



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT District of New Mexico

Honorable William P. Johnson, Chief Judge
Mitchell R. Elfers, Clerk of Court

Office of the Clerk

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Telephone: 505-348-2000

NOTICE OF JOB OPPORTUNITY

Vacancy Announcement #: 26-ABQ/JSP-2

ANNOUNCEMENT DATE:	March 16, 2026
CLOSING DATE:	Until filled <i>** Anticipated start August 2026, exact date negotiable **</i>
POSITION:	Term Law Clerk, Full-time
STARTING LEVEL/SALARY:	JSP 11/1 to 13/1 \$75,489 to \$107,592 Annual <i>Depending on Qualifications</i>
LOCATION:	Albuquerque, New Mexico

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Honorable Kirtan Khalsa, United States Magistrate Judge, is seeking a Term Law Clerk. Principal responsibilities for the law clerk include drafting opinions, assisting during trials and hearings, and interacting with counsel, plus a share of limited administrative duties.

Magistrate Judges in the District of New Mexico are extensively involved in the full range of civil matters. Virtually all civil cases are directly assigned to a Magistrate Judge who becomes the presiding judicial officer if the parties consent. As a result, Magistrate Judges preside over approximately 40% of civil cases filed in the District. In that role, Magistrate Judges adjudicate civil cases in the same manner as a District Judge, including presiding over jury and non-jury trials. In addition, regardless of consent, all civil cases are referred to a Magistrate Judge for pretrial management. Judge Khalsa utilizes her law clerks exclusively on civil matters, so the position offers an excellent opportunity to become familiar with all aspects of federal civil litigation. To be seriously considered, applicants should graduate from a Top-100 law school in the top third of their class.

This is a Full-time Term position (40 hours per week, 80 hours per pay period) for a term of up to two years. Anticipated start date in August 2026, with the exact date being negotiable.

Successful candidate must comply with the requirements of the Judicial Conference of the United States Courts and the *Guide to Judiciary Policy*.

REQUIRED EXPERIENCE/QUALIFICATIONS

Requires a Juris Doctor degree. To qualify for the position of a Law Clerk on the staff of a federal judge, a person 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 one or more of the following attributes:

- ◆ Excellent standing within 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; or
- ◆ Graduation from such a school with an LLM degree;

To qualify for appointment to a JSP 12 or above, an individual must 1) be a member in good standing of the bar of a state, territory, or Federal Court of general jurisdiction, and 2) have legal work experience after graduation from law school.

OTHER EXPERIENCE/QUALIFICATIONS

Progressively responsible experience in the practice of law, legal research, legal administration, or equivalent experience after graduation from law school is a plus. Previous federal law clerk experience or private sector litigation experience is a plus. Strong legal research and writing skills are a must. Organizational skills and skills with Westlaw and MS Word are essential.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate should possess good judgment, good analytical skills, and a strong work ethic; demonstrate tact, initiative, and ability to work independently; and maintain a professional appearance and demeanor at all times. The candidate must also be able to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

- ◆ Employees must be United States citizens or eligible to work in the United States.
- ◆ Employees of the United States District Court are Excepted Service appointments; Excepted Service appointments are “at will” and can be terminated with or without cause by the court.
- ◆ Employees are required to adhere to a Code of Ethics and Conduct.
- ◆ Selectees are subject to an FBI fingerprint check or investigation and may be subject to periodic updates. An individual may be hired provisionally pending successful completion of the necessary records checks.
- ◆ Travel expenses for an interview will not be reimbursed.
- ◆ The court provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities.
- ◆ This position is subject to EFT (direct deposit of salary earnings).

BENEFITS

A generous benefits package is available to full-time excepted employees, including

- ◆ A minimum of 11 paid holidays
- ◆ Optional participation in Federal Employees Health Benefits plans, including dental and vision insurance; Federal Employees Group Life Insurance; Flexible Benefits Program
- ◆ Retirement benefits*: FERS and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)
* *Only if transferring from a previously covered position without a break in service.*
- ◆ Potential for occasional telework
- ◆ Credit for prior government service

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Qualified applicants must submit a **cover letter with two references, three letters of recommendation, current résumé, two writing samples, law school transcript, and AO-78** * (*Federal Judicial Branch Application for Employment*) **by email to usdcjobs@nmd.uscourts.gov.**

*The AO-78 can be downloaded at <https://www.nmd.uscourts.gov/employment>.

PLEASE USE "2026 TERM LAW CLERK – JUDGE KHALSA" IN THE SUBJECT LINE

Applications **must** be submitted in **ONE PDF** document.

Illegible or incomplete applications may result in loss of consideration for the position. ZIP files and links to file sharing services (DropBox, OneDrive, etc.) will not be accepted. PDF size is limited to 10 MB. Documents that cannot be downloaded by the court cannot be considered.

Only qualified applicants will be considered for this position and are encouraged to apply. Only applicants selected for an interview will be contacted. Interviews may be conducted remotely via videoconference; travel for any in-person interviews will be at applicant's expense. The U.S. District Court reserves the right to amend or withdraw any announcement without written notice to applicants. If a subsequent vacancy of the same position becomes available within a reasonable time of the original announcement, the court may select a candidate from the original qualified applicant pool.

THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER