FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO

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POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT
2026-24

Position: Legal Assistant **Location:** Albuquerque, NM
Opening Date: November 10, 2026 **Closing Date:** December 1, 2026
Target Start Date: January 2027 **Office Website:** https://nm.fd.org/
Salary Range: JSP 6 – 8 (Salary and position commensurate with experience)

The Federal Public Defender for the District of New Mexico is seeking a full-time Legal Assistant in our Albuquerque office. The mission of our office is to provide high quality, effective, and ethical legal representation to our clients charged with federal crimes. We are an equal opportunity employer. We seek to hire individuals who will promote the diversity of the office and federal practice.

Duties and Responsibilities:
This position provides support to attorneys in the office and acts as a liaison between attorneys and clients. The assistant will interact and communicate frequently with other FPD staff, clients and their families, court personnel, and the public; will use advanced knowledge of legal terminology, Microsoft Word, Adobe Acrobat, and Case management programs (Defender Data, SECRIS, CM/ECF, PACER, etc.); prepare memorandums, motions, pleadings, and other correspondence; edit and proof-read documents; electronically file pleadings; answer phones and general inquiries about the defender organization and program operations; accurately maintain and manage calendars for multiple attorneys; manage digital and paper case files; proactively anticipate needs of attorneys to include sending reminders of appointments, commitments, and deadlines; screen incoming mail and route mail appropriately; transport documents between the office, courthouse, and post office; and effectively perform all other duties as assigned.

Required Qualifications:
Applicants must have a strong, reliable, self-motivated work ethic, and an ability to work well with minimal supervision. Must possess social and emotional intelligence, have effective people and communication skills, and be able to work collaboratively in a team environment. Must possess excellent oral and written skills and have a strong ability to prioritize and organize your day. Applicants must have a high school degree or equivalent. One to three years' experience, at least one of which must be prior legal assistant experience. Must have a valid driver's license and ability to travel as needed to field offices and/or for training. Must be dedicated to the organization's mission and have an interest in indigent defense.

Preferred Qualifications:
Experience with federal criminal practice; experience with office confidentiality clauses such as attorney/client privilege; certificate or degree in paralegal studies or criminal justice; previous leadership/training/mentoring experience; ability to analyze and make recommendations for process improvements; and Spanish language proficiency is highly desired.

Salary and Benefits:
This is a full-time, at-will position within the federal judiciary. The starting salary range is $45,901 to $73,432, based on experience and qualifications. The position includes a comprehensive benefits package, featuring health, dental, vision, and life insurance; 13 to 26 days of earned annual leave depending on years of service; 13 days of earned sick leave per year; and 12 weeks of paid parental leave after one year of service. Employees also receive 11 paid federal holidays, participate in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), and may contribute to

the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) with up to 5 percent government matching. The position is eligible for Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), access to wellness resources and programming, credit for prior federal service, and regular continuing education opportunities. A one day per week telework option may be available depending on workload and office needs.

How to Apply:

Interested applicants should submit a single pdf document that includes a cover letter, resume, and three references via email to the attention of:

Michelle Dworak, Administrative Officer
FDNM-HR@fd.org
Subject: 2026-24 Legal Assistant

Application Deadline: Applications reviewed on a rolling basis with priority given to those who apply by December 1, 2026. The position may remain open until filled or may close before the deadline and is subject to funding availability. Please, no phone inquiries. Only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

Conditions of Employment:

Employment is subject to a background check, including fingerprinting. This position is part of the excepted service and does not carry Civil Service tenure. U.S. citizenship or authorization to work in the U.S. and receive compensation as a federal employee is required. Salary is paid via direct deposit.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion:

Our office values diversity and is committed to equity and inclusion. We aspire to embody values of mutual respect, collaboration, openness, and humility that honor the people we represent. Our representation is better when members of the defense team and staff members have diverse backgrounds and experiences. In our hiring, we seek individuals who share these values. We embrace the unique backgrounds, social identities, and lived experiences our employees bring to our office. We are interested in applicants' talent, diligence, and desire to see that all people are treated fairly and respectfully – no matter the allegation or circumstance.