



FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT 2605
MITIGATION SPECIALIST

The Federal Public Defender for the Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa is accepting applications for the position of **Mitigation Specialist** to be located at its **Des Moines** office.

ABOUT US: The Federal Public Defender Office operates under authority of the Criminal Justice Act (18 U.S.C. § 3006A) to represent individuals who are unable to afford counsel and are prosecuted in our federal courts. Our office is committed to serving the distinct needs of these individuals with a diverse group of dedicated professionals who



collaborate with, listen to, and advocate on behalf of one another. We welcome and value individuals of any race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, disability, age, veteran status, and other status protected by law. Click [here](#) for more information about our office.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Work closely and collaboratively with attorneys and the entire defense team to coordinate and integrate the client's life history into the defense strategy.
- Gather, review, verify, and synthesize records, including medical and mental health records, substance abuse treatment records, educational, employment, military and institutional records, and social services, housing, and community records.
- Conduct thorough, independent investigations into all aspects of the client's character, history, criminal record, and mitigating circumstances surrounding

the offense.

- Form a trusted relationship with clients and conduct interviews with various individuals, including clients, family members, friends, educators, employers, military personnel, healthcare providers, religious leaders, and law enforcement.
- Provide attorneys with detailed documentation and useful summaries of the investigations, including genealogies, social history reports, chronologies, and analysis of relevant cultural, socioeconomic, environmental, racial, and religious factors affecting the client.
- Identify and consult with expert witnesses, including psychologists, psychiatrists, and other specialized professionals.
- Develop and maintain a list of service providers in various fields.
- Assist attorneys in court and prepare sentencing presentations using various methods, such as written reports, videos, or live testimony.
- Develop, analyze, and present comprehensive mitigation evidence for court proceedings, including pretrial, sentencing, and post-conviction matters.
- Prepare re-entry and release plans addressing support for the client transitioning back to the community with referral resources and community-based programs such as drug or alcohol treatment, mental health treatment, financial assistance, housing, or childcare.
- Stay up to date with current research and trends in areas such as substance use disorders, mental health considerations, and the impact of incarceration.
- Identify and analyze patterns of trauma, mental illness, substance use, systemic inequities, and other factors relevant to mitigation.
- Perform additional tasks as needed or assigned.

REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS:

- Must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university; a degree in social work or a related field, such as anthropology, education, human development, journalism, psychology, sociology, or criminal justice is preferred. Three years of specialized experience is required.
- A basic understanding of criminal law, procedure, evidence, and confidentiality issues, such as attorney-client privilege is required.
- The ability to communicate with and have compassion for individuals from diverse social classes and lifestyles is required.
- Strong interviewing, writing, and advocacy skills are essential. Computer proficiency is required. Fluency in Spanish is preferred but not required.
- The ability to read, analyze, and interpret records and legal documents is required.
- This position requires considerable initiative, resourcefulness, creativity, and

drive. The successful applicant must be able to manage multiple projects, work independently, and collaborate effectively with attorneys, investigators, and paralegals.

- Applicants must possess a valid driver's license and a reliable vehicle with appropriate insurance. Travel will be reimbursed when necessary.
- The selected candidate must be a U.S. citizen or eligible to work in the United States.

BACKGROUND CHECKS: The selected candidate will be subject to a background check and subsequent favorable suitability determination as a condition of employment. Employment will be considered provisional until a satisfactory background check is confirmed.

SALARY AND BENEFITS: Compensation is determined by the Judicial Salary Plan, and will be commensurate with the candidate's experience within a range of JSP-9, Step 1 to JSP-14, Step 1. Federal government benefits apply, including health and life insurance, retirement, and the Thrift Savings Plan. Direct deposit of pay required. Some telework may be offered.

APPLICATION PROCESS: Electronically submit resume, cover letter and three references by March 30, 2026, to megan_magner@fd.org. **The email subject line must read:** Mitigation Specialist 2605. Preference will be given to applications received by March 30, however, position will remain open until filled. Only applicants considered for an interview will be contacted. No telephone calls please. **This position is subject to funding availability.**

The Federal Public Defender is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.