

Visiting Federal Defender Program United States Sentencing Commission

The United States Sentencing Commission has a Visiting Federal Defender program in Washington, D.C. which allows an Assistant Federal Defender (AFD) to be detailed to the Commission. **This detail position is now available. The start date is flexible but is no later than June 1, 2025, and the detail will run through May 31, 2026.**

Responsibilities of the detailee include: (1) in-depth legal research on issues related to federal sentencing and the federal sentencing guidelines, including analyzing statutes, proposed legislation, case law, and governmental and other reports; (2) preparation of legal memoranda and analytical reports; (3) preparation of oral and written responses to inquiries from Commissioners, Commission staff, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation officers, judges, and the public; (4) preparation of training materials for practitioners and judges on sentencing and guidelines practice; (5) preparation of memoranda and draft language of proposed amendments to the federal sentencing guidelines; and (6) participation in staff working groups that focus on new legislation, guideline amendments, and other sentencing issues.

The Visiting Federal Defender program benefits federal defenders by providing an in-depth view of the Commission's amendment process and exposure to the development of sentencing priorities and policy. It also offers an opportunity to hone a specialized set of research and analytical skills. The program enhances the communication and working relationship between the Commission and the federal defender community by providing the Commission direct input from AFDs from across the country.

Experienced AFDs are encouraged to apply. Applicants must possess excellent written and oral communication skills. Applicants must be able to express, orally and in writing, complex legal issues in clear and succinct language that both lawyers and non-lawyers understand. Applicants must also demonstrate the capacity to work effectively with others.

Prior to applying to the program, applicants must obtain the approval of their Defender.

The person selected for this temporary duty assignment will continue to be an employee of their respective federal defender office, which will continue to pay all salary and benefits. In addition to the regular salary, the detailee will receive a stipend from the Commission for housing in Washington and per diem while on the temporary assignment. A certain number of round-trips home will also be provided for by the Commission.

Please direct any questions to Max Wolson, Sentencing Resource Counsel, at Max_Wolson@fd.org. Applications (cover letter, resume, and writing sample) should be sent to Heather Williams, Chair of the Federal Defender Sentencing Guideline Committee, c/o Valerie Duckett, at Valerie_Duckett@fd.org. **Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, but preference will be given to applications received by November 4, 2024.**