

Open Position: Felony Resource Attorney

The Washington Defender Association (WDA) seeks an attorney with 5 to 7 or more years of experience to join our team and our mission.

Who We Are

WDA is the voice of the public defense community in Washington State. We provide support for zealous and high-quality legal representation by advocating for change, educating defenders, and collaborating with other justice system stakeholders and the broader community to bring about just solutions. WDA is the only organization dedicated solely to public defense reform and to supporting and training public defense attorneys, investigators and social workers in Washington.

In 1983, Washington Defender Association was created to support public defenders across Washington State through training and technical assistance. WDA expanded to now include the [Immigration Project](#), [Incarcerated Parents Project](#), misdemeanor support, and felony support. We also advocate on local, state, and national levels for policy public defense matters.

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

WDA is committed to anti-racism as an organization. This includes how we work internally, together as a staff, and externally, with our partners and allies in the justice system, and with the communities public defenders serve across the state. We believe a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace culture enhances our ability to fulfill our mission. We strongly encourage people who have lived experience with justice systems (criminal, family defense/dependency, mental health) to apply. We are looking for candidates who share our commitment to ending mass incarceration, challenging systems of oppression of marginalized communities, and advancing racial and economic justice for all.

Position Summary

Washington Defender Association seeks an experienced attorney to join our team as a Felony Resource Attorney. Our resource attorneys provide technical assistance and training to public defenders and criminal defense attorneys across Washington State.

Primary Responsibilities:

- **Technical Assistance:** Provide individual case consultation to public defenders, criminal defense attorneys, investigators, social workers, sentencing advocates and mitigation specialists. This includes issue spotting at all stages of a criminal case, identifying and shaping arguments for pre-trial motions, providing research and analysis of possible evidentiary, procedural or ethics issues that may arise at or prior to trial, brainstorming mitigation and sentencing issues and/or advocacy.
- **Resource Development:** Draft resources for WDA' including sample briefs and practice advisories related to general criminal and felony specific criminal defense practice.
- **Outreach:** Engage the public defense community across the state through training, meetings, and listserv moderation.
- **Training:** Design and present continuing legal education (CLE) programming for public defenders, our partners and other justice system stakeholders.

- **Relationship Development:** Develop and sustain relationships with attorneys and other legal professionals, expert witnesses, and justice system partners to build a network of interested candidates to provide training to the defender community.
- **Intern Supervision:** Meet with and provide meaningful opportunities to law students or other college students interested in working as an intern/extern or learning about careers in public defense.
- **Race Equity:** Participate in WDA's race equity work. This may include learning about and using race equity tools, adopting WDAs race equity practices, serving on WDA' Race Equity Team or subcommittees, etc.

This job description is not designed to contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee, and others may be assigned.

Qualifications

- A commitment to the goals and mission of WDA.
- A law degree and license to practice law in Washington.
- Class A felony qualified pursuant to CrR 3.1, Standards of Indigent Defense.
- Demonstrated understanding of felony criminal law practice in Washington State including familiarity and experience with the SRA sentencing, scoring, defenses, and trial practice.
- Minimum of 5 to 7 years of criminal defense experience, preferably with experience as a public defense attorney or in a position with some public defense case work experience.
- Excellent written and oral communication, research, negotiation, and analytical skills.
- Commitment to continuous learning and openness to new ideas.
- Ability to work well on a team, prioritize responsibilities, and meet time-sensitive deadlines.
- Understanding of the importance of self-care, and a willingness to take breaks and vacations.
- Ability to travel occasionally around the state to engage with the public defense community, including trainings and meetings.
- Competency with Microsoft Office and online meeting formats such as Zoom and Teams.
- Position qualifies as public service loan forgiveness.
- Although not required, familiarity or experience with appellate court practice, amicus advocacy, juvenile practice including criminal law and non-criminal law such as a dependency is preferred.

Work Environment

WDA's office is located in downtown Seattle and is generally open between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. WDA is closely following COVID-19 and continues to carefully monitor and follow public health recommendations. Currently, the WDA office is closed and staff are working remotely until further notice. To aid remote work, WDA provides laptops, home office supplies, equipment, and technology support. You will need an effective WiFi connection and a phone. This position is eligible for either a work phone or phone stipend, as well as an additional stipend each month to help cover any additional costs while working from home.

Once it is safe to return to the office, this position will require some physical presence at the office, as well as an ability to attend required meetings at the office and in the community. The physical demands and work environment described below represent those required and encountered by an employee to perform the essential functions of this job.

- Ability to input information into a computer for long periods of time.
- Ability to remain stationary for extended periods.
- Ability to access information communicated through a computer.
- Ability to deliver presentations at trainings and other events that support WDA's mission.
- Ability to work some evenings and weekends as needed for WDA training events, and when attending seminars and events related to staff professional development.
- Ability to travel locally, regionally and across the state as needed, for outreach and training events, subject to any COVID 19 safety concerns and restrictions.

Compensation

The salary range for this position is \$80 - 90,000 a year, depending on experience.

Benefits include: 403(b) retirement benefit with employer matching contribution.

- Excellent health insurance benefits with premiums for the employee paid by the employer.
- The option to participate in a Health Savings Account with initial \$500 employer contribution.
- Generous vacation and sick leave.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have also provided home office setup support for working remotely, additional time off for vaccinations or illness related to COVID-19, and an additional small stipend for miscellaneous costs. We expect to continue some or all of those benefits into 2022.

This is a Fair Labor Standards Act exempt, at-will position; continuation in the position depends on both performance and funding.

How to Apply

Send a cover letter, resume, 3 references, and a 5-10 page writing sample in PDF format to Scott Shoemaker at scott@defensenet.org. Please make "Felony Resource Attorney" your subject line. If you need a reasonable accommodation for the application process, please contact the above email or call (206) 623-4321. Position open until filled.

WDA is committed to an environment of mutual respect, collaboration, and equal opportunity for all employees. We are committed to a policy of equal opportunity and fosters an environment free of barriers and discriminatory practices. People of color, those directly impacted by the criminal/civil/court legal system, people who identify as queer, trans, lesbian, gay, or bisexual, and those with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.