



debt is paid, if appropriate. Draft orders advising paid prisoners that complaint must be screened. Draft response orders to prisoners' requests that fees be taken from release account.

- Monitor service of process. Draft orders re: 120 day deadline in paid non-prisoner pro se cases. Draft orders directing service and providing appropriate service procedures.
- Assign new cases to law clerks. Maintain case lists and distribute at regularly scheduled calendar meetings
- Respond to letter inquiries from pro se litigants in matters such as: status of case, requests for copies, requests for rules, seeking advice without first filing lawsuit, etc. Maintain miscellaneous pro se chronological files. Set briefing and related schedules where appropriate. Conduct legal research using Westlaw and Lexis and the court's internal case management database. Provide guidance on court procedures to pro se individuals who seek assistance by telephone or in-person at the courthouse.
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

### III. Evaluation Criteria

#### Required Competencies (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities related to Court Operations)

- **Court Operations/Legal Research**  
Knowledge of local court rules, practices, procedures, and forms. Knowledge of the purpose and format of legal documents. Knowledge of legal terminology. Knowledge of how cases proceed through the court system. Knowledge of rules for accepting documents for filing and documents required for closing cases. Knowledge of legal documents (pleadings, correspondence, transcripts, etc.) Knowledge of public access to court files. Skill in organizing own work products. Ability to perform legal research. Ability to acquire skill in drafting orders, decisions, reports, and memoranda on legal matters and interpreting court orders. Ability to schedule and interpret court calendars and learn operating procedures. Ability to carry out instructions with minimal supervision. Ability to manage time effectively and meet tight deadlines. Ability to work independently and set priorities. Ability to draft documents and correspondence under general direction. Ability to conduct paralegal research and analysis.
- **Judgment and Ethics**  
Knowledge of and compliance with the *Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees* and court confidentiality requirements. Ability to consistently demonstrate sound ethics and judgment.
- **Written and Oral Communication/Interaction**  
Ability to communicate effectively (orally and in writing) to individuals and groups to provide information and notify filers of errors. Ability to communicate with parties and answer procedural questions without providing legal advice. Knowledge of format and style for legal citations and legal writing. Skill in grammar, style, and use of the English language. Skill in proofreading and attention to detail.
- **Information Technology**  
Skill in typing and use of word processing equipment. Knowledge of requisite court computer programs. Ability to use general office equipment. Ability to use automated case management systems and equipment to review dockets and documents. Ability to conduct research of legal and non-legal materials on the internet and intranet.
- **Primary Job Focus and Scope**  
The primary focus of the job is to assist the court by performing duties needed to effectively manage and process civil cases filed by prisoners and non-prisoners who are representing themselves,

ensuring compliance with requirements, regulations, and policies. The job focuses on monitoring the timely and accurate progress of pro-se cases from opening to closing to ensure their orderly, efficient, and fair movement through the court. Employees at this level also conduct paralegal research and analysis, draft orders, memos, and letters responding to specified non-dispositive pro se filings, and non-dispositive motions of all types, for review by a more senior paralegal or pro se attorney. Errors by the incumbent may have the ultimate outcome of affecting a legal matter. Any error in judgment will affect the ability of the system to process the case timely and could have an effect on the perception of the court by those involved and reflect negatively upon the particular chambers where the case resides.

- **Complexity and Decision Making**

Pro Se Paralegals at this level monitor and review a wide variety of complex case documents and make decisions as to subsequent processing action. Continuous tracking of multiple cases, including relating case events to their status, adds to the complexity. Drafting orders and documents for review in unique situations involves complicated issues and must be done in a timely manner. Case management involves monitoring, calendaring, motion tracking, and conferencing. Each case is unique, requiring different choices in approach, interpretation, and analysis. Pro Se Paralegals at this level make some independent decisions to resolve problems, questions, and daily issues based on their knowledge and experience.

- **Interactions with Judiciary Contacts**

The primary judiciary contacts are other pro se paralegals, pro se law clerks, judges and chambers staff, Clerk's office staff, staff of other court units, and Administrative Office staff for the purpose of supporting court units and their operations and activities.

- **Interactions with External Contacts**

The primary external contacts include attorneys, litigants, and the public to verify and update the status of cases and to provide information on case status and proper procedures.

- **Work Environment and Physical Demands**

Work is performed primarily in an office setting or courtroom.

#### IV. **Conditions of Employment:**

The successful applicant must be a U.S. citizen or eligible to work in the United States. Judiciary employees serve under excepted appointments, are considered "at will" appointments, and can be terminated with or without cause by the Court. Employees are hired provisionally pending results of a criminal background check and fingerprinting, and are subject to a probation period. This position is subject to mandatory electronic funds transfer (direct deposit) for payment of salary. The U.S. Courts require employees to adhere to the Code of Conduct for Judiciary Employees, which is available to applicants for review at the court's web site at:

<http://www.uscourts.gov/RulesAndPolicies/CodesOfConduct.aspx>

#### V. **Benefits**

Employees of the U.S. District Court are not classified under Civil Service, but are entitled to many of the same benefits. These benefits include participation in the retirement system, health and life insurance programs, optional participation in the Federal Thrift Savings Plan, optional disability plan, optional long term care insurance, optional flexible spending accounts for health and dependent care reimbursement, optional commuter benefits plan, paid holidays, leave accrual, and periodic salary increases. A more detailed summary of employee benefits can be obtained through the District Court's Personnel Officer.

\*\*\*\*\*HOW TO APPLY\*\*\*\*\*

Applicants must electronically submit the following materials in order to be considered for this position:

1. Cover Letter,
2. Resume highlighting the applicants skills and accomplishments, and
3. Form AO-78, [Application for Judicial Branch Federal Employment](#).

Send the above materials by email transmission to the following address: [tnwdjobs@tnwd.uscourts.gov](mailto:tnwdjobs@tnwd.uscourts.gov) and be sure to refer to "Paralegal (Pro Se)" # 15-04 in the subject line. Only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted.

**THIS POSITION IS OPEN TO ALL QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS. THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER**

