



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Address: Joseph F. Weis Jr. Courthouse
700 Grant Street, Suite 3110
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Website: www.pawd.uscourts.gov



Position: Pro Se Law Clerk
Vacancy: 20-06
Duty Station: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*
Salary/Range: JSP 11 -14 (\$65,914 -\$144,316)**

*A request for a duty station in the Johnstown or Erie Courthouse may be considered. **Starting salary determined by qualifications, years of legal work experience, and bar membership. (See "Qualifications and Requirements" section of this Notice). Promotion potential up to target grade JSP 14 will be without further advertisement.

Overview

The Pro Se Law Clerk provides legal advice and assistance to the Court in connection with prisoner petitions and complaints. The Pro Se Law Clerk works primarily on prisoner habeas corpus and civil rights actions, and cases in which a plaintiff applies for in forma pauperis (IFP) status. This appointment and continued employment is made on a year to year basis and is subject to funding based upon the court's caseload. [Click here](#) to view a brief video about legal professionals working in the Courts.

Representative Duties

- Perform research and prepare draft orders, reports, and recommendations.
- Conduct substantive review and screening of all new prisoner pleadings (habeas corpus petitions and civil rights complaints) and all new cases in which a plaintiff files an IFP application,
- and make recommendations for appropriate disposition.
- Assist with IFP applications for appeals.
- Provide advice to Clerk's Office and Chambers staff on prisoner cases and IFP matters.
- Correspond with other courts, state and federal agencies, counsel, litigants and court staff regarding court rules and procedural issues, calendaring and other litigation matters.
- Evaluate present procedures to determine new innovations for increasing the effectiveness of handling complaints, petitions, and pleadings. Review the docket of pending prisoner and inmate litigation to ensure the proper progress of such cases and advise the Court of those cases where action by the Court is appropriate.
- Keep abreast of changes in the law to aid the Court in adjusting to new legislation in the pro se and area.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

How to Apply

Apply only through the court's online application tracking system which is accessed at the Employment Section (Court Info) of the Western District of Pennsylvania website: [Click here](#)

Please submit the following: a cover letter stating the reason for your interest in the position; a resume, including complete employment, educational history, skills, and experience; and a completed Application for Judicial Branch Federal Employment, AO78, which can be downloaded when applying or [Click here](#) Applicants will receive an email confirmation upon receipt. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Only applicants selected to participate in a personal interview will be notified and must travel at their own expense. Relocation expenses will not be reimbursed. Selected applicants will be asked at that time to submit contact information for three (3) professional references.

Important Dates

Opening: March 3, 2020
Closing: Open until filled. Preference will be given to those applications received by March 21, 2020.

District Overview

The District's jurisdiction encompasses the 25 western counties of Pennsylvania, with courthouses located in Erie, Johnstown and Pittsburgh. The District is comprised of United States District Judges, United States Senior District Judges, United States Magistrate Judges and approximately 125 employees.

Qualification and Requirements

- Must be a law school graduate (or be certified as having completed all law school studies and requirements and merely awaiting conferment of degree) from a law school of recognized standing.
- Standing within the upper one-third of the class at a law school that is accredited by the American Bar Association, law review experience, moot court experience, publication of a noteworthy article in a law school publication, or prior legal employment is preferred.
- A background in prisoner habeas corpus and civil rights actions is preferred.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills are required.
- Strong organizational skills and the ability to prioritize work are required.

JSP Grade	Legal Experience	Bar Membership Required
11	0	no
12	1	yes
13	2	yes
14	3	yes

Legal work experience that will be considered in determining salary means progressively responsible experience in the practice of law, in legal research, legal administration, or equivalent experience received after graduation from law school. Major or substantial legal activities while in military service may be credited, on a month-for-month basis whether before or after graduation, but not to exceed one year if before graduation. Appointment to JSP-12 or above requires the candidate be a member of the bar of a state, territory, or federal court of general jurisdiction.

Organizational Relationship

This position is assigned as Court Staff for the U.S. District Court, Western District of Pennsylvania, and is appointed by the Chief Judge.

Benefits

Employees are eligible for a full range of benefits to include retirement, health and life insurance, flexible benefits, long-term care insurance, paid holidays, and annual and sick leave accrual.

[Click here](#) for additional information.

Background Investigation

This position is classified as a sensitive position which requires the selected candidate to submit to a background clearance, which will include a criminal history, credit and FBI fingerprint check as a condition of employment and may be subject to periodic updates. The selected candidate will be hired provisionally pending the successful completion of the required background check and favorable employment suitability determination. A negative finding from the background check may result in termination of employment. All information provided by applicants is subject to verification. Applicants are advised that false statements or omission(s) of information on any application materials may be grounds for non-selection, withdrawal of an offer of employment or dismissal after being employed.

Applicant Information

Employees must adhere to a [Code of Conduct](#). The Court provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. Veterans' preference is not a factor used in Judicial Branch appointments. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents seeking U.S. citizenship. Positions with the U.S. Courts are excepted service appointments, which are "at will" and may be terminated with or without cause. The selected candidate will be subject to a probationary term for a period of six months. Employees are required to use electronic funds transfer for payroll deposit. The court reserves the right to modify the conditions of this job announcement, to withdraw the job announcement, and/or to commence interviews immediately, any of which may occur without prior written or other notice. In the event a position becomes vacant in a similar classification within a reasonable time from the original announcement, the Court may select an appointee from the candidates who responded to the initial announcement without re-posting the vacancy.

The United States District Court, Western District of Pennsylvania is an Equal Opportunity Employer.