



FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT 2604
PARALEGAL

The Federal Public Defender for the Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa is seeking applications for the position of **Paralegal** to be located in its **Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Davenport or Sioux City** 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.

JOB DESCRIPTION: The paralegal provides support services to staff attorneys. Duties include all aspects of case preparation, file management, and correspondence; drafting, proofing and filing pleadings; gathering, organizing, summarizing, and indexing records and discovery material; preparing evidence and exhibits; assisting attorneys at hearings and trials; utilizing litigation support technology; and assisting with client contact. This position requires excellent skills in proofreading, prioritization, and organization; the ability to work independently and cooperatively; and excellent communications skills. Applicants must be flexible and willing to assist attorneys and clients in crisis situations.

REQUIREMENTS AND QUALIFICATIONS: To qualify for the position of paralegal, a person must be a high school graduate or the equivalent and must have a minimum of three

years general and three years specialized experience. Some higher education may be substituted for general experience. Must have a working knowledge of law office operations, legal practices, methods, and techniques. Must possess an understanding of paralegal and secretarial duties in a legal environment and excel at proofreading legal documents. Applicant must be a U.S. citizen or eligible to work in the United States.

SELECTION CRITERIA: In addition to the ability to perform the above, the successful applicant will be proficient with computers, including a working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, Teams, Outlook, and PowerPoint), Adobe Acrobat, and legal research tools such as Lexis and Westlaw. Knowledge of e-discovery management, data review platforms, and indexing software, such as dTSearch and TrialDirector, are a plus and should be noted in your cover letter. The successful applicant must be able to support attorneys working remotely, in other offices, or in the field and courtroom; thus, the successful applicant must be able to communicate effectively through email, instant messaging, and over the phone, and must also be a self-starter and highly motivated even when not working in the same physical space as others on the team. You should highlight any prior experience with criminal defense work, particularly federal and/or with a public defender agency, as well as additional certifications, technical skills, or other relevant experience. Preference will be given to applicants with criminal paralegal and litigation support experience, and a college degree or certification in paralegal studies.

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-11, 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.

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.

APPLICATION PROCESS: Electronically submit resume, cover letter and three references by February 27, 2026, to megan_magner@fd.org. **The email subject line must read:** Paralegal 2604. Preference will be given to applications received by February 27, however, position will remain open until filled. One or more positions may be filled from this posting. **Please specify which office location is preferred.** 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 opportunity employer.