

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT No. 26-04

Assistant Federal Public Defender

Office of the Federal Public Defender
Middle District of North Carolina

The Office of the Federal Public Defender, Middle District of North Carolina, is accepting applications for the position of Assistant Federal Public Defender in Winston-Salem, NC. The federal defender organization operates under authority of the Criminal Justice Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3006A, to provide representation in federal criminal cases and related matters for those who are financially unable to retain counsel.

Professional Requirements. To qualify for the position of Assistant Federal Public Defender, a person must be a graduate of an accredited law school and a member in good standing of their state bar. Admission to practice in North Carolina is preferred but not required. Applicants must possess excellent oral and written advocacy skills, the ability to work both independently and as part of a team, sound judgment and the capacity to maintain a full felony caseload. Proficiency with Microsoft Office applications and Westlaw or LexisNexis is required. A minimum of five years of professional experience is required, including three years of criminal trial experience. Federal criminal experience is preferred but not required. A full-year judicial clerkship is considered one year of professional experience.

The successful candidate will have a reputation for integrity, professionalism and civility. They must be committed to the zealous representation of criminal defendants who are financially unable to retain counsel, and they must be willing to represent all defendants regardless of the nature of the charge. The successful candidate must be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and compassionately with clients from diverse social, ethnic, cultural, economic and educational backgrounds, including non-citizens. Fluency in Spanish is preferred but not required.

Assistant Federal Public Defenders must be United States citizens or eligible to work in the United States and for the United States Government. Appointment is contingent upon successful completion of an FBI name and fingerprint check.

Duties. Assistant Federal Public Defenders represent defendants in federal criminal cases and related matters, from pre-charge consultation through initial appearances, detention hearings, pretrial motion hearings, change of plea hearings, bench and jury trials, sentencing hearings, direct appeals, probation and supervised release violation hearings, and post-conviction motions. They review discovery, research and analyze the law, consult with and advise clients, negotiate with government attorneys, and interact with court personnel, probation officers, law enforcement officers, witnesses, and clients' families. Assistant Federal Public Defenders also provide advice and training to CJA Panel Attorneys, serve on district court committees, and participate in various professional outreach activities. Travel is required for client conferences, court, and training.

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Salary and Benefits. Assistant Federal Public Defenders are employees of the Judicial Branch of the United States Government. Their pay is comparable to that of Assistant United States Attorneys in the same judicial district. The salary range for non-supervisory Assistant Federal Public Defenders, including locality pay, is \$76,748 to \$197,100. Starting salary will be commensurate with the applicant's experience and qualifications. Assistant Federal Public Defenders are at will employees. They serve in the excepted service and do not have the tenure rights of the competitive Civil Service. The position includes the same benefits as other federal government employees, including participation in health (FEHB) and life insurance (FGLI) programs, the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS), and the Thrift Savings Plan. Salary is payable only by Electronic Funds Transfer (direct deposit).

How to Apply. Qualified persons may apply by submitting a cover letter, résumé, recent writing sample and three professional references to Eric D. Placke, Federal Public Defender, Middle District of North Carolina, 301 N. Elm Street, Suite 410, Greensboro, NC 27401. Applications materials may also be emailed, as a single pdf, to Eric_Placke@fd.org. Please include "Position Announcement No. 26-04" in the subject line of the email. This position will be available on or after November 1, 2026, and will remain open until filled.