



United States Sentencing Commission

Vacancy Announcement

POSITION:	ASSISTANT GENERAL COUNSEL
ANNOUNCEMENT:	#09-07
SALARY RANGE:	Equivalent to GS-0905-14/15 (\$102,721 – \$153,200)
OPENING DATE:	Wednesday, January 28, 2009
CLOSING DATE:	Open Until Filled (first cut-off date for review of applications: Thursday, February 26, 2009)
AREA OF CONSIDERATION:	All Sources
ORGANIZATION LOCATION:	United States Sentencing Commission, Office of General Counsel, Washington, DC

The U.S. Sentencing Commission is an independent federal agency in the Judicial Branch of government consisting of seven members appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate and two non-voting *ex-officio* members. The agency staff consists of approximately 100 employees. The Commission develops and revises guidelines for federal district court judges to consider in sentencing offenders convicted of federal crimes. The Commission monitors and evaluates the use of the guidelines, conducts research and education programs on guideline application and sentencing matters generally, and recommends improvements in federal sentencing practices. Additional information about the Commission can be accessed via the Commission's website at <http://www.ussc.gov>.

BENEFITS

The Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program, the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP), the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance (FGLI) program, the Judiciary or government-wide Flexible Spending Benefit Programs for Dependent Care, Health Care, and Commuter Reimbursement, the Judiciary or government-wide Long Term Care Insurance Programs, retirement, the Thrift Savings Plan, and the federal leave program. The Commission also offers a monthly transit subsidy to employees who use mass transit to commute to and from work. Unemployment and Workers' Compensation benefits are applicable.

This position is in the **excepted** service and does not carry the tenure rights of positions in the competitive Civil Service. All new Commission employees, those converted from a temporary appointment to a permanent appointment, and all rehired former Commission employees are required to serve a one year probationary period. The probationary period begins on the effective date of the employee's appointment, conversion, or rehire. Employment is contingent upon a favorable FBI criminal background check, and requires fingerprinting.

DUTIES

The incumbent assists in discharging the responsibility of the Office of General Counsel to provide legal advice and counsel to the Chair, Commissioners, and staff of the Sentencing Commission. The incumbent performs a variety of tasks and responsibilities dealing with federal sentencing and the federal sentencing guidelines.

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) in-depth legal research related to sentencing and other issues involving analysis of statutes, proposed legislation, case law, and governmental and other reports; (2) preparation of legal memoranda and analytical reports; (3) preparation of oral and written responses to inquiries from Commissioners, Commission staff, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation officers, judges, and the public generally; (4) training of practitioners and judges in sentencing and guidelines practice; (5) preparation of memoranda and draft language of proposed amendments to the federal sentencing guidelines; (6) participating or leading staff working groups that focus on new legislation, guideline amendments, and other sentencing issues; and (7) participating as a Commission representative in professional conferences.

Legal research topics include issues relating to the application of sentencing guidelines for both individual and organizational defendants, sentencing guideline issues relating to all federal offenses, as well as statutory and constitutional issues relating to the sentencing guidelines, substantive sentencing and criminal law issues, administrative law and federal agency practice, and personnel, ethical, and administrative matters.

MANDATORY QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must have a minimum of five years of extensive legal experience which is in or directly related to the line of work of this position and which has equipped the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities to successfully perform the duties of this position. Applicants must possess excellent oral and written communication skills and the ability to interact successfully with staff at all levels. Good organization and planning skills a must.

Applicants must possess a law degree (JD) from a law school accredited by the American Bar Association and be a member of the bar of a state, territory, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or a Federal court of general jurisdiction. To be considered at the GS-14 level, applicants must have at least one year of specialized experience equivalent to the GS-13 in the federal service.

Applicants must have demonstrated work experience applying the federal sentencing guidelines.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES (KSA)

Applicants must address the following KSA topics in a separate narrative statement:

- (1) Substantial experience in applying the federal sentencing guidelines. Trial experience as a prosecutor or defense attorney is strongly preferred. Experience in or knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
- (2) Knowledge of relevant federal criminal law, procedural and administrative rules and regulations, canons of statutory construction, and methods of investigating the legislative history of congressional enactments. Knowledge of recent Supreme Court jurisprudence relating to federal sentencing.
- (3) Experience conducting in-depth legal research related to sentencing and other issues involving analysis of statutes, proposed legislation, case law, and governmental and private reports. Excellent legal analysis, writing, and editing skills. Ability to express, orally and in writing, complex legal issues in clear and succinct language so that the concepts are understood by both lawyers and non-lawyers.

- (4) Ability to maintain effective working relationships with agency staff at all levels as well as with key individuals in a variety of other federal organizations and interest groups. Ability to serve as a representative for the agency.
- (5) Skill in planning, organizing, setting priorities, and completing multiple tasks of varying complexity. Technical abilities, such as computer experience and knowledge of software applications used to conduct legal research.

HOW TO APPLY: To be considered, applicants must submit: (1) a resume, (2) a cover letter, and (3) a separate written narrative statement that addresses the mandatory qualification requirements, the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), and any preferred qualifications they possess. Please submit one set of application materials either by e-mail or mail.

To submit application materials via e-mail:

E-mail applications to Vacancy1@ussc.gov in (WordPerfect 7.0–13.0 or MSWord 2000–XP formats only). **Specify the vacancy announcement number and job title in the subject line of your E-mail.**

To submit application materials by mail:

Send to: **US Sentencing Commission, Office of Human Resources, ATTN: Vacancy Announcement #09-07, One Columbus Circle, NE, Suite 2-500, South Lobby, Washington, DC 20002-8002**

We do not accept application materials via facsimile. All application materials, sent via e-mail or mail, must be received by our Human Resources Office by **CLOSE OF BUSINESS (5:00 PM) on the closing date. Applications will be screened as they are received and interviews may be conducted before the closing date.** For additional information or a copy of this vacancy announcement, please visit our Internet web site <http://www.ussc.gov>. **Application and enclosure(s) will not be returned.** Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or eligible to work in the United States as mandated by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Employees are required to participate in electronic fund transfer, mandated by the Federal Compensation Act.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER