FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO

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Legal Interpreter (Spanish – English)
PART-TIME w/ Benefits
2026-26

Position: Interpreter (Spanish – English) **Location:** Albuquerque, NM
Opening Date: November 18, 2026 **Closing Date:** January 4, 2027
Target Start Date: Jan/Feb 2027 **Office Website:** https://nm.fd.org/
Salary Range: JSP 9 – 14 (Salary commensurate with experience and qualifications)

The Federal Public Defender for the District of New Mexico is accepting applications for a Part-Time Spanish-English Legal Interpreter for the Albuquerque office. The position is Monday thru Thursday with a full-time starting salary range of $62,392 - $127,141 pro-rated to 81% for 32.5 hours per week part-time.

The Federal Public Defender provides legal representation in federal criminal cases and related matters. Our office is committed to the pursuit of justice by zealously advocating in federal courts for the constitutional rights and inherent dignity of individuals who are charged with crimes in federal court and cannot afford their own attorney.

The Spanish language interpreter is a critical part of the defense team, working closely with our attorneys, investigators, social workers, paralegals, and other support staff. The Spanish language interpreter provides oral and written interpretation and translation services (to and from English) between members of a defender organization defense team and client(s). The interpreter meets with clients, family members, and witnesses in the office, court, jails, the field, or by telephone/video conference.

Primary Job Duties:
The Interpreter must be able to interpret/translate all forms of written and verbal communication. Written interpretations/translations include legal documents, correspondence, transcripts, treaties, psychological, medical, and other forensic reports and records, foreign documents, legal provisions, and other case related documents. Oral translations/interpretations include audio and video tape recordings; attorney-client interviews, witness interviews, telephone calls and conversations, in-person jail visits, official court proceedings, pre-sentence interviews and interviews with other government officials, as permitted by the court.

The Interpreter must maintain the confidentiality of all interpreted communications and the fact of such communications, at all times. The Interpreter assists the attorney to understand the cultural background of the client, based on the country of origin, as well as his/her level of comprehension with regard to the judicial process of the United States; helps the attorney establish a professional relationship with the client or witnesses; remains impartial in all situations, interpreting accurately and completely, without regard to the content of the communication. The Interpreter schedules their time to accommodate the needs of staff members who require assistance in and out of the office and performs all other duties as assigned. Frequent travel is required for jail visits, field work, client meetings and national visits.

Qualifications:
Applicants must have a high school degree or equivalent and at least three years of general experience and two-years of specialized experience. State Court Certification and/or American Translator Association certification preferred. Federal Court Certification preferred. Proficiency in consecutive and simultaneous communications, including familiarity with geographically based slang and colloquialisms preferred. Must have a valid driver's license and ability to travel as needed to jails, investigations, field offices, and trainings. Applicants will need to exercise good judgment, have general knowledge of office practices and legal processes, and the ability to type and use a personal computer. Social and emotional intelligence, effective people and communication skills, and the ability to work collaboratively in a team environment are essential. Ability to demonstrate considerable resourcefulness, organization, time management, initiative, tact, and discretion. The job duties and qualifications are representative of knowledge, skills and/or abilities necessary to perform the essential functions of the job satisfactorily.

Conditions of Employment:
Employment is subject to a satisfactory 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.

Salary and Benefits:
This is a part-time position with federal salary and benefits. **Part-time salary will be the equivalent of 81% of the full-time salary.** Salary commensurate with experience and certifications. The part-time schedule for this position is 32.5 hours/week Monday-Thursday. Candidates may seek additional employment opportunities that do not cause a conflict with schedule and cases. All résumé information, certifications, and references will be verified during the interview and selection process. Final appointment is subject to a satisfactory background investigation.

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:

Margaret Katze, Federal Public Defender
FDNM-HR@fd.org
Subject: **2026-26 Interpreter**

Application Deadline: Applications reviewed on a rolling basis with priority given to those who apply by January 4, 2027. 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. For more information about our office, please visit https://nm.fd.org/

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.

The Federal Public Defender operates under the authority of the Criminal Justice Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3006A.