

# Louisiana Capital Assistance Center

*A Non-Profit Law Office*

August 2014

## **Position: Associate Capital Trial Attorney**

### **1. Introduction**

The Louisiana Capital Assistance Center (LCAC) is a not-for-profit law office based in New Orleans, Louisiana committed to excellence in the provision of defense services to indigent clients facing the death penalty.

The LCAC is principally a trial level office, representing indigent capital clients in cases throughout Louisiana. In addition, the LCAC provides resource and consultative services to other capital trial counsel throughout Louisiana. LCAC also represents capital defendants in state post-conviction and federal habeas proceedings in Mississippi and Texas.

The LCAC is committed to the following values:

- excellence in the provision of capital defender services for indigent defendants, accepting that ABA Guidelines for high quality representation in capital cases set a *minimum* standard in the field;
- client-centered and relationship based work that respects the humanity and dignity of all involved in the criminal justice system;
- innovation and creativity in the provision of capital defense services;
- the elimination of racism and other forms of discrimination in the criminal justice system.

The LCAC delivers capital defense services through a staff of dedicated attorneys and mitigation/fact investigators, as well as contracting with other experts. The LCAC emphasizes team based defense and a holistic approach to questions of culpability and mitigation.

The LCAC has been in operation for twenty years and is located at The Justice Center in New Orleans, a building it shares with other not-for-profit offices working with indigent clients in the criminal justice system, including the Capital Appeals Project of Louisiana. Further details are available at our website: [www.thejusticecenter.org](http://www.thejusticecenter.org).

## **2. Role**

The primary function of the capital trial attorney is the representation of indigent defendants facing capital charges at trial level in Louisiana. The attorney will assume second chair responsibility in trial level cases. The role also includes, to a lesser degree, potential representation in capital cases on direct appeal, in state post-conviction and in federal habeas, and participation in and provision of training and consultative services as well as additional service provision as required by the office.

## **3. Duties**

### **Trial Level Representation**

As a part of a defense team, the capital trial attorney will be involved in and/or take direct responsibility for the provision of effective assistance of counsel in accordance with the *ABA Guidelines for the Appointment and Performance of Defense Counsel in Death Penalty Cases*, including, depending upon experience:

- Development and implementation of case theory, investigation and litigation strategies;
- Conduct of pre-trial, trial and post-trial negotiations and litigation;
- Development and maintenance of effective working relationships with clients and significant others in cases;
- Investigation, preparation and presentation of evidence at pre-trial hearings, and potentially in culpability and penalty phases of trial;
- Identification, selection, preparation and use of expert witnesses;
- Legal research, analysis and drafting of litigation documents, including motions, briefs and applications for supervisory review;
- Management and maintenance of case files and additional materials.

### **Appellate Representation**

- Potentially participate in representation of indigent capital defendants on direct appeal, in state post-conviction and/or in federal habeas.

### **Training**

- Attendance at and participation in in-house and external trainings directed to improving and enhancing the attorney's skill set in the provision of capital defender services;
- Design, preparation and presentation of in-house and external trainings in areas of specialized knowledge or interest.

### **Consultative Services**

- Providing advice and litigation support services on a consultative basis to other capital defense practitioners as appropriate to the skills and experience of the attorney.

### **Additional services**

- Providing additional services and performing other duties from time to time as the needs of the office dictate.

## 4. Selection Criteria

Applications will be judged according to the following criteria (in no particular order) and applicants are expected to address the criteria in their application:

### Essential

- At least three years criminal trial experience;
- A knowledge of and familiarity with the standard of care for the provision of capital defender services contained in the *ABA Guidelines for the Appointment and Performance of Defense Counsel in Death Penalty Cases*;
- A commitment to excellence in the provision of capital defender services;
- Strengths in team work, client relations and relationship building;
- Demonstrated excellence in legal research and writing;
- A commitment to working with clients in poverty;
- Creativity and energy in approaching indigent defense and capital representation;
- Familiarity and proficiency with word processor software and legal research software;
- Licensed in Louisiana or willing to take the next Louisiana bar exam.

### Non-Essential but desirable

- Experience in capital casework;
- Licensed in Louisiana;
- Experience or training in mental health and race in the criminal justice system;
- Experience working with disadvantaged client groups;
- Computer literacy in additional useful software such as spreadsheet and database programs, case management software.

## 5. Salary & Benefits

- the position is full time with a 6 month probationary period and a two year minimum commitment. Attorneys are not permitted to maintain a private practice or perform work outside of the office;
- Salary range: commensurate with experience;
- 5% employer contribution to 401(k);
- 70% contribution to health insurance for employee and dependents including dental.

## 6. Application Process

Applications should be submitted electronically to Christine Lehmann, at [clehmann@thejusticecenter.org](mailto:clehmann@thejusticecenter.org). Applicants should submit an application cover letter addressing the selection criteria, a current CV, a legal writing sample and contact details for three references. If the candidate is fewer than five years out of law school, a law school transcript is also required. It is very important that the cover letter address the selection criteria.

*The LCAC is an equal opportunity employer.*