

**UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS
VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

POSITION: SPECIAL MASTER

VACANCY NUMBER: OSM-2023-01-SM

OPENING DATE: November 20, 2023

CLOSING DATE: January 5, 2024

2023 SALARY RATE: \$212,100 (as provided by 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-12(c)(5))

The United States Court of Federal Claims is seeking to fill one special master position in the Court's Office of Special Masters.

Position Overview

The National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986 (42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa -10 through 34 (2006)) vests jurisdiction in the United States Court of Federal Claims over vaccine injury and death cases. Special masters, who are appointed by the court's judges, serve four-year terms, subject to reappointment for additional four-year terms. The special masters function as the trial judges in these often, medically complex vaccine cases. They oversee all aspects of record development, conduct evidentiary hearings, and issue final decisions, subject to appeal, on entitlement to compensation, on damages, and on attorney's fees and costs. Alternative dispute resolution processes are frequently used to resolve issues and demonstrated experience in that regard is beneficial.

Qualifications

In general, special masters should have experience managing large caseloads, managing legal and administrative staff, writing opinions or substantive legal memoranda and briefs, and conducting or actively participating in courtroom proceedings. In addition, special masters rule on motions and evidentiary issues. The position requires maturity, facility with the principles of litigation and alternative dispute resolution, demeanor appropriate to the position, and experience working with complex factual issues involving expert testimony and terminology, preferably in the field of medicine.

To qualify for the position, an applicant:

- Must be a US citizen and member in good standing of the bar of the highest court of a state, territory, or the District of Columbia for a minimum of five years.
- Must have at least ten years of experience in the active practice of law or other legal experience, which is suitable as a substitute in the opinion of the Court, such as:

- (1) Judge of a state court of record, judge of a federal agency board, administrative law judge, or hearing officer;
 - (2) Attorney for federal or state agency;
 - (3) Law clerk to judge or judicial officer; or
 - (4) Professor of law.
- Must have demonstrated professional competence, including an ability to deal with complicated legal problems, an aptitude for legal scholarship and writing, and the high professional regard of other lawyers.
 - Must have demonstrated familiarity with the federal court system, such as, for example, recent litigation before the federal bench. Knowledge of the Rules of the Court of Federal Claims in general and of its “Vaccine Rules,” in particular, is also desirable.
 - Must be willing to travel.
 - Medical-related knowledge and experience preferred.
 - As a condition of employment, the selected candidate must successfully complete an in-depth FBI background investigation and Internal Revenue Service tax check and is subject to 5-year update investigations similar to the initial one.

Information for Applicants

The best qualified applicants will be invited for in-person interviews in Washington, D.C. Due to the large number of applications anticipated, only those applicants invited for interviews will be contacted by the Court. Applicants selected for interviews must travel at their own expense. Interview and relocation expenses will not be reimbursed.

Applications must be submitted electronically. The application shall consist of: (1) a cover letter addressed to Chief Judge Elaine D. Kaplan, United States Court of Federal Claims, including an indication of how the applicant learned of the vacancy (e.g. from USAJOBS, court’s website, etc.), (2) resume, (3) two unedited or minimally edited writing samples (the two writing samples totaling no more than 50 pages combined), and (4) three references (name, affiliation, and contact information) from persons who are familiar with your work.

Email complete application in one submission (attachments in PDF only) to: uscfc_applications@cfc.uscourts.gov.

No telephone calls please.