



OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER

Western District of Arkansas

Federal Defender, James B. Pierce

Announcement No: 2026 – 02

Position Title: Legal Assistant

Location: Fayetteville, Arkansas

Salary Range: \$45,409 - \$67,057

Reports to: Chief Paralegal and Administrative Officer

Date: May 12, 2026

Position: Full-Time

Website: <http://arw.fd.org>

Closing Date: Until filled

Benefits: Health, Vision, Dental, & Life Insurance. Flexible Spending Program. 11 paid federal holidays. 13 days of paid sick leave annually, that accumulates if unused and has no cap. Up to 13 days of paid vacation annually that accumulates if unused with a 240-hour cap; vacation leave increases based on years of service. Paid Parental Leave of 12 weeks after one year of full-time employment. Thrift Savings Retirement Plan with up to 5% matching contributions. Public Service Loan Forgiveness, if qualified. Employee Assistance Program (confidential counseling). Paid training opportunities.

Salary: Bi-weekly via direct deposit. All employees of the office are “at will”, and all positions are subject to available funding.

This position requires on-site, in-person work; ad-hoc teleworking is occasionally available on an approval basis.

WHO WE ARE

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. The Western District of Arkansas represents indigent persons charged in alleged criminal offenses in the U. S. District Court and the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Our main office is located in the heart of downtown Fayetteville <https://www.experiencefayetteville.com/>, with branch offices in Fort Smith <https://www.fortsmithar.gov/> and El Dorado <https://www.goeldorado.com/>. We currently have 16 staff members that comprise a diverse team of attorneys, paralegals, investigators, and administrative staff. We strive to have a cohesive office culture that encourages collaboration, learning, and team building, to support our mission.

PRIMARY JOB DUTIES

The Legal Assistant provides legal secretarial and clerical support services for one or more Assistant Federal Public Defenders (AFPDs)

- Performs the functions of a Legal Assistant to the AFPD(s) utilizing advanced knowledge of legal terminology, word and information processing software. Understands district and circuit court rules and protocols. Edits and proofreads initial drafts, transcribes dictation, performs cite checking and assembles copies with attachments for filing and mailing.
- Receives, screens, and refers telephone and in-person callers. Answers general inquiries from knowledge of the defender organization's activities and program operations and obtains information from others as requested by the AFPD(s).
- Screens incoming mail and handles some routine matters as authorized. Routes mail to appropriate destinations. Reviews outgoing mail for accuracy. Maintains correspondence control records.
- Prepares correspondence by either drafting from general instructions or typing in prescribed format. Prepares memoranda for signature by the AFPD(s).

- Maintains calendars for the AFPD(s) setting appointments as authorized. Arranges meetings and conferences, informing participants of date, time and location of meeting. Reminds the AFPD(s) of appointments and commitments.
- Organizes case files for AFPD(s) and is responsible for other case management functions as assigned, which may include: opening and closing files, keeping records related to in-court time expended on each case, recording future court appearances on the office master calendar and the personal calendars of AFPD(s) and notifying clients of the dates and times of court appearances and appointments with the AFPD(s) and defense experts.
- Receives and routes incoming mail and deliveries. Arranges for courier or express mail services. Oversees outgoing mail.
- Performs administrative duties in such areas as personnel, procurement, and budget as requested.
- Performs all other duties as assigned.

REQUIREMENTS

- a general understanding of the methods and skills required for accomplishing the tasks outlined in the Primary Job Duties section above;
- a general understanding of office confidentiality issues, such as attorney/client privilege;
- the ability to analyze and apply relevant policies and procedures to office operations;
- the ability to exercise good judgment in a mature and diplomatic manner;
- the ability to communicate orally and in writing;
- a general knowledge of office practices and secretarial processes;
- the ability to recognize and analyze problems and recommend practical solutions;
- a general knowledge of basic accounting practices;
- the ability to use a personal computer.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

The physical demands described are representative of those required in order for an individual to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the individual is regularly required to sit and talk or hear. The individual frequently is required to use hands to touch, handle, or feel. The individual must occasionally lift and/or move up to 25 pounds. The individual is frequently required to stand, walk, and reach with hands and arms. The individual will spend most of their time in an office environment.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Candidates must possess good communication skills, initiative, and have a demonstrated work history of dependability, responsibility, and the ability to be a team player.
- Subject to a satisfactory background check.
- Spanish language skills valued but not required.

HOW TO APPLY

Submit a letter of interest, resume, and three (3) professional references in **PDF format** to: Anna Adams, Administrative Officer: anna_adams@fd.org, using the subject line “2026-02 Legal Assistant”

*The Federal Public Defender is an equal opportunity employer.
All encouraged to apply.*