

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT MIDDLE DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE

FEBRUARY 12, 2014

POSITION: Pro Se/Death Penalty Law Clerk (split position; permanent; full-time (subject to continuation of funding))

ANNOUNCEMENT NO.: 14/02

DUTY LOCATION: Nashville, Tennessee

GRADE LEVEL: JSP 11 Step 1 (\$57,982) to JSP 14 Step 10 (\$126,949), depending on experience and qualifications

START DATE: Position available immediately

OPEN PERIOD: Wednesday, February 12, 2014 to Wednesday, February 26, 2014

POSITION OVERVIEW:

The Pro Se/Death Penalty Law Clerk is a split position that provides legal assistance to the Court in connection with pro se/prisoner civil rights complaints; state habeas corpus petitions, including death penalty cases; and motions to vacate sentence in federal habeas corpus petitions. The incumbent independently performs substantive review of the case records and filings; conducts legal research; drafts proposed opinions, memoranda, and orders for each of the district judges; and provides information to chambers staff, court staff, and pro se filers.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES:

- Performs initial procedural and substantive review of documents in order to determine the proper course of action.
- Performs legal research and analysis and communicates results to judges orally and in writing. Reviews motions, briefs and records and prepares draft orders, reports, memoranda, or opinions regarding the request for relief.
- Presents cases and motions to judges and explains (orally and in writing) the proposed recommendation and any choices to be made.

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- Regarding death penalty cases, the pro se/death penalty law clerk researches applicable law and prepares recommendations to the Court regarding stays of execution, jurisdiction, scheduling, exhaustion of remedies, discovery, motions for evidentiary hearing, disposition on the merits, and certificates of appealability.
- Provides procedural information to pro se litigants by responding to questions.
- Remains current with developments in the law of the circuit and the district court, as well as with evolving legislation. Updates judges on those developments.
- Develops specialized expertise in particular areas of the law.

MANDATORY QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:

Eligibility: To be eligible for the position of Pro Se /Death Penalty Law Clerk at a grade JSP 11, an applicant must be a graduate from a law school of recognized standing. To be appointed at JSP 12, the applicant must have at least one year of legal work experience after graduation from law school and bar membership. To be appointed at JSP 13, two years of legal work experience after graduation from law school and bar membership is required. For appointment at JSP 14, experience as a law clerk to a federal judge is required. Prior legal experience or legal practice in fields dealing with death penalty law is highly desirable; for example, experience working in a state attorney general office or capital case defender office.

Other Requirements: Knowledge of federal laws, rules, and court procedures. Skill in legal research and analysis with the ability to summarize legal concepts and issues. Ability to draft memoranda and proposed legal opinions based on thorough research, sound reasoning and logical decision making. Outstanding skill in writing clearly, concisely and informatively. Ability to organize work, manage time effectively, establish priorities and meet tight deadlines while working independently under limited guidance and direction. Compliance with the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees and court confidentiality requirements, including handling confidential information in a variety of contexts.

BENEFITS:

- 10 paid holidays per year
- Paid annual leave in the amount of 13 days for the first three years
- 20 days per year leave after the first three years and 26 days per year after 15 years
- Sick leave in the amount of 13 days per year
- Retirement benefits
- Participation in the Thrift Savings Plan

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- Optional participation in Federal Employee Health Benefits, Life Insurance, Flexible Benefits programs
- Optional long-term care insurance and disability plans
- Credit for prior government service

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

- Employee must be a U.S. citizen or eligible to work in the U.S.
- Employees are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees a copy of which is available upon request.
- Employees of the U.S. District Court are Excepted Service Appointments. Excepted Service Appointments are “at will” and can be terminated at any time with or without cause.
- Employees are required to use Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) for payroll deposit
- Final candidate is subject to a background check.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Interested applicants are asked to submit **one PDF document** that contains a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and law school transcript. Please email the pdf document to applications@tnmd.uscourts.gov with the subject line “Pro Se/Death Penalty Law Clerk,” no later than close of business on Wednesday, February 26, 2014.

The best qualified applicants will be invited for a personal interview. Travel and relocation expenses will not be reimbursed.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER