



U. S. District Court Southern District of Mississippi

Death Penalty Law Clerk Vacancy Announcement MSSD-2022-01

POSITION

DEATH PENALTY LAW CLERK

LOCATION

Jackson, Mississippi

SALARY/TARGET

JSP 11-14*

The full-time starting salary ranges from JSP-11/01 (\$66,214) to JSP 14/01 (\$111,521)

*Actual salary will be dependent on relevant experience and bar membership.

POSITION AVAILABLE

April 12, 2022

APPLICATION CLOSING DATE

5:00 pm CST
Monday, February 28, 2022.

ANNOUNCEMENT

MSSD-2022-01

The U. S. District Court, Southern District of Mississippi, is an Equal Opportunity Employer

POSITION OVERVIEW / RESPONSIBILITIES

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Death Penalty Law Clerk.

Incumbent will report to the Chief District Judge but will be assigned to assist federal district and magistrate judges in the post-conviction habeas corpus review of state death-penalty cases and the review of motions to vacate federal death sentences. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, conducting research, performing substantive screening, and drafting appropriate recommendations and orders.

Representative Duties:

- Independently conduct legal research and keep abreast with developments in the law regarding capital habeas cases in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court.
- Draft memoranda of law on multiple issues regarding complex capital habeas cases
- Review voluminous state-court records and trial transcripts.
- Consult with judges regarding capital habeas issues and cases.

Qualifications/Requirements: Applicants must be a United States citizen or eligible to work in the United States. To qualify for the position of death penalty law clerk, an individual must be a law-school graduate (or be certified as having completed all law school studies and requirements and merely awaiting conferment of degree) from an accredited law school, and have demonstrated one of the following accomplishments or proficiencies:

- (a) Standing within the upper third of the law-school class from an accredited law school on the approved list of either the American Bar Association or the Association of American Law Schools;
- (b) Experience on the editorial board of a law review of such a school;
- (c) Graduation from such a school with an LLM degree; or
- (d) Proficiency in legal studies that, in the opinion of the appointing judge, is the equivalent of one of the above. Some examples of criteria that are considered to be acceptable as equivalent include, but are not limited to:
 1. Publication of a noteworthy article in a law school student publication or other scholarly publication;
 2. Special high-level honors for academic excellence in law school, such as election to the Order of the Coif;
 3. Winning a moot court competition or membership on a moot court team that represents the law school in competition with other law schools;
 4. Participation in the legal aid or other law-school clinical program sanctioned by the law-school;* or other law-school clinical program sanctioned by the law-school;* or

5. Summer experience as a law clerk to a state or local judge or law-clerk experience on a continuing basis in a private firm while attending school (i.e., working one's way through college).*
 (*To receive credit, participation and experience could not have been for academic credit.)

Legal Work Experience. Legal work experience is progressively responsible experience in the practice of law, in legal research, legal administration, or equivalent experience received after graduation from law school. Major or substantial legal activities while in military service may be credited, on a month-for-month basis whether before or after graduation, but not to exceed one year if before graduation.

JSP Grade Level	Years of Legal Work Experience	Bar Membership Required
11	0	No
12	1	Yes
13	2	Yes
14	3	Yes

BENEFITS

The judiciary offers a generous benefits package which includes:

- 11 paid holidays
- Medical insurance options (requires employee contribution)
- Life insurance options (requires employee contribution)
- Long-term care plan options
- Retirement, including participation in the Thrift Savings Plan
- Flexible spending account options

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

- Employees of the federal judiciary serve under “Excepted Appointments” and are considered “at-will” employees and can be terminated with or without cause at any time with the exception of Probation Officers, who must be removed for cause per 18 U.S.C. §362.
- Employees of the judiciary are required to use direct deposit for their salary payments.
- Candidates must be citizens of the United States of America or be eligible to work in the United States.
- As a condition of employment, the selected candidate will be subject to an FBI background check. All information provided by applicants is subject to verification and background investigation. Applicants are advised that false statements or omission of information on any application material may be grounds for non-selection, withdrawal or an offer of employment, or dismissal after being employed.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Qualified applicants should submit a single PDF document including:

- A cover letter of application, resume of qualifications, to include educational and employment experience, and at least three references and recommendation letters;
- Two legal-writing samples, at least one of which is not a law-journal article; and
- A completed Application for Judicial Branch Employment (AO 78), which is available at <https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/ao078.pdf>

to: hr_manager@mssd.uscourts.gov (SUBJECT: DPLC - MSSD-2022-01)

Applications will be accepted until 5:00 pm CST, Monday, February 28, 2022.

The Court reserves the right to modify the conditions of this job announcement, to withdraw the announcement, extend the application deadline, or to fill the position sooner than the closing date without prior notice.