

Lisa B. Freeland, Federal Public Defender
Office of the Federal Public Defender
Western District of Pennsylvania
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Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT # 2023-02

ASSISTANT FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER - ERIE, PA

Posted: October 31, 2022
Closes: December 12, 2022

The Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Pennsylvania is accepting applications for an experienced trial attorney to serve as an Assistant Federal Public Defender (AFPD) in its **Erie branch office**. The position primarily involves legal representation of indigent persons charged with criminal offenses in the United States District Court, though the position may also require providing representation to individuals in federal habeas corpus proceedings.

Job Description: The AFPD will advocate for our clients charged with criminal offenses or involved in post-conviction proceedings in the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania and the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. The position requires managing cases at various stages of litigation; preparing pleadings, briefs, and motions; appearing on behalf of clients in court hearings and at other related proceedings; developing litigation strategies; meeting with clients, experts, witnesses, and family members; and performing other duties as assigned. The AFPD will work to uphold every person's right to be presumed innocent; receive a vigorous defense; and, if convicted, receive a fair sentence. They will advocate for humane sentences by collaborating with teams of investigators, paralegals, social workers, and other staff to develop mitigation evidence and to present judges with fully developed views of our clients and their lives, not merely their charges.

This position requires some travel throughout our district and occasional out-of-district travel. At the discretion of the Defender, the AFPD in the Erie Branch office may also be assigned to cases in the Pittsburgh division. Once hired, the applicant will have the option to work from home two days per week at the discretion of the Defender; however, such a schedule is not always possible given the in-person responsibilities of the position. Whether working remotely or from the Erie FPD office, the AFPD must be available to appear in the district court in Erie when clients are presented upon arrest.

Requirements and Qualifications. The successful applicant must be a graduate from an accredited law school and a member in good standing of a state bar and 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, staff, court and agency personnel as part of their employment. Trial experience, as well as excellent research, writing and oral advocacy skills, are required. The applicant should be prepared to immediately undertake the representation of clients in serious criminal cases and have a working knowledge of the United States Sentencing Guidelines. The ability to manage a heavy caseload, travel and work flexible hours are essential for the position, as are effective organizational skills and the ability to work in a team environment. Applicants must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Federal Public Defender attorneys may not engage in the private practice of law. The successful candidate will be subject to a general background check and IRS tax check procedure as a condition of employment.

Salary and Benefits. This is a full-time position. Salary is based on federal pay schedules and is commensurate with experience. Benefits include health, supplemental dental/vision benefits, long-term care, and life insurance, as well as 11 paid federal holidays, 13 days of paid sick leave, and 13 days of paid vacation leave annually. (The rate of paid vacation leave increases to 20 days after three years.) FPD staff can opt to participate in a pre-tax Health, Dependent Care, and Commuter Reimbursement programs. The position is covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), including the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), which matches up to 5% of employee contributions, up to a cap. Salary is paid every other week and is subject to mandatory direct deposit.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Our office values diversity, is committed to equity and inclusion, and aspires to create a culture of mutual respect, collaboration, openness, and humility that honors the people we represent. We believe representation is better when members of the defense team have diverse backgrounds and experiences. We seek a lawyer who shares this belief and commitment. We embrace the unique contributions our employees can bring to the FPDO because of their backgrounds, social identities, and lived experiences. We are interested in applicants' talent, intelligence, dedication, and persistence, and desire to see that all people are treated fairly and respectfully. The FPD seeks applications from a diverse group of qualified individuals in terms of race, ethnicity, nation of origin, culture, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual identity, education, opinions, age, languages spoken, veteran status, disability, religion, and socioeconomic circumstance. We especially encourage applications from members of the BIPOC community, people affected by the criminal legal system, and people from other underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.

Application Information. Qualified applicants should apply by submitting a letter of interest, a current and detailed resume, and a writing sample in one Adobe Acrobat document to paw_employment@fd.org using the subject line "2023-02."

This Office is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

One or more positions may be filled from this announcement.

Only those candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

No telephone calls, please.