The Tennessee Office of the Post-Conviction Defender (OPCD) is accepting applications for an Assistant Post-Conviction Defender position. Candidates with all levels of experience will be considered. The position is located in Nashville, TN.

The OPCD is an independent agency of the Tennessee state government. The office represents people sentenced to death in Tennessee and provides non-case-specific assistance and educational resources to appointed counsel in capital cases. Direct representation focuses on the investigation and presentation of collateral claims in state courts, primarily in post-conviction proceedings. The office also represents clients in clemency proceedings. The OPCD handles cases throughout Tennessee and travel is required. Please see www.tmpcdo.net for further details about the agency.

Assistant post-conviction defenders work on teams with investigators and paralegals on behalf of clients to develop both guilt/innocence and sentencing claims, as well as grounds for clemency. The assistant defender’s primary duties include developing and maintaining close working relationships with clients; review and analysis of voluminous records; identification of potential legal claims and investigative needs; oversight of investigation and record collection; consultation with experts; drafting of extensive legal pleadings; presentation of evidence at evidentiary hearings; oral arguments in appellate courts; and presentation of clemency applications to Governor’s staff.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Tennessee law license or eligibility for admittance to Tennessee State Bar through comity or passage of the next scheduled bar exam
- Demonstrated commitment to and passion for protecting the rights of indigent clients
- Strong written and oral advocacy skills
- Ability to analyze complex issues
- Familiarity with issues of mental health, trauma, and racial injustice
- Ability to collaborate closely with others in a team setting
- Strong organizational skills
- Ability to develop trusting relationships with clients
- Ability to work and communicate with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds
- Flexibility to work evenings and weekends
• Ability to travel within Tennessee, as well as out of state
• A valid driver’s license

Preferred Qualifications:

Prior experience in any of the following areas:
• Capital defense
• Trial or appellate criminal defense
• Complex civil litigation
• Judicial clerkship

The OPCD is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to creating a diverse, inclusive, and healthy work environment for all employees. Salary is statutory and based on experience. Health insurance and other benefits are provided.

Interested candidates should send: 1) a cover letter discussing their desire to work as a capital defense attorney and addressing their qualifications for the position; 2) a resume; 3) three professional references; and 4) a legal writing sample to apply@tnpcdo.net. Application deadline is March 18, 2022. Failure to submit all the materials will automatically disqualify an applicant from the process. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Interviews will be conducted remotely.