



## 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](http://www.pawd.uscourts.gov)



**Position:** Pro Se Law Clerk (Part-Time)  
**Vacancy:** 21-06  
**Duty Station:** Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
**Salary:** JSP Grade 11-14, (\$33,286 - \$72,880)  
*commensurate with experience, and qualifications*

#### Overview

Our Pro Se Law Clerks provide 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 are 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

- Performs substantive screening after filing of all prisoner and inmate petitions and motions, including state habeas corpus petitions, motions to vacate sentence, and civil rights complaints.
- Drafts appropriate recommendations and proposed orders for the Court's review.
- Reviews filed complaints, petitions, and pleadings to determine issues involved and basis for relief.
- Performs research, as required, to assist the Court in preparing opinions.
- Maintains liaison between the Court and litigants.
- Evaluates present procedures to determine new innovations for increasing the effectiveness in handling pro se complaints, petitions, and pleadings.
- Reviews the docket of pending prisoner and inmate litigation to assure the proper progress of such cases and advises the Court of those cases where action by the Court is appropriate.
- Compiles statistics and prepares periodic reports, as required, that reflect the status and flow of cases. Identifies problem areas, makes recommendations, and offers solutions, as required by the Court, Administrative Office, and other officials.
- Keeps abreast of changes in the law in the pro se area.
- Provides information, guidance, and advice to the Court and other staff working in the pro se area. Advises appropriate personnel on the status of cases.
- Performs other related 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; a writing sample; 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 candidates selected for interview will be notified and must travel at their own expense. A video interview may be scheduled instead of an in-person interview. Relocation expenses will not be reimbursed.

#### Important Dates

Position Available: September 13, 2021  
Opening: June 10, 2021  
Closing: Open until filled. Preference will be given to those applications received by July 6, 2021.

#### 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 165 employees.

## Qualification 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.
- 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 is defined as 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.

## 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. 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 Clerk of Court may select an appointee from the candidates who responded to the initial announcement without posting the vacancy.

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