

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 18, 2016

U.S. District Court
Eastern District of New York

PRESS RELEASE

The Eastern District of New York Announces Revised CJA Mentoring Program

Chief Judge Dora L. Irizarry, on behalf of the Board of Judges of the Eastern District of New York, is pleased to announce the implementation of a newly revised Criminal Justice Act Mentoring Program (the “Program”). The goal of the Program is to expand the roster of distinguished practitioners who are committed to representing indigent defendants who qualify for appointed counsel under the Criminal Justice Act (“CJA”).

The newly designed Program has two significant changes: (1) the Program will be administered by two senior, highly respected members of the CJA Panel – Susan Kellman, Esq. and Michael Hueston, Esq. (the “Co-Directors”); and (2) qualified Mentees working on cases with their Mentors may now be assigned as Associate Counsel and paid under the CJA. Mentees will be expected to provide at least fifteen (15) hours of legal services *pro bono* before qualifying for compensation, and assignment as Associate Counsel will be at the discretion of the presiding judge in each case.

To qualify as a Mentee, a lawyer must be a practitioner with limited federal criminal experience, including state court practitioners with five or more years of criminal experience. Qualified Mentee candidates also must have strong research and writing skills and be admitted to the Eastern District Bar. Although an important objective of the Program is to encourage increased participation by women and minority attorneys on the CJA Panel, the Program is open to all interested, qualified candidates. Mentees who successfully complete the Program will be encouraged to apply to the CJA Panel, but appointment is not guaranteed.

Mentees will be assigned to a Mentor volunteer, drawn from the ranks of experienced and respected members of the federal criminal bar, who will work closely with their assigned Mentee on randomly assigned cases that will expose the Mentees to myriad issues across the spectrum of representation in federal courts. The Co-Directors will supervise the Mentors and Mentees by meeting with them periodically to evaluate the Mentee’s experience in the Program. They will also participate in the selection of Mentors, review Mentee applications, and assist the CJA Mentoring Subcommittee in arranging educational programs for the Mentees.

The Eastern District of New York’s Court website at <http://www.nyed.uscourts.gov> has a detailed description of the new Mentoring Program, along with an application form for interested Mentees. The forms can be submitted electronically or downloaded and submitted to Douglas Palmer, Clerk of the Court, Eastern District of New York, 225 Cadman Plaza East, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, Telephone 718-613-2270.

For additional information, please contact Susan Kellman (sgk@kellmanesq.com), Michael Hueston (mhueston@nyc.rr.com), or the Hon. Cheryl L. Pollak, U.S. Magistrate Judge, Chair of the CJA Committee (cheryl_pollak@nyed.uscourts.gov).