

**FEDERAL COMMUNITY DEFENDER OFFICE
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

DEFENDER ASSOCIATION OF PHILADELPHIA
FEDERAL COURT DIVISION
CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT

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January 16, 2024

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

ASSISTANT FEDERAL DEFENDER
CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT
At Least One Position
Posting Date: January 16, 2024
Closing Date: When Filled

The Federal Community Defender Office for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania is hiring one or more Assistant Federal Defenders (AFD) in the Capital Habeas Unit. The Capital Habeas Unit (CHU) represents indigent, death-sentenced prisoners, including federally death-sentenced prisoners, in federal habeas corpus proceedings throughout the United States in all stages of litigation. This AFD position will also be assigned cases in our Non-Capital Habeas Unit. The Non-Capital Habeas Unit (NCHU) represents individuals seeking relief from both state and federal convictions in Pennsylvania and it litigates cases in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and the United States Supreme Court.

CHU and NCHU attorneys examine the records of their clients' cases and do careful research and writing to support a wide variety of legal claims. They work with clients; undertake factual investigation as needed; engage with experts; conduct evidentiary hearings in the United States District Court; present oral argument to the District Court and the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit; and seek or oppose writs of *certiorari* from the United States Supreme Court. CHU and NCHU attorneys are also responsible for remaining current with developments in criminal law and procedure and habeas corpus law and providing updates to legal staff; analyzing discovery materials; and assisting with the planning and implementation of investigation relating to both the guilt and sentencing phases of capital and non-capital cases. Although CHU and NCHU attorneys will be independently responsible for individual cases, both units use a collaborative approach to their cases, and its members work closely with one another and with members of the Office's other practice groups (including the Trial, Appeals, and Capital Trial Units) to provide the highest level of legal representation to their clients.

Candidates must have excellent analytic, research, and writing skills to fill the position of Assistant Federal Defender in the Capital Habeas Unit. Candidates should have prior experience in trial, appellate, or post-conviction criminal defense litigation, and prior habeas experience is preferred. Candidates ideally will have at least three years of criminal litigation experience. Candidates must

possess a solid understanding of criminal law, criminal procedures, and evidence; have outstanding legal research and writing skills; be able to analyze complex legal issues; and be proficient with computer assisted legal research. The candidate must have experience handling complex litigation and must be able to undertake representation of petitioners currently litigating in every stage of the habeas proceedings. Candidates also must be able to communicate effectively with clients, colleagues, staff, government, and court personnel and must have a commitment to the representation of the indigent. The position will require travel throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and may require travel throughout the United States. Fluency in the Spanish language is highly desirable.

Candidates for this position must possess a law degree and be a member of a state bar. Eligibility for admission to the Pennsylvania Bar or willingness to sit for the next bar exam is required, as is admission to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, and the United States Supreme Court, if not already admitted in those jurisdictions.

Philadelphia, one of America's most preeminent historical cities, is rich in culture, entertainment, and history. Our office is in Philadelphia's Center City district, in the historic Curtis building, close to the federal courthouse and across from Independence Mall, the Liberty Bell and Washington Square Park.

Salary will be based upon experience consistent with federal guidelines and regulations. Kindly note that the filling of this position will be subject to the funding restrictions and approval of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts.

Interested applicants should submit a cover letter, resume and writing sample to [Federal Community Defender Office Careers](#). Candidates will be interviewed on an ongoing basis until the position is filled. The Federal Community Defender Office is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We are dedicated to promoting a professional work environment that supports and respects all employees and applicants without regard to race, color, gender identity, national origin, religion, or disability. All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply.