

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT #2025-04
Social Worker/Mitigation Specialist
Office of the Federal Public Defender – District of New Jersey
Posted: December 9, 2025
Closes: Open Until Filled

The Federal Public Defender for the District of New Jersey is accepting applications for **one position** of Social Worker/Mitigation Specialist. The Federal Public Defender operates under the authority of the Criminal Justice Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, and provides defense services in federal criminal cases and related matters in the federal courts. Whoever is hired for this position will support our clients and attorneys in our Newark, Camden and Trenton offices, but **will be based in our Newark, New Jersey office.**

Responsibilities of the Social Worker/Mitigation Specialist include, but are not limited to:

- work on interdisciplinary defense teams to investigate allegations of federal criminal conduct and prepare written mitigation materials for court
- conduct assessments, develop service plans, and provide client centered support, referrals, crisis intervention and case management assistance
- together with paralegals and investigators, obtain and review records including those related to
 - prior court and prison history
 - social and family history
 - neighborhoods and schools
 - medical and mental health treatment
 - other relevant subjects impacting the client's life
- interview lay persons and professionals about all aspects of a client's history;
- develop, assess, and maintain referral and service resources with service providers and experts
- attend relevant trainings and conferences, and develop training programs for NJ FPD staff
- recruit and supervise social work master's level students around client assignments, clinical issues, procedures and the intersections of legal issues within holistic, harm reduction models; and
- travel to prisons, jails, and detention facilities.

Qualifications Required:

- a reputation for personal integrity, a commitment to defense-based sentencing advocacy and quality representation on behalf of indigent individuals, humility, compassion, flexibility, enthusiasm and a can-do attitude;
- graduate degree and license in social work (LCSW, LSW, or LMSW)
- at least 3-5 years of experience in criminal defense mitigation investigation or a closely related field.
- demonstrated experience in the application of traditional social work advocacy and clinical skills
- excellent written and oral communication skills
- demonstrated mitigation investigation and mitigation report writing
- experience applying a client-centered & holistic approach to legal representation
- SIFI certified or prepare to become SIFI certified in order to supervise students
- a reliable vehicle and valid driver's license.

Fluency in language(s) other than English, preferably Spanish, highly desired. Knowledge of the United States Sentencing Guidelines, federal sentencing, the federal court system and federal correctional systems is also preferred.

Salary and Benefits:

The federal defender service follows the Judiciary Salary Plan, and salary will be commensurate with experience and qualifications. This position is in the excepted service and does not carry the tenure rights of the competitive civil service. This position offers federal employment benefits, including health and life insurance, a pension (after vesting), and participation in the Thrift Savings Plan (401k). Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit). The position is “*at-will*” employment.

How to Apply

Qualified persons should email a cover letter, resume, list of three references and a writing sample (preferably a redacted mitigation report or sentencing memorandum) in **one single PDF** document to NJFPDResume@fd.org

The subject line of your email should be “Social Worker/Mitigation Specialist Position.”

Only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted. No telephone calls please.