



**OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL DEFENDER**  
Eastern District of California  
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**POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT #26-006**  
**INVESTIGATOR – CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT**

The Office of the Federal Defender for the Eastern District of California is accepting applications for the position of Investigator in its Capital Habeas Unit (CHU) for its Sacramento Office. The CHU represents individuals sentenced to death by the state in federal habeas corpus (§2254) and ancillary proceedings. Our clients are on Death Row in California and currently four other states. The Unit also represents individuals sentenced to death in the federal courts in §2255 proceedings.

**Primary Job Duties:** CHU investigators perform extensive fact and mitigation investigations. This includes:

- Familiarizing themselves with extensive case files (including police reports, prior legal proceedings, trial transcripts, and expert and lay reports) and identifying potential avenues of investigation/sources of information;
- Locating, interviewing, and drafting declarations of fact and mitigation witnesses, including the client's family, friends, teachers, employers, and service providers, as well as eyewitnesses and alibi witnesses;
- Crafting exhaustive, multi-generational psychosocial histories for the Unit's clients by gathering and interpreting records, such as medical, social services, vital records, education, employment, court, military, and law enforcement;
- Building a strong rapport with both incarcerated clients and essential mitigation witnesses through frequent visits and contact.

**Requirements:**

- Demonstrated commitment to compassionate, comprehensive, and culturally sensitive criminal defense investigations;
- A willingness to acquire and develop knowledge of mental health issues/cognitive deficits/competency issues in order to be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental disorders;
- Capacity to work both independently and in a team setting while possessing a high degree of initiative, creativity, and problem-solving ability;
- Above-average organizational ability and written and oral communication skills;
- Familiarity with people locator sites such as TLO, Accurint, and CLEAR;
- Frequent and extensive travel within California, across the United States, and occasionally to foreign countries;
- Flexibility for some evening and weekend work;
- Possession of a valid driver's license (or ability to obtain one) and possession of an insured vehicle;
- Spanish language fluency a plus;
- Must be a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident in the process of applying for citizenship. Selected candidate will be subject to a background check as condition of employment.

This is a full-time permanent position with federal salary and is full-time remote eligible with a preference for California residency. Salary will be based upon experience and education in accordance with Judicial Salary Plan. Direct deposit of pay required. Federal government benefits apply, including health, life and long-term insurances, thrift savings program, retirement and flexible spending accounts. Employees of the Federal Defender are considered "at-will" employees and are not covered by the Civil Service Reform Act.

To apply, please submit as a single PDF your cover letter, résumé, three references and a completed Application for Judicial Branch Employment form (AO78), [http://www.cae-fpd.org/AO\\_78.pdf](http://www.cae-fpd.org/AO_78.pdf), to: [cae\\_hr@fd.org](mailto:cae_hr@fd.org)

Position announced on February 17, 2026, and is open until filled. Preference given to applications received by March 17, 2026.

The Office of the Federal Defender for the Eastern District of California is an equal opportunity employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. This agency provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, please notify the agency. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be on a case-by-case basis.