

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT MIDDLE DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA



NOTICE OF VACANCY

*The United States District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana is accepting applications for the position of **Pro Se Law Clerk**.*

ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER: 15-USDC-6

LOCATION OF POSITION: Baton Rouge, Louisiana

POSITION TITLE: Pro Se Law Clerk

CLASSIFICATION LEVEL: Judiciary Salary Plan JSP 12 – 14

SALARY RANGE: \$70,192 – \$128,223 annually,
depending on experience and qualifications

OPENING DATE: Tuesday, June 9, 2015

CLOSING DATE: Friday, June 26, 2015, 5:00 PM CST

POSITION OVERVIEW:

The United States District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana is recruiting qualified applicants for the position of Pro Se Law Clerk. This full-time position is located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Funding for this position is through December 2016. Extension of the position beyond that date will be dependent upon case load and budget.

Pro Se Law Clerks work with the District and Magistrate Judges providing legal advice and assistance on prisoner cases including reviewing complaints and petitions, conducting necessary research, and preparing orders, rulings, and recommendations on both dispositive and non-dispositive motions for the court's approval. While the nature of the matters presented is serious, the office environment is personable. Pro Se Law Clerk duties and responsibilities include:

- Performs substantive screening after filing of all prisoner and inmate petitions and motions, including state habeas corpus petitions, motions to vacate sentence, and civil rights complaints. Drafts appropriate recommendations and orders for the Court's signature.
- Reviews all complaints, petitions, and pleadings that have been filed to determine issues involved and basis for relief.
- Performs research, as required, to assist the Court in preparing opinions.
- Maintains liaison between the Court and litigants. Corresponds with other officials, such as United States Attorney, as required.
- Evaluates present procedures to determine new innovations for increasing the effectiveness in handling complaints, petitions, and pleadings. Reviews the docket of pending prisoner and inmate litigation to assure the proper progress of such cases and advises the Court of those cases where action by the Court is appropriate.
- Compiles statistics and prepares periodic reports, as required, that reflect the status and flow of cases. Identifies problem areas, makes recommendations, and offers solutions, as required by the Court, Administrative Office, and other officials.
- Keeps abreast of changes in the law to aid the Court in adjusting to new legislation in the Pro Se area.
- Provides information, guidance, and advice to District Judges, Magistrate Judges, and other personnel working in the Pro Se area. Advises appropriate personnel on the status of particular cases. Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

Candidates must also have an excellent academic record and excellent research and writing skills. This position requires a detail-oriented self-starter who can maintain strict confidentiality, work well with staff members at all levels, and complete assignments accurately and in a timely manner. Candidates must have excellent communication and organizational skills. Maturity, ethics, and commitment to the law are required. Some travel may be required. Additionally the applicant must be proficient in computer assisted research, Windows, WordPerfect, and Microsoft Word.

To qualify for the position of Pro Se Law Clerk, a candidate must be a law school graduate and have demonstrated one of the following accomplishments or proficiencies:

- a) Standing within the upper third of the law school class from a 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:
 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 of 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 legal aid 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.

This list is not all-inclusive; the determination of an acceptable equivalence rests with the appointing Judge.

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.

The table below shows the number of years of legal work experience required to qualify for appointment as a Pro Se Law Clerk at the applicable JSP grade level. Please note that appointment to JSP 12 or above requires that the applicant be a member of the bar of a state, territory, or federal court of general jurisdiction. The target grade for a Pro Se Law Clerk is JSP 14.

JSP Grade Level	Years of Legal Work Experience	Bar Membership Required
12	1	Yes
13	2	Yes
14	3	Yes

PREFERRED EXPERIENCE:

- Two years post graduate legal experience.

BENEFITS:

Judiciary employees serve under excepted appointment (not civil service). Employees working at least 20-hours per week and serving an appointment term of more than one year are eligible for the following benefits.

- Ten (10) paid Federal holidays plus paid annual and sick leave;
- Retirement benefits under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS);
- Retirement under the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) with employer matching contributions;
- Health benefits under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB);
- Supplemental Dental and Vision Benefits under the Federal Employees Vision and Dental Plan (FEDVIP);
- Life insurance benefits under the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLI);
- Group Long Term Care Insurance through CNA;
- Flexible Benefits Program for Health Care Reimbursement and Child Care Reimbursement;
- Long Term Care Insurance through the Federal Judiciary or the Office of Personnel Management (OPM);
- Paid on-site assigned parking; and
- 24-hour fitness facility

This position is subject to mandatory electronic fund transfer (direct deposit) participation for payment of net earnings.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES:

Qualified applicants should submit complete applicant's packet which includes: a letter of interest addressing relevant work experience, a current resume, a list of three professional references (*letters not required*), one writing sample of no more than five pages, AND a completed Application for Judicial Branch Federal Employment (Form AO-78). Applicant's packets must be received by 5:00 PM CST on Friday, June 26, 2015 to be considered. Applications for Judicial Branch Federal Employment (Form AO-78) may be downloaded from our website www.lamd.uscourts.gov/employment. **YOU MUST REFERENCE THE VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER IN YOUR LETTER OF INTEREST.** Applications will not be considered complete until all of the items listed above have been received by Human Resources. Please email or fax your complete applicant's packet to:

humanresources@lamd.uscourts.gov

*(Attachment must be saved as **one** PDF file – Multiple attachments WILL NOT be accepted.)*

OR

Attention: Human Resources; 225.389.3542

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Applicants must be U. S. citizens or eligible to work in the United States. The most qualified applicants may be invited to one (or more) personal interview(s) with the Court. Applicants selected for interviews will be required to travel to the designated location at their own expense. The court is not authorized to reimburse applicants for travel and/or relocation expenses. All applicants who participate in the interview process will receive a written response if they are not selected. **Please do not inquire about the status of your application.** Prior to appointment, the selectee considered for this position is required to undergo a FBI background check and investigation. The selectee may then be appointed provisionally, and retention will depend upon a favorable suitability determination of the investigation. Unsatisfactory results may result in termination of employment.

The Court requires employees to adhere to a Code of Ethics and Conduct which is available to applicants for review upon request. Employees of the United States Courts are NOT included in the government's Civil Service classification. They are, however, entitled to the same benefits as other federal government employees depending on the appointment type. Employees who work at the Court are considered at-will and work at the pleasure of the court.

The Court has the right to modify the conditions of this vacancy announcement, withdraw the announcement, or fill the position at any time before the closing date, any of which may occur without prior written notice. The incumbent(s) will be subject to a one year probationary period.

The Court provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please notify human resources. The decision on granting reasonable accommodations will be made on a case by case basis. The United States District Court for the Middle District of Louisiana is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in the work place.