

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS

District of Columbia Circuit

CLIFTON B. CISLAK
Clerk of Court



E. Barrett Prettyman U.S. Courthouse
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Washington, D.C. 20001-2866
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Announcement Number:	USCA-26-03
Position Title:	DIRECTOR OF THE LEGAL DIVISION (SENIOR STAFF ATTORNEY)
Salary Range:	\$198,534 - \$249,900 (JSP 16 - 17, depending on experience)
Position Location:	WASHINGTON, D.C.
Opening Date:	April 1, 2026
Closing Date:	OPEN UNTIL FILLED – Preference will be given to applications received by May 1, 2026.

The United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit is accepting applications for the position of Director of the Legal Division (Senior Staff Attorney). **This position begins in August 2026.**

POSITION SUMMARY AND RESPONSIBILITIES: The Director of the Legal Division is appointed by the Chief Judge with the approval of the Court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 715. The Director manages the Legal Division, a unit of the Clerk's Office that employs approximately 11 staff attorneys, three Deputy Directors, and one paralegal. The Legal Division's principal responsibility is to recommend to the court the disposition of substantive and procedural motions, appeals decided without oral argument, and emergency matters. The primary responsibility of the Director is to ensure the high quality of all substantive work performed by the legal and support staff employed by the Legal Division. In addition, the Director has administrative responsibility for all aspects of the Division's operations, including but not limited to, human resources management, recruitment and training, budget oversight, procurement management, statistics tracking, and records management. Some work may be done remotely.

The responsibilities of the position include:

- Providing procedural and substantive legal advice to the Court, Clerk, and Clerk's Office and Legal Division staff.
- Reviewing submissions from staff attorneys (including draft memos, proposed orders, and similar documents), ensuring that the quality of the work comports with court standards.
- Supervising after-hours emergency matters.
- Screening cases for jurisdictional issues and suitability for mediation, and assessing the necessity for oral argument.
- Overseeing the hiring process.

- Managing attorney discipline matters.
- Handling classified materials and information in cases dealing with national security and terrorism.
- Advising the Clerk's Office Operations Unit regarding case opening instructions, processing of motions, preparation of votesheets, and drafting of orders.
- Monitoring the "rapid response" backlog control program in the Legal Division.
- Serving as the primary person responsible for managing large, multiparty cases.
- Assisting the Clerk with matters concerning the management of the office, including the evaluation of short- and long-term institutional goals and strategies.

QUALIFICATIONS: The caseload of the D.C. Circuit involves virtually every area of federal law and is unique in the number of cases filed against the executive branch. Because the Director of the Legal Division must be able to advise the judges and others on difficult, varied, and important legal issues, the court is highly selective in its hiring. The court is looking for an individual who has the ability to analyze complex legal issues quickly and to express oneself clearly, both orally and in writing. Prior experience working for a federal court, especially in a Clerk's Office or Staff Attorney Office, is preferred. Any management or supervisory experience should be described.

At a minimum, applicants must possess a J.D. degree, be a member of the bar of a state or the District of Columbia, and have at least five years of legal work experience gained after graduation from law school.

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.

Qualified applicants also will possess superior analytical, research, and writing skills; outstanding written and oral communication abilities; strong interpersonal skills; and the ability to work effectively and comfortably with judges, chambers staff, and senior court staff.

REQUIREMENTS: Because the D.C. Circuit entertains a large number of high-profile and sealed cases, employees are subject to strict confidentiality requirements.

In addition, your continued employment is contingent upon the satisfactory completion of a background records check. A full background investigation for a security clearance is required.

To learn about the Judiciary's benefits, go to <https://www.uscourts.gov/careers/benefits>.

The successful applicant must be a United States citizen or eligible to work in the United States. This position is an excepted appointment and is "at will." The first year of employment is considered a probationary period. The United States Court of Appeals is an Equal Employment Opportunity employer. The successful applicant will be subject to mandatory electronic transfer of funds for payment of net pay. The United States Courthouse is a smoke-free building.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE: Email a cover letter (addressed to Felicia Powell, Human Resources Specialist), resume, law school transcript, and self-edited writing sample as a single PDF attachment to VacancySeniorStaffAttorney@cadc.uscourts.gov.

Interviews will begin immediately. The court will send a letter regarding the status of an application only to those candidates scheduled for interviews.