

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # PDS-2010-02

PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

**APPELLATE ATTORNEY
PDS 11/12/13/14 (GS-11/12/13/14 Equivalent)**

Opening Date: April 1, 2010

Closing Date: Until Filled

Location: Public Defender Service
633 Indiana Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Promotion Potential: If this position is filled at a lower grade, incumbent will have promotion potential to PDS-14 (GS-14 equivalent).

Agency Background: PDS is a federally funded, independent organization that provides legal representation to the indigent citizens of the District of Columbia who are charged with criminal offenses and are facing a loss of liberty. PDS has approximately 235 employees, mostly located at the main office at 633 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC. DC residency is not a requirement for employment. There are approximately 125 attorneys at PDS. In addition to the legal staff, there are social workers, investigators, and administrative and technical staff that work with the legal staff to advance the PDS mission. PDS is funded by federal appropriations and all employees are entitled to federal benefits including health and life insurance, federal retirement, and the Thrift Savings Plan. Transferring employees will receive recognition of creditable federal service for leave accrual and retirement purposes. Employment at the Public Defender Service is not federal employment.

Division Background: The PDS Appellate Division is a group of fewer than twenty lawyers committed to providing persuasive written and oral advocacy, primarily in criminal appeals in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, the jurisdiction's highest court, and in collateral proceedings ancillary to that appellate representation. The Division consists of appellate specialists, with excellent research, writing and oral persuasion skills, permanently assigned to the Division, and Trial Division attorneys on a twelve-month assignment. Attorneys present oral argument in every direct appeal case. All attorneys, including supervisors, receive intensive guidance on their cases; attorneys are expected and encouraged to discuss case theory and case presentation with colleagues in all PDS legal divisions; and rigorous moot courts precede oral arguments. The Division regularly participates as *amicus curiae* in the Court of Appeals.

Major Duties: An Appellate Division attorney is expected to handle criminal appeals in the District of Columbia Court of Appeals. The attorney must be able to work well with clients and write and argue a substantial number of appellate briefs in serious criminal cases each year. Other responsibilities include representing clients in post-conviction proceedings, participating in moot courts for colleagues and advising and training Public Defender Service and Criminal Justice Act attorneys on legal issues and appellate practice.

Qualifications Required: J.D. or equivalent degree from an accredited law school; membership in District of Columbia Bar or eligibility for reciprocity admission to the DC Bar; and excellent research, writing, and oral persuasion skills.

Preferred Experience: Preferred qualifications include experience as an appellate attorney, experience representing indigent clients in criminal cases, and experience preparing and presenting cases in trial courts.

How to Apply: Applicants must submit: (1) a resume that includes a list of three references (name, address, telephone number, and a statement of how each reference is able to evaluate your skills), (2) a legal writing sample, preferably a brief or other advocacy piece, (3) Response to the question (no more than three double spaced typewritten pages): Why do you want to be an appellate public defender?, and (4) an official law school transcript. With the exception of the law school transcript, all materials must be submitted online through the PDS website at <http://www.pdsdc.org/Employment/JobOpportunities.aspx>. Please mail your official transcript to:

Jennifer Thomas, Director of Legal Recruiting
Attention PDS-2010-02
The Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia
633 Indiana Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20004

Equal Opportunity Employer