FEDERAL PUBLIC DEFENDER
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

MITIGATION SPECIALIST

Posted: October 29, 2026 Location: Peoria, IL
Salary Range: $61,722 to $163,514 Duration: Permanent, full-time
Closing date: Open until filled, preference given to applications received by November 13, 2026

The Federal Public Defender for the Central District of Illinois is accepting applications for a Mitigation Specialist to support the Assistant Federal Public Defenders. The Federal Public Defender's Office operates under the authority of the Criminal Justice Act 18 U.S.C. § 3006A to provide defense services in federal criminal cases and related matters by appointment from the court to individuals unable to afford counsel. Our office is committed to providing the highest level of representation for our clients.

Duties. The Mitigation Specialist is bound by the rules of professional responsibility that govern the conduct of counsel respecting work product, privilege, diligence, and loyalty to the client. The Mitigation Specialist is responsible for developing and analyzing mitigation evidence for court proceedings to aid the court in making decisions regarding pretrial release, trial, and sentencing. In furtherance of these duties the Mitigation Specialist will:

- Assist attorneys in investigating, analyzing, developing, and presenting mitigation evidence.
- Develop and maintain relationships with clients, their family members, local social service providers, pretrial service and probation officers, and other entities to support both the client and attorney.
- Interview clients and relevant persons in a culturally competent manner.
- Locate and conduct witness interviews to discover information to assist the attorney in advocating for pretrial release and develop all mitigating circumstances in the client's life to assist at trial or sentencing.
- Obtain necessary client signatures and ensure all release forms are current and timely.
- Gather, investigate, validate, and report to attorney all aspects of client's life history obtained from multiple sources including vital records, social services records, educational records, employment and personnel records, military records, medical/health records, arrest reports, institutional records, community records, and interviews with persons relevant to the client.
- Determine what experts might be consulted and potentially retained to evaluate the client for substance abuse or mental illness.
- Facilitate client's entry into the necessary and available treatment, housing, educational, or vocational programs.
- Develop and maintain lists of inpatient and outpatient treatment facilities, short-term/low-income/homeless housing, and vocational training and educational programs.
- Maintain sufficient knowledge of current research and trends in areas such as substance abuse, mental health, and effects of incarceration.
- Assist the attorney in court where requested, including preparing sentencing presentations and testifying.

Requirements. To qualify for this position, the applicant must:

- Hold at least a bachelor's degree. An advanced or graduate degree in Social Work is preferred.
- Have a minimum of two years of specialized experience, which includes: conducting ongoing, exhaustive, and independent investigations of every aspect of the client's character, life history, record, and any

circumstances of the offense, or other factors, which may provide a basis for a lesser sentence; and maintaining complete and accurate files.
- Be committed to providing quality representation to indigent defendants.
- Have a working knowledge of criminal justice and correctional systems, mental health and other social services, psychology, and psychological testing.
- Be able to locate, obtain, review, analyze, and summarize relevant records.
- Possess excellent interviewing and writing skills.
- Be courteous, friendly, and professional with staff and clients.
- Have a reputation for personal integrity.
- Work well independently and prioritize and multi-task effectively.
- Have strong organization, communication (verbal and written), and collaboration skills.
- Have a valid driver's license and the ability to travel across the Central District of Illinois, as duties involve significant travel.

Spanish-language proficiency is desired but not required.

Salary and Benefits. Starting salary will be commensurate with experience. This position also offers full federal benefits, including:

- Federal Employees Retirement System
- Thrift Savings Plan with matching
- Health insurance
- Life insurance
- Dental and Vision insurance
- Annual leave
- Sick leave
- 11 paid holidays
- Paid Parental Leave
- Employee Assistance Program

Conditions of employment. Employees of the Federal Public Defender's Office are members of the judicial branch of government and are considered "at will" in the excepted service. Applicants must be United States Citizens or authorized to work in the United States. The successful candidate will be subject to a general background check as a condition of employment and may be subject to periodic updates. Direct deposit is required for payment of compensation to employees.

Application Instructions. Sending the following, in **one** PDF document, to:

ilchr@fd.org

(1) letter of interest
(2) current and detailed resume
(3) writing sample that has not been edited by others
(4) names and contact information for three work references who may be contacted
(5) completed AO78 Application for Judicial Employment

An email confirming receipt of the application materials will be sent to all applicants. Only those selected for interviews will receive further communication. ***No telephone inquiries please***. Costs associated with interviewing and relocation will not be reimbursed. All positions are subject to availability of funds. For more information about our office, visit http://ilc.fd.org.

The Federal Public Defender for the Central District of Illinois is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

AO 78 (5/24)

FEDERAL JUDICIAL BRANCH
APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

If you need additional space, continue under "Remarks" listing item number.

1. Name *(Last, First, Middle Initial)*

2. Phone Number

3. Present Address *(Street, City, State, Zip)*

4. Email Address

5. Place of Birth *(city/town, state, & country) (required for background investigation)*

6. Other Names Previously Used for Employment Purposes

7. Date of Birth *(complete only for law enforcement positions)*

N/A

GENERAL

8. Are you a U.S. Citizen? ☐ YES ☐ NO — If no, give the Country of your citizenship

9. a. Were you ever a federal civilian employee? ☐ YES ☐ NO — If yes, give highest civilian grade: _____ / _____ / _____ (Pay Plan / Grade / Step)

b. Are you receiving a federal civilian annuity payment? ☐ YES ☐ NO

c. Are you receiving federal severance pay? ☐ YES ☐ NO — If yes, give former agency contact/telephone: _____

d. Have you received a federal separation incentive payment in the past 5 years? ☐ YES ☐ NO — If yes, state mo/yr received and former agency contact/telephone:

10. Do you have any relatives who are Judges, Officers or employees of the United States Courts? ☐ YES ☐ NO — If yes, give their names, positions, and relationships to you.

11. Have you ever served on active duty with the military? ☐ YES ☐ NO *(If selected, you will need to provide your DD-214 (copy 4), Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, so that your service may be verified and credited)*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

12. During the last 5 years, have you been fired from any job for any reason, did you quit after being told that you would be fired, did you leave any job by mutual agreement because of specific problems, or were you debarred from Federal employment by the Office of Personnel Management or any other Federal agency? ☐ YES ☐ NO — If yes, provide in Section 18 the date, explanation of problem, reason for leaving, and employer's name/address.

13. Are you delinquent on any Federal debt? *(Include delinquencies arising from Federal taxes, loans, overpayment of benefits, and other debts to the U.S. Government, plus defaults of Federally guaranteed or insured loans (e.g., student loan, home mortgage loan)).* ☐ YES ☐ NO — If yes, provide in Section 18 the type, length, and amount of delinquency/default, and steps being taken to correct the error/repay the debt.

EDUCATION

14. a. Do you have a high school diploma or G.E.D. equivalent? ☐ YES ☐ NO

b. Name and location of colleges or universities attended *(including law schools)*	Dates Attended mm/dd/yyyy Start	Finish	Credit Hours Quarter	Semester	Type of Degree (if applicable)	Date Received mm/dd/yyyy	Grade Point Average and/or scholastic standing

15. Other schools or training attended *(list name/location of school, dates attended, subject studied, certificates received, and other pertinent data):*

JOB RELATED SKILLS, AWARDS, SPECIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

16. List any skills (e.g., language, computer, keyboarding speed), honors, awards, or special accomplishments (e.g., memberships in professional/honor societies, leadership activities, performance awards) that you believe are relevant to your ability to perform the job:

APPLICANTS FOR LEGAL POSITIONS

17. a. Are you admitted to the Bar? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If yes, list the name of Bar(s) and date(s) of admission.

Name of Bar:_____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy):_____
Name of Bar:_____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy):_____

b. Is your Bar membership? ☐ ACTIVE ☐ INACTIVE

If active, list the name of Bar(s).

Name of Bar:_____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy):_____
Name of Bar:_____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy):_____

c. What was your scholastic standing in law school? ☐ UPPER ½ ☐ UPPER ⅓ ☐ UPPER ¼

d. Were you a member of an editorial board of law review or a moot court participant? ☐ YES ☐ No

18. REMARKS *(Use this space for continuation of answers. List the item number being explained.)*

WORK EXPERIENCE

(Start with your present position and work back 10 years. Include any military service. Use additional page if necessary.)

A

Dates of Employment *(mm/dd/yyyy)* From: _____ To: _____	Number of hours worked per week: ☐ Full-Time ☐ Part-Time	Exact Title of Your Position
Salary or Earnings Starting $ _____ Per _____ Final $ _____ Per _____	Pay Plan/Grade *(If in federal Service)*	Place of Employment City _____ State _____
Name of Immediate Supervisor Title of Immediate Supervisor Business Telephone: (Area Code and Phone Number)		Name of Employer *(firm, organization, etc.)* Address of Employer
Reason for Leaving		
Description of Work		

B

Dates of Employment *(mm/dd/yyyy)* From: _____ To: _____	Number of hours worked per week: ☐ Full-Time ☐ Part-Time	Exact Title of Your Position
Salary or Earnings Starting $ _____ Per _____ Final $ _____ Per _____	Pay Plan/Grade *(If in federal Service)*	Place of Employment City _____ State _____
Name and of Immediate Supervisor Title of Immediate Supervisor Business Telephone: (Area Code and Phone Number)		Name of Employer *(firm, organization, etc.)* Address of Employer
Reason for Leaving		
Description of Work		

C

Dates of Employment *(mm/dd/yyyy)* From: _____ To: _____	Number of hours worked per week: ☐ Full-Time ☐ Part-Time	Exact Title of Your Position
Salary or Earnings Starting $ _____ Per _____ Final $ _____ Per _____	Pay Plan/Grade *(If in federal Service)*	Place of Employment City _____ State _____
Name of Immediate Supervisor Title of Immediate Supervisor Business Telephone: *(Area Code and Phone Number)*		Name of Employer *(firm, organization, etc.)* Address of Employer
Reason for Leaving		
Description of Work		

D

Dates of Employment *(mm/dd/yyyy)* From: _____ To: _____	Number of hours worked per week: ☐ Full-Time ☐ Part-Time	Exact Title of Your Position
Salary or Earnings Starting $ _____ Per _____ Final $ _____ Per _____	Pay Plan/Grade *(If in federal Service)*	Place of Employment City _____ State _____
Name of Immediate Supervisor Title of Immediate Supervisor Business Telephone: *(Area Code and Phone Number)*		Name of Employer *(firm, organization, etc.)* Address of Employer
Reason for Leaving		
Description of Work		

OPTIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION – RESPOND ONLY IF REQUIRED BY THE VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Answer questions 19, 20, and 21, only if required by the vacancy announcement. Your answers should include convictions resulting from a plea of nolo contendere (no contest), but omit (1) traffic fines of $300 or less, (2) any violation of law committed before your 16th birthday, (3) any violation of law committed before your 18th birthday if finally decided in juvenile court or under a Youth Offender law, (4) any conviction set aside under the Federal Youth Corrections Act or similar state law, and (5) any conviction for which the record was expunged under Federal or state law.

19. During the last 7 years, have you been convicted, imprisoned, on probation, or on parole? *(Include felonies, firearms or explosives violations, misdemeanors, and all other offenses)*	☐ YES	☐ NO	If yes, provide in Section 22 the date, explanation of violation, place of occurrence, and name/address of police dept or court.
20. Have you been convicted by a military court-martial in the past 7 years?	☐ YES	☐ NO	If yes, provide in Section 22 the date, explanation of violation, place of occurrence, and name/address of military authority or court.
21. Are you now under charges for any violation of law?	☐ YES	☐ NO	If yes, provide in Section 22 the date, explanation of violation, place of occurrence, and name/address of police dept or court.

22. REMARKS *(Use this space for continuation of answers. List the item number being explained.)*

APPLICANT CERTIFICATION

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information on and attached to this application is true, correct, complete and made in good faith. I understand that false or fraudulent information on or attached to this application may be grounds for not hiring me, or firing me after I begin work, and may be punishable by fine or imprisonment. I understand that any information I give may be investigated.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE SIGNED _____