

**UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**



**Announcement 2022-04**

<b>Position Title:</b>	<b>CJA Administrative Attorney      CL 27</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Circuit Mediation and Judicial Support Office, Fifth Circuit - New Orleans, Louisiana</b>
<b>Salary Range/Grade:</b>	<b>CL 27 (\$52,967 - \$86,084 per annum). The presumptive starting salary is \$66,214 for a person with appropriate work experience. A salary in excess of this figure would be considered only for a candidate with extraordinary, relevant experience or qualifications, and a salary history supporting such an offer.</b>
<b>Closing Date:</b>	<b>Multiple positions may be filled from this announcement. Applications will be considered as soon as received and will continue to be considered until filled. The United States Court of Appeals, Fifth Judicial Circuit, is an Equal Opportunity Employer.</b>

**Overview:**

The Circuit Mediation and Judicial Support Office (CMJSO) invites applications from qualified persons for the position of CJA Administrative Attorney. Under the supervision of the Chief Circuit Mediator, and working with the other members of the office, the CJA Administrative Attorney coordinates the court's Criminal Justice Act (CJA) voucher program and plans and executes all case-related and other functions of that program. In addition to mediation and CJA voucher review, CMJSO assists the Chief Circuit Judge and the Fifth Circuit in matters of judicial conduct and disability, attorney discipline, case budgeting, and pro bono representations.

**Representative Duties:**

The primary responsibilities of the CJA Administrative Attorney are to conduct reasonableness review of compensation claims that are submitted by attorneys appointed under the CJA, process vouchers using computer database applications, and to advise judges, court staff, and appointed counsel as needed on CJA matters. See the addendum for an overview of the CJA voucher process. Duties include: 1) preparing memoranda to the Chief Circuit Judge and the Chief Circuit Judge's designee(s) on CJA vouchers, 2) preparing regular and *ad hoc* statistical reports; 3) providing advice/training on CJA compensation, policies, and related subjects to appointed counsel, district court CJA staff, and judges; 4) fielding inquiries about the CJA process and CJA vouchers, including inquiries from judges, court personnel, and appointed counsel; 5) assisting judges on issues of CJA panel attorneys' performance and potential disqualification, and 6) completing special projects assigned by the Chief Circuit Mediator.

### **Qualifications and Requirements:**

A JD degree from an accredited law school in the United States or an equivalent degree from an institution elsewhere is required. Membership in the bar of a state or territory is not an absolute prerequisite, but the inability to pass a bar examination would very likely be disqualifying. Criminal law practice experience a plus.

In addition to interpretation and application of CJA statutes, plans, guidelines and policies to fee applications in criminal cases, and other work of the court, the duties of the position include administrative work with databases and billing review. The position requires strict confidentiality of sensitive information. Preferred skills include:

1. Meticulous attention to detail, intelligent adherence to procedural requirements, the utmost judgment and discretion, and absolute compliance with the office's requirements of confidentiality.
2. Effective oral and written communication skills, including preparing, editing and proofreading memoranda, reports and other documents to individual judges and to court staff with attention to presentation, format, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and style and dealing with telephone inquiries and conducting conferences.
3. Ability to interpret and apply statutes, rules and regulations, policies and guidelines relevant to the duties required of the position.
4. Proficiency in the use of computer programs, including database and word processing applications, with sufficient keyboard skills to allow data entry to be accomplished quickly.
5. Initiative to prioritize workloads and effectively manage multiple and time-sensitive projects.
6. Ability to work harmoniously with senior administrative personnel within the court system.

### **Application Procedure:**

Qualified applicants must submit a cover letter, résumé, and salary history, via email with the required documentation as readily accessible attachments (Word, or .pdf) to: [vacancy@ca5.uscourts.gov](mailto:vacancy@ca5.uscourts.gov)

Applications will be considered as soon as received and will continue to be considered until the position is filled. Applicants should therefore submit applications as soon as possible, even if they are not immediately available to begin work.

**Information for Applicants:**

- Only qualified applicants who submit complete applications will be considered for this position.
- Applicants must be United States citizens or [otherwise eligible to work in the federal court system](#).
- The court provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities.
- Funding is not available to support interviewee travel or relocation expenses.
- The selected applicant must provide educational transcripts. A background investigation, including fingerprint and records check, will be conducted as a condition of employment.
- All employees of the Judiciary are “at will” employees in the excepted service.
- The position is subject to mandatory electronic funds transfer for payment of salary.
- The court reserves the right to modify the conditions of this job announcement, withdraw the job announcement, or fill the position, any of which actions may occur without any prior written or other notice.

**ADDENDUM: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION  
ON THE CJA VOUCHER PROCESS**

Under the Criminal Justice Act (CJA), private attorneys are appointed to represent indigent criminal defendants. The person in the posted position will be responsible for reviewing and processing vouchers through which these attorneys are paid.

At the conclusion of a criminal proceeding in a district court, an appointed attorney submits an electronic voucher, setting out the hours worked and expenses incurred in the representation, and attaching detailed time sheets and documentation of expenses as required. The voucher is reviewed and approved by the presiding district court judge. If the amount exceeds specified limits, the voucher must be sent to the Court of Appeals for approval by the Chief Circuit Judge, or a judge to whom this authority has been delegated. The voucher must be carefully examined for reasonableness and compliance with applicable regulations and policies. A memorandum for the judge must be prepared for each voucher setting out an assessment of the claim for payment in the light of the attorney’s work product and outlining the procedural history of the case and the work required of the attorney during the course of the proceedings.

Vouchers for appointed counsel’s work on appeal undergo a similar process. Payment in excess of certain specified limits require approval by a circuit judge, and a memorandum similar to the one described above must be prepared.

The volume of submissions is high, and the workload is heavy. In a recent calendar year, over 700 appellate vouchers and approximately 430 excess district court vouchers were submitted. Although the Chief Circuit Mediator and the more senior attorneys in the office are always available for consultation, the position requires assuming responsibility for maintaining assigned workflow without over-the-shoulder supervision. Backlogs cannot be tolerated.

The incumbent will regularly interact with circuit and district court judges throughout the Fifth Circuit. Regular communication with CJA-appointed attorneys is required – to answer general questions, to respond to inquiries about voucher status, and to allow attorneys to provide further information when questions are raised about the amounts requested. Periodic reports must be prepared for the court about the operations of the office, and there are sometimes requests for more detailed statistical analyses of particular aspects of the appointment and payment process.

The applicant should provide evidence of education and experience that demonstrates a high level of comfort in working with computer applications, applying rules accurately and precisely, and with accepting the substantial responsibilities and workload of the position. Communication with judges, court personnel, and attorneys is an important aspect of the position; skills in this area are also required and should be demonstrated in the application.

## **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

The fringe benefits offered to employees of the United States Courts include:

- 13 days paid annual leave per year for the first three years of service.
- 20 days paid annual leave per year after three years of service.
- 26 days paid annual leave per year after 15 years of service.
- 13 days paid sick leave accrued per year.
- 11 paid holidays per year, plus Mardi Gras day.
- Choice of medical, dental, and vision coverage from a wide variety of plans.
- Life, long-term disability, and long-term care insurance options.
- Participation in the Federal Employees Retirement System.
- Participation in the Thrift Savings Plan (similar to 401k, with matching \$).
- Pre-tax flexible spending accounts (medical and dependent care).
- Transit/Parking subsidy (subject to the availability of funds).