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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF OKLAHOMA**
www.okwd.uscourts.gov

Position Title: Pro Se/Death Penalty Law Clerk (40 hours/week)
Vacancy Number: 24-11
Location: Oklahoma City
Close Date: Open until filled. Applications will be reviewed upon submission. Applications received prior to **August 19, 2024** will receive priority.
Starting Salary Range: JSP 11/01 to JSP 14/10 (\$72,553 to \$158,860*)
*Appointment at the highest grade requires prior federal law clerk work experience. Starting salary will be commensurate with experience and in accordance with the *Guide to Judiciary Policy*)

The United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma is seeking qualified applicants for the position of a combined Pro Se/Death Penalty Law Clerk, 40 hours per week. Funding for this position is based on the pending caseload of death penalty and prisoner cases and so is subject to annual review. Recertification is required each year thereafter to continue the position. At this time, funding is guaranteed through December 31, 2024 for both the Pro Se and Death Penalty aspects of the position. Health insurance and other federal benefits are included.

POSITION OVERVIEW: 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 review of motions to vacate federal death sentences. Incumbent will also provide legal advice and assistance to the Court in connection with prisoner petitions and complaints.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES – PRO SE:

- Provides information, guidance, and advice to judges and other personnel working in the pro se area;
- 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 U.S. Attorney, as required;
- Evaluates present procedures to determine 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 judges, magistrate judges, and other personnel working in the pro se area.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES – DEATH PENALTY:

- Independently conducts legal research and keeps abreast with developments in the law regarding capital habeas cases in the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court;
- Drafts memoranda of law on multiple issues regarding complex capital habeas cases;
- Reviews voluminous state court records and trial transcripts;
- Consult with judges regarding capital habeas issues and cases;
- Drafts opinions and orders in capital habeas cases.

QUALIFICATIONS STANDARDS: To qualify for the position of pro se/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 a law school of recognized standing and have demonstrated one of the following accomplishments or proficiencies:

- 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;
- Experience on the editorial board of a law review of such a school;
- Graduation from such a school with an LLM degree; or
- 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,*
 5. Summer experience as a law clerk to a state or local judge or law clerk experience on a continuing bases 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, 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 (At least 2 of those years being federal law clerk experience)	Yes

BENEFITS: Employees of the U.S. District Court are not classified under Civil Service but are entitled to many of the same benefits as other federal government employees including participation in the retirement system, health, dental, vision, life and long-term care insurance programs, paid leave, periodic grade and step increases, and 11 paid holidays. All employees are subject to mandatory electronic direct deposit of salary payment.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or eligible to work in the U.S. Participation in the interview process will be at the applicant's own expense and relocation expenses will not be provided. Interviews by video conference may be accommodated for interviewees upon request. Only qualified applicants will be considered for this position.

As a condition of employment, the selected candidate will be subject to an FBI fingerprint background check and satisfactory adjudication by the employing office to be eligible for employment. Due to the sensitivity level of this position, candidates may be asked about their criminal history prior to receiving a tentative offer of employment. Candidates completing the AO-78 must complete questions 18-20 regarding their criminal history. Criminal history is not in itself disqualifying. All available information, past and present, favorable and unfavorable, about the reliability and trustworthiness of an individual will be considered when making an employment suitability determination. 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 of an offer of employment, or dismissal after being employed.

The Court reserves the right to modify the conditions of this job announcement, or to withdraw the announcement, which may occur without prior written or other notice. In the event that a position becomes vacant in a similar classification, within a reasonable time of the original announcement, the court may elect to select a candidate from the applicants who responded to the original announcement without re-posting the position.

All court employees are at will and therefore the selected candidate may be removed from this position at any time if, after reasonable on-the-job training, the selected candidate fails to perform at a satisfactory level.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS: Please email a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and completed application form as a single .pdf document to hr@okwd.uscourts.gov. The employment application can be found on our website at www.okwd.uscourts.gov. Please include the vacancy number and name of the applicant in the subject line of the email. A writing sample can be a legal brief, noteworthy publication or legal research memorandum.

Vacancy No. 24-11
Joan Kane, Court Clerk
U. S. District Court, Western District of Oklahoma
William J. Holloway, Jr. U.S. Courthouse
200 NW 4th Street, Rm 1210
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

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