OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

RESEARCH & WRITING ATTORNEY 2026-10

(Multiple positions may be filled with this announcement.)

Location: New Haven or Hartford, Connecticut

Application deadline: Open Until Filled.

ABOUT US

The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the District of Connecticut provides legal representation to persons charged with committing federal crimes who cannot afford to hire a private attorney. We represent the accused from arrest through trial and appeal, including the U.S. Supreme Court.

We are attorneys, paralegals, investigators, mitigation specialists, office administrators, and information technology specialists. Our team fosters interdisciplinary skill sets that ensure compassionate and comprehensive representation. We work together to uphold every person's right to be presumed innocent, to have a fair trial, to mitigation, and to have a fair sentence, if convicted. Our defense is vigorous, both at trial and on appeal. We advocate for humane sentences through client-centered representation, which honors an individual's lived experience.

Our Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice: We are committed to cultivating a culture of acceptance and connectedness that honors the diverse backgrounds of the people we represent. Our commitment to inclusion is integral to our commitment to a fair justice system. In recruiting members of our team, we welcome the full spectrum of humanity. We embrace the unique contributions our employees can bring to our office because of their backgrounds, social identities, and lived experiences. We know that the best legal representation occurs through a diverse, collaborative, and inclusive workforce.

THE OPPORTUNITY

We seek a Research and Writing Attorney who is available to begin employment no later than January 4, 2027. Availability to start earlier will be considered in the hiring decision. Office location to be determined, in New Haven or Hartford, Connecticut, with duties requiring work in both offices and travel to all seats of court and prison locations, including Central Falls, Rhode Island.

The Research and Writing Specialist assists attorneys in drafting motions, memoranda, petitions, and briefs for filing in federal magistrate, district, and appellate courts, as well as the U.S. Supreme Court. The Specialist conducts comprehensive legal research, analyzes complex legal and factual issues, reviews records and transcripts in habeas and direct appeal cases, and advises attorneys on case strategy, evidentiary issues, and oral argument preparation. The Specialist may also assist with training and continuing legal education programs, supervise law students, legal interns, and paralegals, and analyze the impact of new legislation, policies, and regulations on the office.

The Office's business often requires team members to work together and support each other at various and sometimes unpredictable instances. Accordingly, the foregoing job description is only a sample of the work involved, and other duties and needs may arise.

QUALIFICATIONS

To qualify, the applicant should have the following: A desire and capacity to work collaboratively in a team environment.

- Strong legal research, writing, and analytical skills.
- The ability to analyze complex legal issues and records, identify relevant facts and legal principles, and write clearly and concisely.
- A general understanding of criminal law, criminal procedure, evidence, sentencing guidelines, and evidence handling.
- The ability to interpret and apply relevant statutes, regulations, policies, procedures, and legal precedents.
- A strong understanding of legal principles, practices, methods, and procedures.
- The ability to exercise sound judgment, professionalism, and discretion.
- The ability to keep confidences and protect attorney-client privilege and other legal privileges.
- Strong oral and written communication skills.
- The ability to recognize and analyze problems and recommend practical solutions.
- Strong planning and organizational skills.
- Computer fluency, including proficiency with Microsoft Office and computer-assisted legal research tools.
- Progressively responsible legal experience demonstrating the ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position.
- The desire to work with and on behalf of people from diverse backgrounds.
- A strong commitment to providing holistic representational support to indigent persons in proceedings under federal criminal law.
- Proficiency in Spanish (preferred).

The position requires that the applicant possess a valid driver's license, insurance, and own/operate a personal vehicle for business purposes (mileage is reimbursable). Occasional travel is required, including night and weekend work.

Employment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation including, but not limited to an FBI fingerprint and name check.

EXPERIENCE/ EDUCATION

Applicants must be a graduate of an accredited law school and admitted to practice, in good standing, before the highest court of a state. Appellate writing experience or experience in handling federal criminal cases is preferred.

SALARY AND BENEFIT DETAILS

The salary of the successful applicant will be commensurate with the person's qualifications and experience. The starting salary for this position falls within a range under the Judicial Salary Plan from Grade 9 at $69,642 to Grade 15 at $174,347. The position offers federal employment benefits, including paid vacation, paid sick time, paid holidays, health insurance, life insurance, retirement plan, and participation in the Thrift Savings Plan (401k). Teleworking is available, consistent with office policy, court obligations, and position duties.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply for this position, email a single PDF containing a cover letter, resume, three references, and a writing sample to CTX_Hiring@fd.org. Please include the job announcement number in the subject line of the email.

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. We are interested in applicants' talent, intelligence, dedication, and desire to see that all people are treated fairly and respectfully, no matter the allegation or circumstance.

The Federal Public Defender for the District of Connecticut is an equal opportunity employer.