

**U.S. District Court-
Eastern District of Virginia**

WEBSITE :

www.vaed.uscourts.gov

PHONE:

757-222-7303

Announcement #:

FY 26-17R

Location:

Richmond, VA

Appointment:

Full-time/ Permanent

Open: 04.10.2026

Close: Open Until Filled

SALARY RANGES

JSP14 (\$131,385 -
\$170,806)

- Actual starting salary dependent upon qualifications.

**Pro Se Staff Attorney
FY26-17R**



POSITION OVERVIEW

The Richmond Division of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia is currently accepting applications for a full-time Pro Se Staff Attorney. The Pro Se Staff Attorney carries primary responsibility for managing Social Security appeals by conducting legal research and preparing draft reports and recommendations, or memorandum opinions and orders, including cases involving self-represented claimants. Core responsibilities include reviewing the administrative law judge's findings, examining the administrative record and identifying potential issues, analyzing relevant legal questions, drafting proposed reports and recommendations or memorandum opinions, and ensuring adherence to applicable procedural requirements. The position requires a strong working knowledge of Social Security regulations, pertinent federal statutes, and controlling Circuit precedent. The Pro Se Staff Attorney also works closely with the judges and chambers staff to resolve immigration litigation, § 1983 litigation, and post-conviction habeas litigation filed by *pro se* prisoners. This includes post-conviction death penalty cases. This position involves performing initial case screening, preparing draft orders, and overseeing procedural compliance. This role is particularly critical given the urgent liberty interests at stake, the complexity of the underlying administrative records, and the frequency of self-represented detainees. This requires knowledge of federal immigration, habeas, and § 1983 jurisprudence and governing law. This position is on-site in our Richmond division. Some telework may be considered. Preference given to candidates able to start as soon as possible.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Law school graduate (top quarter or law review required), with at least three years of professional legal experience. Strong preference for attorneys with experience working on social security and prisoner immigration, § 1983, and habeas corpus matters. Computer proficiency in Windows applications, word processing ability in Microsoft Word, and experience with computer-assisted legal research are required. Applicant must have the ability to analyze complex legal issues and understand a wide range of legal concepts, principles, and practices as they relate to social security appeals and prisoner litigation; perform legal research and write accurately and expeditiously; communicate complex issues in simple terms with a professional demeanor; set priorities; and manage work with limited supervision. Applicant must be detail-oriented and possess excellent organizational skills.

REPRESENTATIVE DUTIES

Duties and responsibilities include:

- taking primary responsibility for the Court’s social security docket;
- taking primary responsibility for a portion of the Court’s immigration and *pro se* prisoner docket;
- providing substantive legal analysis of pleadings and making recommendations directly to the judges regarding the dispositions of motions;
- drafting appropriate reports and recommendations, orders, and opinions for review by judges;
- efficiently managing the flow of the Court’s social security, immigration, and *pro se* prisoner litigation;
- providing information to judges and Court staff on legal issues unique to social security, immigration, and *pro se* prisoner litigation;
- evaluating existing procedures and developing and implementing improved processes for the adjudication of the Court’s social security, immigration and *pro se* prisoner litigation;
- preparing periodic reports for judges on trends in the respective dockets;
- conducting legal research and keeping abreast of developments in the law including but not limited to social security appeals, prisoner immigration cases, § 1983 cases, and capital habeas cases in the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court;
- reviewing voluminous administrative and state court records and trial transcripts;
- collaborating with other staff attorneys and chambers law clerks; and
- performing other duties as assigned.



APPLICATION INFORMATION

To apply, submit a cover letter; detailed résumé including educational background, past employment, and references; a law school transcript; and a writing sample. Priority consideration will be given to applications received by **April 26, 2026**. The application package should be sent to: The Honorable Mark R. Colombell, United States Magistrate Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, 701 E Broad Street, Suite 5212, Richmond, VA 23219. Alternatively, you may email your application materials in **one PDF document to: Mara_Shingleton@vaed.uscourts.gov**.

All applications will be reviewed to identify the best qualified candidates. Only applicants selected for an interview will be notified. Applicants not selected for an interview will not receive notice concerning the status of their application.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

Employees must be United States citizens or eligible to work in the United States.

Employees are required to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees](#), which is available to applicants to review upon request.

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 will be hired provisionally pending the results of a background investigation.

Employees are required to use the Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) for payroll deposit.

The Court reserves the right to modify the conditions of this job announcement, to withdraw the job announcement, or to fill the position sooner than the closing date, if a closing date is shown; any of these actions may occur without any prior written or other type of notice.

The United States District Court
is an Equal Opportunity
Employer

BENEFITS

- A generous benefits package is available and includes:
- A minimum of 11 paid holidays per year
- Paid annual leave
- Paid sick leave
- Retirement benefits
- Optional participation in the Thrift Savings Plan
- Optional participation in choice of Federal Employees’ Health Benefits
- Optional participation in the choice of Supplemental Dental and Vision Insurance
- Optional participation in choice of Federal Employees’ Group Life Insurance
- Optional participation in the Flexible Benefits Program
- Optional participation in Long-Term Care Insurance
- Optional participation in private long-term disability plan
- Situational telework authorized
- Credit for prior government service