

Position Recruitment Announcement

Position Title: Term Staff Attorney (One year term subject to renewal for up to 4 years.)

Duty Station: New Orleans, Louisiana

Opening Date: October 5, 2026

Closing Date: October 26, 2026

Starting Salary/Range: CL 27/25 (\$59,732) to CL 29/61 (\$138,380) (depending on experience)

The Staff Attorneys' Office (SAO) for the Fifth Circuit is accepting applications for the position of Term Staff Attorney.

Position Overview: Staff attorneys assist the court in screening direct criminal appeals, pro se prisoner cases, and immigration cases through the preparation of legal memoranda, opinions, and orders. Staff attorneys also address federal and state pro se prisoner applications for certificates of appealability and for leave to proceed in forma pauperis. The work of staff attorneys is analogous to that of personal law clerks, except the staff attorneys work for the Court as a whole, rather than for individual judges. Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications:

- J.D. degree from a law school of recognized standing.
- Strong academic credentials; law review, moot court, or equivalent legal research experience preferred.
- Superior analytical, research and writing skills and proficiency in computer-assisted research, Windows and Word.
- Good communication and interpersonal skills are essential.



U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

The Fifth Circuit is composed of the States of Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi and represents the second largest circuit (both in case filings and authorized personnel) in the federal court system.

Other:

Applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. The court reserves the right to modify the conditions of this job announcement, withdraw the announcement, fill the position(s) sooner than the closing date, or extend the closing date, any of which actions may occur without any prior written notice. Due to the anticipated high volume of applicants, only those individuals selected for an interview will receive notice.

Known for its charm, resilience, and unmatched culture, New Orleans blends a rich history with a vibrant present. The city's world-renowned cuisine, thriving live music scene, and subtropical climate draw professionals, artists, and innovators alike.

The Staff Attorneys' Office is located in the heart of Downtown New Orleans, just steps from the historic French Quarter, National WWII Museum, and Superdome. Nearby neighborhoods like the Marigny, Garden District, and Mid-City showcase the city's distinctive architecture and strong sense of community.

From the dazzling parades of Mardi Gras to the city's dozens of annual festivals, New Orleans fosters a spirit of creativity and celebration of life unlike anywhere else.



John Minor Wisdom Courthouse

The John Minor Wisdom Courthouse occupies an entire city block adjacent to Lafayette Square. The Italian Renaissance building – which is noted for the impressive detail and ornament in its lobby and three courtrooms – is listed in the National Register for Historic Places. Since the 1970s, the building has been solely occupied by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals.

BENEFITS

- Paid vacation time from 13 to 26 days per year, depending on length of federal service
- 13 paid sick days per year
- 11 paid holidays per year
- Term staff attorneys are not eligible to participate in the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) or the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) (unless they are appointed without a break in service from another federal position in which they were eligible for these benefits)
- Qualifying employment for Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program
- Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB)
- Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance (FEDVIP)
- Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FGLI)
- Social Security
- Flexible spending accounts for healthcare, dependent care, and commuter expenses
- Federal Occupational Health Services Program (FOH)
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Work/Life Services Program
- On-site physical fitness facility
- Potential for some regular and recurring telework

The United States Circuit Court falls within the Judicial Branch of the U.S. Government. Policy for the Judicial Branch is determined by the Judicial Conference of the United States. An overview of Federal Judiciary benefits is

HOW TO APPLY

Qualified individuals must submit all of the following to be considered:

- A cover letter
- A detailed resume, including law school class rank and/or percentile or brief explanation as to why this information is unavailable.
- Law school transcript
- Self-edited writing sample. The writing sample should reflect the writing and analytical skills solely of the applicant, and the applicant should be prepared to discuss it if called for an interview. The writing sample should not exceed 15 pages. Law review articles are not accepted.
- List of at least three professional references.

Complete application packets must be submitted via email as a single pdf document with reference "Term Staff Attorney" in the subject line to:

saohumanresources@ca5.uscourts.gov

Applicants who are interviewed will complete a writing exercise on the day of the interview.

Funding is not available for interviewee travel or relocation expenses.

Conditions of Employment

Applicants must be U.S. citizens or eligible to work for the federal government. The selected candidate will be subject to a background check and subsequent favorable suitability determination as a condition of employment. Federal court employees are excepted service appointments. Excepted service appointments are "at will" and can be terminated with or without cause by the court. Employees are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees. Employees are required to use the Electronic Fund Transfer (direct deposit) for payment of net pay.

THE UNITED STATES COURTS ARE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYERS.