

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT EXECUTIVE**



DATE: September 10, 2025

POSITION: Chief Counsel to the District Court
(Supervisory Pro Se Law Clerk)

LOCATION: 500 Pearl Street, New York, NY

CLASS LEVEL: JSP 15

SALARY: \$172,621 - \$195,200
(Depending on qualifications and experience)

CLOSING DATE: Open Until Filled
[Priority will be given to applications received by October 3, 2025](#)

VACANCY NO.: 25-12

DESCRIPTION: The Chief Counsel manages one of the largest Pro Se Litigation Offices in the Federal Judiciary. This position reports directly to the Chief Judge of the District Court, with policy guidance from the Court's Pro Se Committee, and oversees an office responsible for assisting the District and Magistrate Judges with their pro se docket, currently over 2200 pro se cases courtwide.

POSITION OVERVIEW: The principal responsibilities of the Chief Counsel are to lead the Office of Pro Se Litigation, which currently comprises 7 attorneys, and support the District and Magistrate Judges of the Court in handling the civil pro se docket. The Office of Pro Se Litigation assists the Court in carrying out its statutory obligations under 28 U.S.C. §1915(e)(2) and §1915A to screen civil complaints filed by incarcerated people and those with *in forma pauperis* status. These cases are predominantly civil rights actions, including employment discrimination actions, and petitions for writs of habeas corpus. The Chief Counsel works closely with the leadership team of the Clerk's Office to establish and maintain systems that are both efficient and appropriately solicitous to pro se litigants. This includes the preparation of manuals, guides, and other memoranda for the benefit of pro se litigants and chambers. The Chief Counsel co-runs the Pro Bono Program, which connects pro se litigants in need of counsel with volunteers from the SDNY bar.

The Chief Counsel reports to the Chief Judge on legal matters in pro se cases on the Chief Judge's docket and internal management of the Office, and also to the District Executive's Office on operational matters, and collaborates with the Pro Se Committee, a team of judges, on other internal initiatives. In addition, the Chief Counsel maintains external relationships that support the SDNY's pro se docket: the Chief Counsel serves as a primary liaison to the Pro Se Clinic, currently managed by the City Bar Justice Center, which provides legal advice to pro se litigants, and communicates with counterparts around the country and the governing body at the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts to stay abreast of budgetary developments and, where appropriate, to present the position of the Office. Court initiatives may require collaboration with local stakeholders, including the offices of the United States Attorney, the New York State Attorney General, and the New York City Corporation Counsel, as well as with the prisons and jails within the district. In connection with the Pro Bono Program, the Chief Counsel coordinates programs and events with the private bar and participates in bar activities and committees.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: The Chief Counsel, under the direction of the Chief Judge, is responsible for hiring, training, supervision, and general management of the staff attorneys, which includes performance evaluation. The Chief Counsel is responsible for ensuring that the Office's handling of its screening duties remains responsive to developments in the law, appropriately solicitous to pro se litigants, and operationally manageable. Day-to-day duties and responsibilities of this position include reviewing the staff attorneys' written work and legal analysis, coordinating with Clerk's Office staff on operational matters relevant to the pro se docket, and managing and promoting the Court's Pro Bono Program. Management of the Court's Pro Bono

Program involves providing advice to chambers on cases in need of counsel, frequent communication with the private bar, distribution of a monthly newsletter that solicits assistance from volunteer lawyers, and collaboration with bar associations. Project management of internal initiatives requires scheduling check-ins with participants and communicating developments to the relevant stakeholders.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS: Applicants must possess a Juris Doctor degree from a law school accredited by the American Bar Association and be admitted to the bar in a federal court of general jurisdiction. Applicants also must have excellent academic credentials and superior analytical, research, and writing skills with law review or equivalent legal research experience. Competitive applicants will have at least three years of post-law school relevant legal experience such as working as a pro se or death penalty law clerk or other experience in areas of legal work that come before the pro se and death penalty law clerk programs, including civil rights claims brought under 42 U.S.C. § 1983. Applicants with significantly more experience are preferred. All applicants should emphasize any supervisory and/or managerial experience; experience directing the workflow within an office; experience reviewing professional legal staff work products; and experience training law clerks or other professional legal staff on standards of performance. Applicants must possess a solid grounding in federal jurisdiction and civil procedure. The Court seeks highly qualified applicants with diverse backgrounds and experience.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE: To be considered for this position, applicants must submit a cover letter, resume (including law school class rank and/or percentile if available), law school transcript, self-edited writing sample, and a list of at least three professional references. Only applications submitted via e-mail will be accepted. It is preferred for the applications to be submitted in a single PDF document, and for candidates to include the vacancy number and position title in the subject field of the e-mail containing the application. Applications submitted as zip files, cloud files and/or links will not be accepted. Applications that do not conform to the above procedures will not be considered. Only candidates selected for the next step in the hiring process will be contacted. Please submit your application to: DEJobs@nysd.uscourts.gov.

Applicants must be U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents seeking U.S. citizenship. Employees of the United States District Court are not included in the government's Civil Service classification and are at-will employees. All employees are required to adhere to the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees. The successful candidate for this position is subject to a background check. This position is subject to mandatory electronic funds transfer for payment of net pay.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER