

Office of the
Federal Public Defender
District of Colorado

Matthew K. Belcher, First Assistant
Dean Sanderford, Chief, Appeals

Virginia L. Grady, Federal Public Defender

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POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT
ASSISTANT FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER – APPELLATE DIVISION

The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the District of Colorado seeks a full-time appellate attorney to fill an existing vacancy in our office. We operate under authority of the Criminal Justice Act (18 U.S.C. § 3006A), representing individuals unable to afford counsel and prosecuted in our federal courts. Our office is committed to serving the distinct needs of our clients with a diverse group of dedicated professionals. Applicants 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 are welcome. Click [here](#) for more information about our office.

Job Description: The Appellate Assistant Federal Public Defender will provide zealous and professional appellate representation to individuals who are unable to afford counsel to challenge their convictions and sentences in the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit and the United States Supreme Court. Appellate appointments include appeals from within the office and cold-record appeals from any district within the Tenth Circuit. This position will also include preparing complex district court motions. Travel outside Denver may be required on occasion. Defender attorneys may not engage in the private practice of law. The office has a telework policy that permits employees to work at home up to two days per week.

Applicants must be 1) a graduate of an accredited law school; 2) licensed by the highest court of a state, federal territory, or the District of Columbia; 3) a member in good standing in all courts admitted to practice; and 4) a United States citizen, or a person authorized to work in the United States and receive compensation from this organization. Employment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation, including an FBI name and fingerprint check, and an IRS tax check.

The successful applicant will have excellent legal research and writing skills, a strong work ethic, a demonstrated commitment to criminal defense, a team-oriented approach to work, and a reputation for personal integrity. Candidates with experience in a federal judicial clerkship are strongly preferred.

Salary and Benefits: This is an “Excepted Appointment,” full-time position with federal benefits and salary commensurate with experience and qualifications within the range of AD-21 to AD-29 (\$85,573 - \$197,100). Among the many benefits of employment are the Federal Employees Retirement System, the Thrift Savings Plan (401k), paid annual and sick leave, 11 paid federal holidays, and health, life, disability, long-term care, dental, and vision insurance. Salary is payable only by direct deposit.

How to Apply: Qualified applicants should apply via email by submitting a letter of interest, a resume, and a writing sample that is your own work, combined in .pdf format, to Veronica Knights, Personnel Administrator, at employment@cofd.org. Subject reference line should be AFD – Appellate Division.

Due to the volume of applications expected, this office will only communicate with candidates who are selected for an interview. No inquiries or telephone calls, please. Position announced February 10, 2026, open until filled, and subject to the availability of funds.

The Federal Public Defender is an equal opportunity employer.



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