

Federal Public Defender for the District of Alaska

CJA Panel Application (new applicants)

Please indicate the panel(s) to which you are applying:

- ☐ Trial Panel: Anchorage
- ☐ Trial Panel: Fairbanks
- ☐ Trial Panel: Juneau
- ☐ Appellate
- ☐ Habeas

Please submit your completed application and attachments
to: sonja_belau@fd.org

Dear Criminal Justice Act Panel Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of the Criminal Justice Act (CJA) Panel for the District of Alaska. The District Court could not fulfill its obligation under the Sixth Amendment to indigent defendants without an active CJA Panel. As the administrator of the CJA Panel, the Federal Public Defender is committed to ensuring that CJA Panel members receive the resources and support necessary to provide effective and zealous representation, and that CJA Panel attorneys are appointed on a sufficient number of cases to maintain expertise in federal criminal law and procedure.

Admission to the CJA Panel depends on meeting the minimum requirements outlined in the District's CJA Plan, and on other factors, including your experience; your expertise and language skills; input from references; other relevant information obtained from the application and during the review process; and the number of available slots consistent with case numbers.

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Questions?

Please email or contact anyone on the CJA Panel Team:

- Sonja Belau, CJA Panel Administrator (sonja_belau@fd.org)
- Dena Boughton, CJA Department Assistant (dena_boughton@fd.org)

(Application revised/updated July 29, 2026)

Applicant Information

Last Name:	First Name:	Middle Initial:
Name of Firm:		
Street Address:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Office Phone:	Cell Phone:	Home Phone:
e-mail:	Fax:	Website:

Court Admission

Year of Admission 9th Circuit Court of Appeals:	Year of Admission District of Alaska:	Year of Admission Alaska State Bar:	Alaska State Bar Number:
State Bar Admissions other than Alaska:			

Requirements

Check those that apply.

- ☐ I am a member in good standing of the Federal Bar for the U.S. District Court in the District of Alaska.
- ☐ I have demonstrated experience in, and knowledge of, the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, the Federal Rules of Evidence, the Bail Reform Act, and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines.
- ☐ I have significant experience representing persons charged with serious criminal offenses.
- ☐ I *do not* have significant criminal experience, but I have other relevant experience such as a federal judicial clerkship or federal civil litigation practice that I request be assessed as substitute experience.

Additional Expectations

Check those that apply.

- I have read and am familiar with the:

- ☐ Criminal Justice Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3006
- ☐ CJA Guidelines, Vol. 7, Part A
- ☐ U.S. District of Alaska Local Criminal Rules
- ☐ CJA Plan for the District of Alaska
- ☐ CJA Billing Guide for the District of Alaska
- ☐ Ninth Circuit CJA Policies and Procedures

- ☐ I have represented individuals or the prosecuting authority in at least ten criminal cases, three of which were felonies, either as lead counsel or second chair, in state, military or federal court.

- ☐ I have tried at least three federal or state felony jury trials.
(Trials may be replaced with equivalent experience, such as unusually complex matters settled short of trial, criminal appeals which require unusual knowledge or effort, or substantial civil jury trials.)

- ☐ I have written five appeals in state, federal, or military courts as the lead attorney or as a law clerk, associate, or contract attorney primarily responsible for the final product.

- CLEs:

- ☐ I agree to attend the Intro to Federal Court CJA Panel Training or CJA Boot Camp program when offered.
- ☐ I agree to attend a minimum of at least four hours of continuing legal education each year offered by the Federal Public Defender during my tenure on the CJA Panel, one hour must include eDiscovery training. (The Federal Public Defender training can be replaced with equivalent training from other federal criminal defense resources.)

- I have:
 - ☐ Unlimited internet and a CM/ECF account.
 - ☐ Access to space to meet clients and witnesses.
 - ☐ Access to online legal research tools, such as Westlaw or Lexis.
 - ☐ The ability and willingness to accept collect calls from clients in prison or jail.

☐ I understand I am personally responsible for the representation of my CJA client upon receiving a CJA appointment, and that my responsibility cannot be delegated.

Education

Law School Institution:	Year/Degree Received:	Location:
Honors, Awards, Activities (including Law Review):		
Undergraduate Institution:	Year/Degree Received:	Location:
Honors, Awards, Activities (including journals):		
Other Educational Institution:	Year/Degree Received:	Location:
Honors, Awards, Activities (including journals):		

References

Please include individuals who are familiar with your qualifications to be a member of the CJA Panel.

Last Name:	First Name:	Title:
Office Phone:	Cell Phone:	Email:
Dates of Acquaintance:	Relationship:	

Last Name:	First Name:	Title:
Office Phone:	Cell Phone:	Email:
Dates of Acquaintance:	Relationship:	

Last Name:	First Name:	Title:
Office Phone:	Cell Phone:	Email:
Dates of Acquaintance:	Relationship:	

Last Name:	First Name:	Title:
Office Phone:	Cell Phone:	Email:
Dates of Acquaintance:	Relationship:	

Description of Legal Practice

Briefly describe your criminal law experience and practice and the types of trial and non-trial matters (e.g., extradition, habeas corpus) in which you have been involved. If the experience offered is other than criminal work, please describe that experience in sufficient detail so that the Committee may determine if it is comparable to representation in a criminal matter.

Past Legal Experience

Please provide your legal experience for the ten years preceding your application. If you were employed as a public defender, prosecutor, or clerk *at any time*, please include that information. If you were a CJA panel member *at any time*, please include that information.

Legal Experience

Provide the number of cases in which you have been involved as counsel of record. If the number is greater than ten, you may estimate (e.g., "15+"). Additional information about your cases is requested towards the end of the application.

Case Experience	First Chair Number of Cases	Second Chair Number of cases
Federal Court: Felony Cases Defended		
Federal Court: Jury Trials to Verdict		
Federal Court: Bench Trials to Verdict		
State Court: Felony Cases Defended		
State Court: Jury Trials to Verdict		
State Court: Bench Trials to Verdict		

Appeals	Number of Cases
Appellate Briefs	
Oral Arguments	
Federal Habeas Petitions	

Areas of Specialized Legal Experience

Please check each that applies to you.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Capital Defense
☐ Sex Offenses
☐ Tax Fraud
☐ Wire Fraud / Mail Fraud
☐ Suppression Issues
☐ Psychiatric and Psychological Issues
☐ Computer Forensics
☐ FISA/CIPA/Terrorism | ☐ Multi-Defendant Conspiracy Defense
☐ Immigration
☐ Mortgage Fraud
☐ Environmental Crimes
☐ Sentencing Mitigation
☐ DNA
☐ Wiretaps |
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Other Areas of Specialized Experience

Language:	Proficiency level (fluent, speak, read, write)

Document indexing / organization / database software:	Proficiency level (exert, average, novice)

Team collaboration software (such as Slack, Dropbox, Box, etc.)	Proficiency level (exert, average, novice)

Additional Questions

Please respond to each of the following inquiries by answering “Yes” or “No” in the space provided. Unless your answer is an unqualified “No” please fully describe the facts and circumstances. Provide all responsive information known to you. Answers should not reveal privileged or confidential client information. (“Yes” answers do not necessarily disqualify an applicant.)

- **Has your license or right to practice before any state, court agency, or other tribunal ever been denied, revoked, or suspended?**

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- Have you ever been censured, reprimanded, adjudged, or held in contempt or otherwise disciplined by any judge, court, agency, or tribunal?

- Have you ever been convicted of any felony or misdemeanor that you have not reported to the Alaska State Bar?

- Has your professional conduct or ability been the subject of comment, favorable or unfavorable, in a written opinion of any judge, court, or other tribunal? If so, attach a copy of the opinion.

- Have you ever been the subject of any complaint filed with, or made to any attorney disciplinary body or any bar association or committee thereof?

- Have you been sued by a client? If so, provide the court and case number(s), and the disposition(s) of the matter(s).

- **Have you ever been removed from any indigent defense panel?**

Additional Information

You may attach and refer to a CV where relevant.

1. **List continuing legal education or relevant programs in which you presented in the last three years.**

2. **If you taught or lectured at a law school in the last three years, list the school(s), year(s), and subject(s).**

3. **If you authored or co-authored any publications on legal matters, provide the complete citation.**

4. **Describe your civic, philanthropic, community, social, or public service activities during the past three years, including any posts held and honors received.**

5. **Provide a brief statement on the background/experience/perspective you bring to the panel that would contribute to high quality legal representation for the diverse indigent population in Alaska.**

6. **Provide a brief statement of any additional information you feel should be considered by the Panel Screening Committee.**

7. **Please attach (in pdf format) one writing sample you authored within the last two years, preferably a substantive piece of writing in a criminal case.**

Authorizations

Please check each box to certify.

- ☐ I understand I am not entitled to indemnification by the Court, the federal government, or any provision of the CJA for any claims by my clients or service providers resulting from my representation of a CJA client.
- ☐ I understand and agree that representation of an indigent client upon appointment by the Court is a professional privilege and duty, subject to the Court's oversight, and even if I am placed on the panel, I have no "right to appointment" to represent any indigent client. I agree to abide by the terms and conditions of the Court's CJA governing documents. I understand that failure to provide true and correct information in answer to any of the questions on this form will be grounds for denial of panel membership or removal from service on the panel. I certify that I have read and understand the above and agree to it.
- ☐ I authorize the administrators of the disciplinary and inquiry bodies of any court, bar, or other association to disclose to the Criminal Justice Act Panel Screening Committee all information contained in the files of such bodies concerning my present professional status, all complaints which have been made against me, together with the disposition thereof.

Name:	
Electronic Signature:	Date Signed:

END OF APPLICATION