

**FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
Western District of Washington**

*Rene L. Valladares
Interim Federal Defender*

*Corey Endo
First Assistant Defender*

**POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT
Legal Assistant – Tacoma, Washington**

Position No: 26-04

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 a full-time legal assistant for our Tacoma office. The FPD represents people charged with federal crimes who cannot afford to hire an attorney or are entitled to one. The Court appoints our attorneys to represent accused persons before charges are filed, upon arrest, for the appeals process, and through federal habeas corpus review. Legal assistant candidates should have interest or experience in criminal defense work and the desire to advocate for people accused of committing crimes even when the evidence against them appears strong. We provide a vigorous defense at trial and, if our clients are convicted, at sentencing and on appeal. We advocate for humane sentences by developing mitigation evidence to present judges with full views of our clients and their lives, not merely their charges.

The legal assistant should have initiative, resourcefulness, creativity, compassion, and a desire to stand up for those with few resources. This position is supervised by the Supervisory Administrative Assistant.

Responsibilities:

- Provide office support and front-desk duties including answering phone calls and greeting clients/visitors
- Maintain and update databases for staff information and case files
- Archive files to off-site storage as needed or directed
- Scan, download, and photocopy legal documents and case materials
- Assist with word processing tasks and assignments
- Receive and handle deliveries and process office mail
- Maintain staff schedules
- Schedule and maintain calendars for office conference rooms and G-cars
- Other duties as assigned

Requirements: The successful candidate must be a high school graduate (or equivalent) and have at least one year of office experience, preferably in a law office. Spanish fluency is desired but not required. 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 complete a background check. A prior criminal conviction is not necessarily disqualifying.

Salary and Benefits: This position has a starting salary range of \$51,037 to \$62,809 (Grade 6, Step 1 to Grade 8, Step 1) based on the Judiciary Salary Plan effective January 12, 2026. Salary

will be based on experience. Benefits include health and life insurance plus 12 paid federal holidays, 13 days of paid sick leave, and 13 days of paid vacation leave annually. (The rate of vacation accrual increases with years of service.) The position is eligible for the [Federal Employees Retirement System](#) and the [Thrift Savings Plan](#), which matches up to 5% of employee contributions. Salary is paid biweekly and only by direct deposit.

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 "Legal Assistant" in the email subject line.

Preference will be given to applications received by March 9, 2026. 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.