

Office of the  
**Federal Public Defender**  
District of Colorado

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

Virginia L. Grady, Federal Public Defender

John C. Arceci, Senior Counsel  
Mary V. Butterton, Senior Litigator

**POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**ASSISTANT FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER – TRIAL DIVISION**

*The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the District of Colorado seeks a full-time trial 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:** This is a full-time position dedicated to all stages of the magistrate and district court proceedings. Our attorneys are expected to be zealous advocates of the highest caliber, devoted to the defense of low-income clients and the enforcement of the Bill of Rights. Our robust litigation practice challenges every stage of the criminal proceeding, from bond hearings, pretrial motions, jury trials, and sentencing to post-conviction retroactive relief projects. Because mitigation is a core component of our work, our attorneys, investigators, and support staff collaborate on every case. 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.

**Qualifications:** To qualify for this position, an applicant 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 agency. Employment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation, including an FBI name and fingerprint check, and an IRS tax check.

Applicants must have *at least seven years of substantial experience* in criminal defense. Substantial experience includes primary responsibility for jury trials in felony cases, previous work with scientific expert witnesses (including challenges and examinations), dispositive motions practice, sentencing mitigation, and management of voluminous discovery. Superior research, writing, and oral advocacy skills are required. A strong and established work ethic, a demonstrated commitment to criminal defense, a team-oriented professional demeanor, and a reputation for personal integrity are essential. Trial level capital defense education or training is preferred but not required. Proficiency in Spanish is preferred but not required.

**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@cofpd.org](mailto:employment@cofpd.org). Subject reference line should be AFPD – Trial 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 reposted on March 30, 2026, open until filled, and subject to the availability of funds. More than one position may be filled from this announcement.

**The Federal Public Defender is an equal opportunity employer.**



633 17th Street, Suite 1000  
Denver, CO 80202



Phone: 303-294-7002  
Fax: 303-294-1192



Web: [co.fed.org](http://co.fed.org)  
Email: [co.info@fd.org](mailto:co.info@fd.org)