

District of Columbia Court of Appeals

NOTICE

Beginning July 7, 2025, the D.C. Court of Appeals will be accepting new applications from qualified attorneys who wish to serve on its Criminal Justice Act (CJA) panel, as well as applications from current members who wish to remain on the panel. The court is also continuing to accept, on a rolling basis, applications from attorneys interested in working on criminal appeals pro bono. Applications for both the panel and for the court's pro bono registry are available at <https://www.dccourts.gov/services/cja-practitioner>. If you have questions regarding either paid or pro bono opportunities in criminal appeals, please contact the court's Staff Counsel Abraham Sisson at asisson@dcappeals.gov.

CJA Panel

The CJA panel is comprised of attorneys the court determines are qualified to represent indigent appellants in criminal appeals. Decisions to accept new applicants and to renew membership for the 2025-2026 CJA panel are at the discretion of the court. Such decisions are based on the needs of the court, including the number of appeals filed, the complexity of the appeals, and the needs of the defendants. The average CJA panel attorney is appointed to approximately one case per month; however, attorneys can request to be appointed on a more or less frequent basis. The current hourly rate for CJA panel attorneys is \$110, and attorneys may be compensated up to \$190,000 per calendar year for work performed pursuant to their panel appointments, subject to applicable limitations on maximum compensation per case (which can be exceeded for particularly large or complex cases). Attorneys are also reimbursed for expenses, which do not count toward the annual \$190,000 limit. Resources available for CJA panel members include trainings offered through the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia (PDS), as well as the PDS-CJA Appellate Consultation and Assistance Program, through which the PDS Appellate Division staff consults on briefs and arranges moot courts for CJA panel attorneys.

Prior to submitting a CJA panel application, applicants must read Miscellaneous Order No. M-217-03, which establishes a Continuing Legal Education requirement for attorneys on the CJA panel; the 2006 Notice to CJA Counsel Concerning the Annual CLE Requirement; the memorandum titled "Obligations of Counsel," updated August 4, 2023; and the Voucher Guidelines for Attorneys Appointed by the D.C. Court of Appeals Under the District of Columbia Criminal Justice Act. These documents, along with other documents relevant to the CJA panel, are available on the court's website at <https://www.dccourts.gov/services/cja-practitioner>. Attorneys interested in joining the panel must email the completed application, including a writing sample, to cjaapplication@dcappeals.gov. Attorneys currently on the DCCA CJA panel who wish to remain on the panel must email a completed Application Update for 2025-2026, and may also attach their 2025 CLE documentation if the CLE requirement is satisfied (submitting both the DCCA form and the attendance verification forms). Submission of an application constitutes acknowledgment and acceptance of the "Obligations of Counsel" terms.

An attorney who submits an application to the CJA panel must be a registered e-filer at the time their application is submitted. In addition, because the court makes all payments via the web voucher portal, successful applicants must register for the web voucher system.

Both the application and the update for current panel members include a waiver and release form that will permit the Office of Disciplinary Counsel to release any disciplinary records concerning the

applicant to the D.C. Court of Appeals.

All applications and updates must be received no later than August 11, 2025. The court expects to notify successful applicants by the end of September 2025.

Pro Bono Registry

In addition to reopening the CJA panel, the court is continuing to add attorneys to its pro bono registry, through which attorneys may be assigned to represent one or more indigent criminal appellants per year on a pro bono basis. Attorneys participating in the registry are not obligated to accept any particular case for assignment. As with the CJA panel application, the pro bono registry application can be found at <https://www.dccourts.gov/services/cja-practitioner>.