

The Federal Community Defender for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania
(Philadelphia)

Death Penalty Externship Information

The Office of the Federal Community Defender for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania is pleased to accept applications for our Fall 2021 Death Penalty Externship with the Habeas Corpus Unit.

The Death Penalty Externship will provide law students with hands-on training in most areas of post-conviction capital case litigation. Students will participate in a thorough orientation on capital work and responsibilities at the Capital Habeas Corpus Unit, Federal Court Division of the Defender Association. They will also attend informal seminars instructed by staff attorneys on specific aspects of capital post-conviction litigation including habeas corpus evaluation hearings and appellate litigation. Most of the students' time will be spent researching and writing claims for inclusion in habeas petitions as well as investigating cases, including interviewing clients, witnesses, and jurors.

This is a 7-credit externship, and students are expected to devote 21 hours per week for the semester, which runs through the end of the Examination Period. Students will be assigned a Faculty Supervisor whom they will meet with on a bi-weekly basis, along with submitting reflective journals. This externship is open to current 2L or 3L students.

HOW TO APPLY:

Before 5 PM on May 10, 2021, students must apply for this externship by emailing a resume and one page Statement of Interest to externships@law.upenn.edu with “Federal Defender – Death Penalty Application” in the subject line. Please combine your resume and Statement of Interest into one pdf. The Statement of Interest should address why you want to enroll in this externship.

The Penn Law Externship Program will forward students' application materials to the Federal Defender's Office on your behalf. The Defender's Office will contact students it would like to interview directly and will select the students to enroll in the externship. Before Advance Course Registration closes, students will receive an email letting them know if they were not selected for enrollment.

Please note that this placement expends a great deal of time and effort scheduling work, securing supervisors, designing programming, creating office space, etc. Thus, students are strongly encouraged to enroll only if they are committed to completing the externship. If you have any questions about this externship, please email externships@law.upenn.edu.