

APPENDIX A

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT  
MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

MENTEE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Revised January 2025 and  
Approved by the Fourth Circuit  
Judicial Council on March 4, 2025

## **I. OBJECTIVES OF THE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM**

The United States District Court (the Court) has designed this Mentorship Program to identify and help prepare viable candidates to qualify for appointment to the CJA Panel. An important objective of this Program is to encourage increased participation of women and minorities on the CJA Panel, its primary goal is to obtain the best qualified CJA Panel candidates. As such, the Program is open to all qualified candidates.

Beyond providing education and training, our objective for the Mentorship Program is to create community for our participants. We want Mentees to feel welcome, knowing you have the support of your Mentor, the CJA Administration, and the Federal Public Defender. We hope that you will attend training programs and get to know other Panel attorneys and members of the Office of the Federal Public Defender.

Mentees who successfully complete the Program will be encouraged to apply for appointment to the Panel. If a Mentee does apply, in addition to following the normal application review process, the Committee will solicit the views of the Mentor, the Division Review Panel, and the judge(s) before whom the Mentee has appeared as to whether the Mentee qualifies for appointment.

## **II. MENTEE PARAMETERS**

### **A. Cases**

1. Cases that will serve as teaching vehicles for the Program will be newly presented cases that will expose the Mentee to myriad issues across the spectrum of representation (*e.g.*, grand jury issues, bail and release, discovery review, proffer sessions, plea negotiations, sentence guideline calculations and negotiations, client interviews and conferences regarding various issues and themes, legal research and writing, and possible evidentiary hearing, trial and/or sentencing).
2. The Mentor Attorney from the Federal Public Defender's Office or CJA Panel will serve as lead counsel in the case. The Mentor will contact the Clerk's Office for assistance in assigning a Mentee to the case. Once the Deputy Clerk has arranged for the assignment of the Mentee, the Deputy Clerk will relay that information to the Mentor Attorney.
3. The Mentee assigned to the case will be contacted by the Mentor soon after assignment. The Mentor will identify the Mentee to the Court and to the defendant.
4. The Court may authorize the Mentee to participate in the proceedings. However, the Court, in its discretion, may preclude the Mentee from participating in certain

aspects of the defendant's representation.

5. Mentees will contact the PACER website at: <http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov> and complete the online registration form. Mentees should, under "Firm Name," type in his/her name followed by "CJA Mentee Attorney." Once the registration has been submitted, the Mentee will receive his/her own ID number and password directly from PACER. Mentees should be aware, however, that PACER services are monitored and that the use of the free service is for CJA related matters only. Unauthorized use of the PACER service will result in removal from the Program. Any Mentee who wishes to use PACER for non-related CJA matters must register under his/her own name and obtain a different account number.
6. Mentees will contact the Clerk's Office and make arrangements to register to use the court's CM/ECF system if not previously registered for this service. Online and personal training on the use of this system is available from the Clerk's Office.
7. Mentees will contact the Clerk's Office to make arrangements to be admitted to practice before the Western District of Virginia. Attorney admission fees will be waived for Mentee Attorneys.

## **B. Mentee Protocols**

Mentees will be expected and permitted to:

1. Appear and argue on the record on behalf of the defendant. The Mentor, as counsel of record, must be present in court with the Mentee **at all times**. The Mentee will be required to register for and otherwise comply with the Court's ECF requirements.
2. Under the direction **and in the presence** of the Mentor, confer on behalf of the defendant with: government counsel; chambers; U.S. Probation and Pretrial Officers; federal, state and local law enforcement agents and agencies; U.S. Bureau of Prison personnel; defendant's family; friends and potential witnesses; interpreters; and other members of the defense team, such as investigators or paralegals.
3. Obtain, organize, and review discovery material, perform legal research, draft and file submissions, pleadings, memoranda and motions, under the direction, review and co-authorship of the Mentor, organize exhibits, and engage in other trial preparation activities.
4. Under the direction **and in the presence** of the Mentor, participate in hearings, trials and evidentiary proceedings. Examination of witnesses or any addresses or statements to a jury will be done only under the direction of the Mentor and with the Mentor present during the examination, the address, or statement.

5. Mentees will be required to complete a minimum of eight CLE credits that focus on federal criminal practice skills. In addition, Mentees are strongly encouraged to attend Program orientation sessions and other seminars and workshops coordinated by the Federal Public Defender's Office.
6. Each Mentee must fill out an evaluation form regarding his/her mentor at the conclusion of the proceeding in which the Mentee participated. See [Appendix C of the CJA Mentorship Program Guidelines](#). All evaluation forms will be confidential. The forms must be mailed or emailed to the Clerk of Court.

Clerk, U.S. District Court  
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