

United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit



APPLICATION FOR THE POSITION OF FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

March 2021

Information for Applicants

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Federal Public Defender (FPD) functions under the authority of 18 U.S.C. § 3006A(g)(2)(A) and the Criminal Justice Act Plan of the FPD's district and provides federal criminal defense services to individuals unable to afford counsel.

QUALIFICATIONS

To be qualified for appointment, an applicant must:

1. Be a member of at least one state bar and be a member in good standing of every bar in which they are admitted to practice;
2. Have been engaged in the active practice of criminal law for at least five years, preferably with significant federal criminal trial and appellate experience;
3. Possess the ability to effectively administer a federal public defender's office;
4. Possess and have a reputation for integrity and good character, commitment to equal justice under the law and vigorous representation of clients, and outstanding legal ability and competence (evidenced by substantial legal experience, ability to deal with complex legal problems, aptitude for legal scholarship and writing, and familiarity with courts and court processes);
5. Have a commitment to the vigorous representation of those unable to afford counsel; and
6. Not be related by blood or marriage to a judge of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals or the Ninth Circuit Judicial Council, or to a judge of the District Court to be served, within the degrees specified in 28 U.S.C. § 458 at the time of initial appointment.

POSITION AVAILABILITY

The position of Federal Public Defender for the Northern District of California is available upon successful completion of a background investigation.

SALARY AND APPOINTMENT TERM

The term of appointment is four years, with potential for appointment to successive terms based upon demonstration of highly satisfactory performance as determined by a broad survey and performance evaluation. The current authorized annual salary is \$172,500.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

All applications will be evaluated without regard to race, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, genetic information, age, disability, or service in the uniformed forces, in addition to any other status or characteristic protected under applicable federal law.

SELECTION PROCESS

Applicants should expect the entire selection and appointment process to take up to 12 months. A brief description of the process follows:

1. An ad hoc Local Screening Committee will review the applications timely received and interview candidates deemed “well qualified.” Interviews are usually held over a one or two-day period in the District in which the opening is located. The initial interview typically occurs within two months after the application period closes.
2. The Local Screening Committee ranks the top candidates interviewed and forwards those rankings in a report to the Ninth Circuit Standing Committee on Federal Public Defenders. The Standing Committee is composed of five circuit judges of the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, one district judge who sits as an ex-officio member, and one CJA panel attorney and one federal defender who serve as consultants. The Standing Committee considers the recommendations of the Local Screening Committee and interviews the top-ranked candidates. It forwards one name for nomination, vote, and appointment by the Court of Appeals.
3. Once the Court of Appeals votes, the nominee undergoes an Office of Personnel Management background investigation that must be satisfactorily completed before appointment to a four-year term. The investigation may take 3-6 months to complete. The nominee also must complete financial disclosure forms. Upon determination that the background investigation has been completed satisfactorily, the Court issues an Order of Appointment and makes a public announcement.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. All applications must be completed using the provided Microsoft Word form. **If copying and pasting verbiage from a separate document, please do so by right-clicking on the application form and choosing the “Keep Text Only” paste option.** If you have any technical difficulties with the form, contact the Office of the Circuit Executive at cja@ce9.uscourts.gov.
2. Navigate the application form by using the up and down arrow keys or the Tab key on your keyboard.
3. Transcripts from all law schools attended and evidence of good standing in all state bars in which membership is held must be submitted with the completed application.

4. Any letters of reference (optional) must be submitted with the completed application. Letters of reference should be addressed to the Circuit Executive for the Ninth Circuit. Letters received after the closing date, unless specifically requested by the Office of the Circuit Executive, will not be considered.
5. Complete, print, and sign the application as well as all authorizations and waivers.
6. Scan the completed and signed application and any attachments as one PDF document. Omit these instructions (pages i-iii) from the final PDF.
7. The application must be emailed in PDF format to cja@ce9.uscourts.gov. Please name the file: Lastname_Firstname.pdf. The file should be a complete scan of your application and all attachments.
8. Reference checks may be conducted upon receipt of the completed application, as explained in Section I of the application form. Such contacts are not limited solely to those persons named on the application as “references” but may include others familiar with your ability and character.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Your completed application, including all attachments, must be emailed to cja@ce9.uscourts.gov no later than **April 30, 2021**.

THE UNITED STATES COURTS ARE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYERS

If an applicant believes that they have been subjected to discriminatory treatment at any time during the recruitment process, or if an applicant has a complaint about any other aspect of the merit selection process, such complaint should be addressed to:

**Office of the Circuit Executive
Attn: Office of Workplace Relations
United States Courts for the Ninth Circuit
P.O. Box 193939
San Francisco, CA 94119-3939
workplacedirector@ce9.uscourts.gov**