

**STAFF ATTORNEYS - LEGAL DIVISION  
UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE THIRD CIRCUIT**

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Announcement Date: **April 11, 2024**

Position Title: **Career Staff Attorney**

Number of Vacancies: **1 or 2**

Location: **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

Position Type: **Full-Time, Career**

Starting Date: **May 2024**

Classification Level: **CL-29 (\$91,024 - \$147,946) or CL-30 (\$107,565 - \$174,823) (CL Level will be determined based upon qualifications and experience, and funding.)**

Closing Date: **Open until filled.**

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The United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit invites applications from qualified individuals for the position of Career Staff Attorney.

**POSITION OVERVIEW AND OFFICE ENVIRONMENT**

Staff Attorney Offices were created in the United States Courts of Appeals by act of Congress in 1976. Staff Attorneys serve the Court at large and are essential in furthering the disposition of cases before the Court. In the Third Circuit, approximately twenty-five attorneys work with a dedicated administrative staff in a highly collegial environment. Career staff attorneys provide experience, depth, and continuity to the office and report to our established group of supervisory attorneys. At times, career staff attorneys may work directly with the Director or Chief Deputy. Career staff attorneys also interact with the term staff attorneys who join the office at regular intervals. Some career attorneys may be involved in training, mentoring, and reviewing the work of less-experienced staff attorneys.

[Learn more about careers in the judiciary.](#)

**Responsibilities:**

- Conducting legal research, analyzing options, and drafting memoranda, per curiam opinions, and orders for the Court;
- Responding to questions from supervisory staff and judges concerning individual cases and drafting supplemental memoranda or opinions, as needed;
- Maintaining and further developing expertise in the core areas of law the office works in most frequently, including habeas corpus, civil rights and constitutional law, appellate jurisdiction, federal civil and criminal procedure;
- Maintaining or further developing expertise in the areas of law the office works in less frequently, including immigration, capital habeas, and bankruptcy.
- Maintaining or further developing expertise with the state and territorial laws within the Third Circuit;
- Effectively managing a case load that involves a wide range of subject matter and often includes complex and atypical issues; and
- Meeting office standards for quality, quantity, prioritization, and timeliness of case work.

- CL-29 attorneys are expected to work independently, requiring supervisory assistance only in novel or exceptionally complex cases, and produce written work that complies with the Court's standards with little need for revision.
- CL-30 attorneys are expected to possess substantial skill in writing and editing legal documents with considerable accuracy and speed. They must work independently with only occasional supervisory guidance and direction, complete a higher volume of casework than CL-29 attorneys, and work on capital habeas cases.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### CL-29 Career Attorneys

At a minimum, qualified applicants must have at least two years of specialized experience in the areas of habeas corpus, civil rights and constitutional law, appellate jurisdiction, and federal civil and criminal procedure. Applicants must have a strong academic background; significant skill in research and writing; excellent oral and written communication skills; maturity, good judgment; high ethical standards; demonstrated flexibility in handling work assignments; demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and effectively manage work; and a positive work attitude. Bar admission is required.

Federal Staff Attorney or Judicial Law Clerk experience is preferred.

### CL-30 Career Attorneys

At a minimum, qualified applicants must have at least three years of specialized experience in the areas of habeas corpus, civil rights and constitutional law, appellate jurisdiction, and federal civil and criminal procedure. Applicants must have a strong academic background; substantial skill in research and writing; excellent oral and written communication skills; maturity, good judgment; high ethical standards; demonstrated flexibility in handling work assignments; demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and effectively manage work; and a positive work attitude. Bar admission is required.

Capital habeas corpus experience is preferred. Federal Staff Attorney or Judicial Law Clerk experience is preferred.

## **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

The following documents are required: (1) cover letter, (2) resumé, (3) law school transcript; (4) list of three professional references with current contact information, (5) self-edited writing sample that demonstrates analytical ability, and (6) completed and signed AO-78, *Application for Federal Judicial Branch Employment* (version dated 3/24). These documents must be submitted on-line at [www.ca3.uscourts.gov/vacancy-announcements](http://www.ca3.uscourts.gov/vacancy-announcements) in a single PDF document. The application form (AO-78) is available at [Application for Judicial Branch Federal Employment | United States Courts \(uscourts.gov\)](#).

## **BENEFITS**

Federal benefits include paid vacation based on years of service, paid holidays, paid sick leave, paid parental leave (eligibility based on certain requirements), health and life insurance plans, Federal Employees Retirement System, and Thrift Savings Plan (similar to 401K plan). Eligibility for Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program and mass transit subsidies.

## **DUTY STATION AND WORK SCHEDULE**

The position is located in Philadelphia, PA. Some work schedule flexibility is offered (e.g., varying starting and ending times, within parameters). Hybrid/partial telework schedule currently offered.

## **CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

Candidates must be United States citizens, with limited exceptions. Positions with the United States Courts are excepted service appointments that are “at will” and can be terminated with or without cause by the Court. Employee appointments are provisional and contingent upon the satisfactory completion of a background investigation. Direct deposit of pay is required.

The selectee for this position is subject to a criminal record check and satisfactory adjudication by the employing office to be eligible for employment. Candidates will not be asked about their criminal history prior to receiving a tentative offer of employment. Candidates completing the AO-78 are not required to complete questions 18-20 regarding criminal history. Criminal history is not in itself disqualifying. All available information, past and present, favorable, and unfavorable, about the reliability and trustworthiness of an individual will be considered when making an employment suitability determination. Providing false and/or misleading information may be grounds for removal from the application and selection process, as well as disciplinary action if discovered after an individual’s date of hire.

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**The Federal Judiciary recognizes the importance and value of diversity in its workforce. Applicants from diverse groups and backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply. The Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit is committed to equal opportunity for all applicants.**

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