

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT No. 12-04
Assistant Federal Public Defender or Research and Writing Specialist
Western District of Texas
El Paso Division

THE FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER for the Western District of Texas is accepting applications for the position of assistant federal public defender or research and writing specialist, to be stationed in the El Paso office. The federal defender organization operates under authority of the Criminal Justice Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, to provide defense services in federal criminal cases and related matters by appointment from the court.

Requirements. Both positions require that the applicant be: (1) a graduate of an accredited law school; (2) admitted to practice in good standing before the highest court of a state; and (3) licensed to practice in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas by the time of entrance on duty. Appointment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation, including an FBI fingerprint and name check and an IRS tax check.

Duties. An assistant federal public defender represents clients charged with federal criminal offenses and clients involved in other matters covered under the Criminal Justice Act. The primary duties of a research and writing specialist include: (1) drafting motions, memoranda, briefs, and petitions to be filed in the U.S. district court, the U.S. court of appeals, and the U.S. Supreme Court; and (2) consulting with attorneys on legal issues arising in discovery, motion practice, trial, sentencing, and appeal. A research and writing specialist may be required to perform general paralegal duties, as well as other duties as assigned. The research and writing specialist does not ordinarily sign pleadings or make court appearances. Both positions require travel for investigation, litigation, and training, and may involve foreign travel. Federal public defender attorneys may not engage in the private practice of law.

Selection Criteria. The successful applicant for either position will have an established capacity or clearly demonstrated aptitude for excellence in criminal defense practice, a commitment to the representation of indigent accused persons, and a reputation for personal and professional integrity. Applicants must also possess the ability to communicate effectively with clients, witnesses, colleagues, and court and agency personnel. The successful applicant for research and writing specialist will have strong legal research and word processing skills, will be able to analyze legal issues from complex records, and will write clearly and concisely. Appellate writing experience or experience in handling federal criminal cases and Spanish-language fluency are preferred for both positions.

Salary and Benefits. The salary of an assistant federal public defender is commensurate with that of an assistant U.S. attorney with similar qualifications and experience. The salary for a research and writing specialist falls within a range of \$47,448 (JSP-9, Step 1) to \$113,735 (JSP-15, Step 1). The salary of the successful applicant will be commensurate with the person's qualifications and experience. Both positions are in the excepted service and do not carry the tenure rights of the competitive Civil Service. The positions do offer federal government employment benefits, including health and life insurance, retirement, and participation in the Thrift Savings Plan. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).

How to Apply. Persons may apply by sending a letter of interest (mentioning announcement number 12-04), résumé, and representative writing sample. Legal experience should be described in detail. Send completed application to: G. Patrick Black, Acting Federal Public Defender, Western District of Texas, 700 E. San Antonio Ave., D-401, El Paso, Texas 79901-7020. For applicants with disabilities, this organization provides reasonable accommodations, which are decided on a case-by-case basis. To request a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application or interview process, contact Administrative Officer Susan Andrade at (210) 472-6700. More than one position may be filled from this announcement. Position announced April 23, 2012 subject to the availability of funds; open until filled.

The Federal Public Defender is an equal-opportunity employer.