

LISA B. FREELAND  
Federal Public Defender

**FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

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*First Assistant Federal Public Defender*

**CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT**

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POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT  
***CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT***  
**RESEARCH AND WRITING SPECIALIST**

**POSITION #:** 2019-07-CRWS  
**ANNOUNCED:** July 25, 2019  
**CLOSES:** Open until filled

The Federal Public Defender for the Western District of Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh Division) is seeking a **Research and Writing Specialist** (RWS) for its Capital Habeas Unit (CHU). The CHU represents death-sentenced prisoners in federal habeas corpus proceedings.

**Job Description:** The RWS is an active member of the capital habeas team, composed of attorneys, paralegals and investigators. In addition to assisting with legal research and drafting petitions, briefs and other case filings, the duties of the CHU Research and Writing Specialist include: maintaining client contact; assisting with the planning and implementation of investigation relating to both the guilt and penalty phase of capital cases; staying abreast of the latest developments in the law of habeas corpus and criminal procedure and providing updates to legal staff; and analyzing, researching and gathering records.

**Requirements and Qualifications:** Candidates must be attorneys who possess excellent skills in legal analysis, research and writing. Candidates should have a demonstrated commitment to poverty law or indigent defense, and should have experience in one of the following areas: criminal law, preferably in capital cases; habeas corpus litigation; or complex federal civil litigation. Capital post-conviction or appellate experience is preferred but not required. Recent law school graduates with at least two years of relevant work experience and outstanding academic record and writing ability will also be considered. Fluency (oral and written) in Spanish helpful but not required. A background in any area of mental health and/or social work is also helpful.

Applicants must be members in good standing of a state bar and must, subsequent to hiring, gain admission to the Western District of Pennsylvania. Candidates must be willing to travel with overnights stays. The position requires the incumbent occasionally to lift and/or move up to 25 pounds.

**Salary and Benefits:** This is a full-time position with salary and benefits based on qualifications and experience. The position is in the excepted service and does not have the tenure rights of the competitive Civil Service, however, the position does carry regular government employment benefits including health and life insurance, retirement, and the Thrift Savings Plan. Salary will be based on years of experience and consistent with federal guidelines and regulations. This position is subject to mandatory Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit) for payment of net pay. The selected candidate will be subject to a background check as a condition of employment. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or eligible to work in the United States.

Interested candidates may apply by submitting a cover letter and resume *in one Adobe Acrobat document* to [PAW\\_employment@fd.org](mailto:PAW_employment@fd.org) using the subject line: **2019-07-CRWS**. Candidates will be interviewed on an ongoing basis, and the position will remain open until filled.

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The Federal Public Defender is an Equal Opportunity Employer.  
Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. No telephone calls please.  
Hiring subject to availability of funding.