

# OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK



## Albany Office

54 State Street  
Suite 310  
Albany, NY 12207  
(518) 436-1850  
(518) 436-1780 Fax

Eric K. Schillinger - Federal Public Defender  
Emma Reynolds - First Assistant

## Syracuse Office

4 Clinton Square  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Syracuse, NY 13202  
(315) 701-0080  
(315) 701-0081 Fax

## VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT #26-MIT-01

**Position:** Non-Capital Mitigation Specialist  
**Location:** Syracuse, New York  
**Opening date:** February 13, 2026  
**Closing date:** Open Until Filled (Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis)  
**Starting Salary:** \$74,678-\$138,370 depending on experience  
**Target Start Date:** March 2026  
**Office Website:** <https://nyn.fd.org/>

The Office of the Federal Public Defender, Northern District of New York, is accepting applications for a Mitigation Specialist for the Syracuse, New York office. The mitigation specialist will 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 special projects.

## **ABOUT US**

The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of New York is a law office that provides legal representation to persons charged with committing federal crimes who cannot afford to hire a private attorney. We represent the accused from arrest through trial and appeal, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

We are attorneys, paralegals, investigators, office administrators, and information technology specialists. Our team fosters interdisciplinary skill sets that ensure compassionate and comprehensive representation. We work together to uphold every person's right to be presumed

innocent, to have a fair trial, to mitigation, and to have a fair sentence, if convicted. Our defense is vigorous, both at trial and on appeal. We advocate for humane sentences through client-centered representation, which honors an individual's lived experience.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

To qualify, the applicant should have the following:

- A desire and capacity to work collaboratively in a team environment.
- Understanding of the methods and skills required for accomplishing the duties of the position. Strong research and writing skills.
- Computer fluency in the Microsoft Office suite of programs, including Word, Excel and Adobe Acrobat.
- High level of organizational skills to gather, maintain, and manage documents and information for assigned cases.
- The ability to speak and write clearly and effectively.
- The ability to read, analyze, and interpret records and legal documents.
- The ability to exercise good judgment in a mature and diplomatic manner.
- The ability to recognize and analyze problems and recommend practical solutions.
- The ability to keep confidences and protect legal privileges.
- The ability to recognize and analyze problems and recommend practical solutions.
- The desire to work with and on behalf of people from diverse backgrounds.
- A strong commitment to providing holistic representational support to indigent persons in proceedings under federal criminal law.
- Proficiency in Spanish (preferred).

Applicants must possess a valid driver's license and insurance. Occasional travel is required, potentially including night and weekend work.

Employment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation including, but not limited to, an FBI fingerprint and name check.

## **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

All applicants must have an MSW (or similar degree) 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 or another foreign language is preferred, but not required.

## **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

The starting annual salary for this full-time position falls within a range under the Judicial Salary Plan (JSP) of JSP 11/01 at \$74,678 to JSP 13/10 at \$138,370. The salary of the successful applicant will be commensurate with the person's qualifications and years of experience. The position includes a highly competitive federal benefit package including paid vacation, paid sick time, 11 paid federal holidays, health insurance, life insurance, retirement plan, and participation in the Thrift Savings Plan (similar to a 401k). All employees of the office are "at will," and all positions are subject to fluctuations in workload and funding. Salary is payable only by electronic funds transfer (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 believe representation is better when members of the defense team have diverse backgrounds and experiences. We seek an individual who shares this belief and commitment. We embrace the unique contributions our employees can bring to the Office of the Federal Public Defender because of their backgrounds, social identities, and lived experiences. We are interested in applicants' talent, intelligence, dedication, persistence, and desire to see that all people are treated fairly and respectfully. The Office of the Federal Public Defender 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 socioeconomic circumstance. We especially encourage applications from members of the BIPOC community, people affected by the criminal legal system, and people from other underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

Qualified persons shall email a single PDF document containing a cover letter, resume, three references, completed form AO78 (Application for Federal Employment) and a writing sample to [michelle\\_teska@fd.org](mailto:michelle_teska@fd.org) using the subject reference: **Mitigation Specialist-SYR**. The AO78 can be found at [https://jnet.ao.dcn/sites/default/files/forms/pdf/AO\\_078-08-2024\\_1.pdf](https://jnet.ao.dcn/sites/default/files/forms/pdf/AO_078-08-2024_1.pdf)

Rolling interviews will be conducted; this position is open until filled and subject to funding availability. The Office of the Federal Public Defender is organized through the United States Court System and is independent from the executive branch. Interested applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. All responses will remain confidential. Only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

**The Office of the Federal Public Defender is an equal-opportunity employer.**