

Position Announcement 16-14
RESEARCH AND WRITING SPECIALIST
Office of the Federal Public Defender
Western District of Texas (El Paso)

THE FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER for the Western District of Texas is accepting applications for the position of research and writing specialist, to be stationed in the El Paso office. The Federal Public Defender 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 to individuals unable to afford counsel.

Requirements. A research and writing specialist is an attorney position. Applicants must 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 first day of duty. Appointment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation, including but not limited to an FBI name and fingerprint check.

Duties. 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 Supreme Court of the United States; 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 is not an assistant federal public defender and does not ordinarily sign pleadings or make court appearances. The position requires occasional travel.

Selection Criteria. The successful applicant for research and writing specialist 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 integrity. Applicants must also possess the ability to communicate effectively with clients, witnesses, colleagues, and court and agency personnel. The successful applicant 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 is preferred.

Salary and Benefits. The starting salary for a research and writing specialist falls within a range of \$50,598 (JSP-9, Step 1) to \$121,280 (JSP-15, Step 1). The salary of the successful applicant will commensurate with the person's qualifications and experience. The position is in the excepted service and does not carry the tenure rights of the competitive Civil Service. The position offers federal government employment benefits, including participation in health and life insurance, retirement, and the Thrift Savings Plan. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).

How to Apply. Qualified persons may apply by forwarding a letter of interest (mentioning announcement number 16-14), résumé, and representative writing sample, along with 3 references. Legal experience should be described in detail. Send completed application to: Maureen Scott Franco, 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 determined on a case-by-case basis. To request a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application or interview process, contact Victoria B. Longoria, Personnel Administrator, at (210) 472-6700. More than one position may be filled from this announcement. Position originally announced July 18, 2016, modified and re-announced February 9, 2018 subject to the availability of funds; open until filled.

The Federal Public Defender is an equal-opportunity employer.