AFPDs should be willing to work on a range of cases, from misdemeanors to complex felonies to immigration habeas petitions. AFPDs prepare pleadings, briefs, and motions; appear on behalf of clients in court hearings; develop litigation strategies; meet with clients, experts, witnesses, and family members; and perform other duties as assigned. AFPDs advocate for their clients in collaboration with teams of investigators, paralegals, social workers, and others. This position requires some travel throughout our district and occasional out-of-district travel. Lawyers in the Seattle office may be assigned to cases filed in the Tacoma courthouse and vice versa.

Selection Criteria: A successful applicant will demonstrate a commitment to advocacy on behalf of the underserved, marginalized, and poor; a reputation for integrity; and the ability to work well as part of a team. Applicants must possess at least three years of state or federal criminal trial, or similar litigation, experience. Applicants should have a familiarity with litigation-related technology and a willingness to learn programs as needed. They must be able to manage a full caseload and travel if necessary. Spanish fluency is a plus.

Applicants must be law-school graduates, licensed attorneys in good standing with a federal or state bar, and eligible for admission to the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Applicants must meet the [employment eligibility requirements](#) of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. As a condition of employment, candidates must be fingerprinted and successfully complete a background check. A prior criminal conviction is not necessarily disqualifying.

Salary & Benefits: This position has a salary range of \$86,261 to \$197,100. The salary will be based on professional attorney experience. Benefits include health and life insurance as well as 11 paid federal holidays, 13 days of paid sick leave, and 13 days of paid vacation leave annually. (The rate of paid vacation leave increases with years of service.) The position is eligible for the [Federal Employees Retirement System \(FERS\)](#), including the [Thrift Savings Plan \(TSP\)](#), which

matches up to 5% of employee contributions. Salary is paid biweekly and only by direct deposit. Partial telework is available for this position.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion: Our office values diversity, is committed to equity and inclusion, and aspires to create a culture of mutual respect, collaboration, openness, and humility that honors the people we represent. We embrace the unique contributions our employees can bring to the FPD because of their backgrounds, social identities, and lived experiences. We believe representation is better when members of the defense team have diverse backgrounds and experiences. We seek colleagues who share this belief and commitment. We are interested in applicants' talent, intelligence, dedication, persistence, and desire to see that all people are treated fairly and respectfully—no matter the allegation or circumstance.

The FPD seeks applications from a diverse group of qualified individuals in terms of race, ethnicity, nation of origin, culture, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual identity, education, opinions, age, languages spoken, veteran status, disability, religion, and socio-economic circumstance. We especially encourage applications from people who have been affected by the criminal legal system and people from underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.

How to Apply: Qualified persons may apply by emailing a letter of interest, résumé, and two professional references (including names, email addresses, and telephone numbers) as a single PDF document to wawpersonnel@fd.org. Please include the position title “AFPD” in the email subject line.

Please indicate if you are interested in the Seattle position, the Tacoma position, or both. Only applicants granted interviews will be contacted. Initial interviews may be conducted in person or via video conference. No telephone inquiries please.

This position is subject to available funds.