

**FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER  
DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO**

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**POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Legal Assistant – Las Cruces**

2021-11

The Federal Public Defender for the District of New Mexico is accepting applications for a full-time Legal Assistant in the Las Cruces office. The federal defender organization operates under the Criminal Justice Act, 18 U.S.C. §3006A, to provide criminal defense and related help in federal courts. More than one position may be filled from this posting.

**Job Description:** This position provides secretarial and clerical support to the attorneys and staff utilizing advanced knowledge of legal terminology, Word and information processing software. Legal Assistants must understand district and circuit court rules and protocols; create, edit, and proofread legal documents, correspondence, and memoranda; transcribe dictation; perform cite checking and assemble documents for filing and mailing. Duties also include case management to include opening and closing cases in our case management system, screening and referring telephone calls and visitors; screening incoming mail; reviewing outgoing mail for accuracy; handling routine matters as authorized; assembling and attaching supplemental material to letters or pleadings as required; maintaining calendars; setting appointments as instructed; organizing and photocopying legal documents and case materials; and case file creation and management. Backing up and covering for other legal assistants, case management staff, and the receptionist is a mandatory component of this position.

The ideal candidate will have 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; exercise good judgment; have a general knowledge of office protocols and secretarial processes; analyze and recommend practical solutions; be proficient in Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat; have the ability to communicate effectively with assigned attorneys, other staff, clients, court agency personnel, and the public; and have an interest in indigent criminal defense. Must possess excellent communication and interpersonal skills, and be self-motivated while also excelling in a fast-paced team environment. Spanish fluency required.

**Requirements:** Minimum qualifications are high school graduate or equivalent and at least three years legal secretary experience, federal criminal experience preferred. Starting salary ranges from a JSP-6 to JSP-8, currently yielding \$39,311 to \$48,378 annually depending on experience.

**Salary and Benefits:** This position is full time with a comprehensive benefits package that includes: health and life insurance, vision and dental benefits, flexible spending accounts, paid time off, sick leave, leave for all federal holidays, participation in the Federal Employees' Retirement System, and participation in the Thrift Savings Plan with up to 5% government matching contributions. Salary is payable only by electronic funds transfer (direct deposit).

**Conditions of Employment:** Appointment to the position is contingent upon the successful completion of a background check and/or investigation including an FBI name and fingerprint check. All employees must be fully vaccinated for Covid-19 prior to entrance on duty. Employees of the Federal Public Defender are members of the judicial branch of government and are considered "at will." You must be a U.S. citizen or person authorized to work in the United States and receive compensation as a federal employee.

**Application Information:** In one PDF document, please submit a statement of interest and resume and three references to:

Melissa Read, Administrative Officer

[FDNM-HR@fd.org](mailto:FDNM-HR@fd.org)

Reference **2021-11** in the subject.

Applications must be received by September 15, 2021. Position(s) will remain open until filled and is subject to the availability of funding.

The Federal Public Defender is an equal opportunity employer. We seek to hire individuals who will promote the diversity of the office and federal practice.

**No phone calls please. Submissions not following this format will not be considered.  
Only those selected for interview will be contacted.**