

**OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA**

**POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT**

***PARALEGAL – CAPITAL HABEAS UNIT***

The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Florida is accepting applications for a Paralegal position in the Capital Habeas Unit, located in Tallahassee, Florida. The CHU represents death-sentenced prisoners in federal habeas corpus proceedings.

**CHU Values:** We value serving our clients through skilled collaboration, compassionate advocacy, and creativity. We value having a staff that reflects the community we are serving and encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply. We value working with resiliency, initiative, and enthusiasm.

**Description:** The CHU paralegal will be responsible for vital litigation tasks, including collecting evidence, exhibits, and information relating to criminal offenses and clients' life histories. This position will compile and maintain digests and indexes of substantive records; assist with overall data management; provide litigation and investigation support; and develop and maintain banks of substantive pleadings.

Paralegals perform legal research using all available resources including computer-assisted legal research tools; draft legal pleadings and correspondence; ensure completeness of documents; prepare and review cases in accordance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, precedents, policies, office practices and established procedures. This position may submit written reports, spreadsheets, digests, and indexes as needed. The paralegal will also assist with client, family, and witness contact and develop and maintains banks of substantive motions, briefs and jury instructions.

The paralegal will provide litigation support, including but not limited to working with the team to develop appropriate strategies to meet the litigation needs of each individual case and determine specific requirements for discovery and collection, review, analysis, production, and presentation of case materials; working closely with the team to understand substantive issues of the case so that the most effective tools can be identified and used; developing and using specific procedures, tools, and techniques to ensure quality control is maintained throughout the litigation; coordinating with counsel to develop and oversee the workflow and ensure that information captured using the chosen technology is properly communicated to the team and effectively used.

**Qualifications:** This position requires extremely high levels of organization and attention to detail and a strong work ethic. Applicants must be meticulous, dependable self-starters and have the ability to work well under the pressures of deadlines.

Applicants must possess strong oral and written communication skills, interpersonal skills, the ability to work well with others in a team-based approach, and the willingness to take direction from the CHU attorneys. Capital defense experience, criminal defense experience, and/or complex civil litigation experience as well as knowledge or experience in the mental health or social work fields are helpful but are not mandatory. Applicants must be a high school graduate or equivalent and have excellent computer skills, the ability to learn new programs, and experience working daily with Adobe Acrobat, Outlook, and Microsoft Word and Excel. Maturity, good judgment, and the ability to treat others with respect in times of high stress are necessary for this position. Empathy and dedication to the cause of our clients are essential traits.

A valid driver's license is required, as is residence in the general area of Tallahassee, Florida. Must be able to occasionally travel overnight and work non-traditional hours as needed.

**Application Process:** Applicants should email a cover letter, resume, and three references (in .pdf format) to [FLN\\_Resumes@fd.org](mailto:FLN_Resumes@fd.org). **The position will remain open until filled, but early applications are strongly encouraged. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.** Employment is conditioned upon a favorable background check. Salary will be based on experience, consistent with federal rules and regulations.

The position is subject to approval of funding. Multiple positions may be hired from this posting.

**Questions:** If you have any questions, please feel free to email Kimmy Sharkey, Assistant CHU Chief (kimberly\_sharkey@fd.org), or Terri Backhus, CHU Chief (terri\_backhus@fd.org).

The Office of the Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of Florida is an equal opportunity employer. Individuals from minority groups are encouraged to apply. To be eligible for hiring, an applicant must be a U.S. Citizen or a lawful permanent resident, who is eligible to work in the U.S. and is either currently seeking U.S. Citizenship or intends to become a U.S. Citizen when eligible, or must otherwise meet the citizenship requirements for employment. *See* <https://www.uscourts.gov/careers/search-judiciary-jobs/citizenship-requirements-employment-judiciary>.

Vacancy Announcement FY 2019-003