



NEW MEXICO  
LAW OFFICES OF THE  
PUBLIC DEFENDER

# Limited Practitioner Position

Bridge the gap between graduating from law school and passing the bar

This position allows the LOPD to extend an offer to applicants prior to graduation from law school, which provides a law student the guarantee of employment after graduation and the LOPD the guarantee of an employee dedicated to indigent defense. The purpose of the limited practitioner position is to bridge the time from when a student graduates law school and is sworn in as a practicing attorney. Since the LOPD is a government agency, it is unable to hire an individual as an attorney unless they are sworn and licensed by a state bar. Individuals extended an offer are expected to join the LOPD team soon after taking the bar exam for extensive training on criminal defense, local rules and practices, and the LOPD's approach to providing holistic representation. Once the limited practitioner is sworn in and performing at the expected level of practice, the limited practitioners will be moved into a public defender attorney position based on demonstrated performance and availability of positions.

- The position is designed to hire for positions in LOPD offices throughout the state.
- The LOPD has hires between 20 and 30 law graduates from one graduating class.
- Generally, more positions are available for spring graduates with start dates after the July bar exam.
- This is a temporary position intended to bridge the gap between graduating from law school and passing the bar.
- Once sworn in and having demonstrated the expected level of practice, limited practitioners will be moved into a public defender attorney position based on demonstrated performance and as the positions become available.

## Timelines:

For spring graduates, offers are extended as early as October and as late as July, depending on available positions and budget. For fall graduates, offers are extended as early as September and as late as April, depending on available positions and budget. The limited practitioners generally start after the bar exam and participate in a lengthy training program which includes training on specific legal issues, docket and trial preparation, and litigation skills.

*"The greatest part about being an LOPD limited practitioner was the opportunity to get real experience allowing me to seamlessly transition into being an attorney. ... I was eased into the task of preparing dockets, analyzing cases, strategizing with clients, and figuring the ins and outs of dynamic courtrooms. The real on the job training was invaluable and led me to feel much more competent and effective once I began in earnest." Maxwell Pines, UC Berkley School of Law Graduate, Serious Violent Offense Attorney licensed and practicing with LOPD since 2014.*

# Instructions for Applying for Limited Practitioner Position

## Application Deadlines

We accept applications from *fall and spring graduates* on a rolling basis. We recommend submitting applications based on the following deadlines:

- Fall graduates submit applications by September 30.
- Spring graduates submit applications by February 28.

## Timeline for Interview Process:

In-person, zoom or telephonic interviews will be scheduled:

- September and October for fall and spring graduates. Fall graduates are encouraged to submit their applications at the beginning of their 3L year and no later than September 30.
- February and March for spring graduates.
- Interviews may also be scheduled upon receipt of application.

## Application Materials:

Any students seeking a Limited Practitioner position must submit a full application by emailing it to [LOPD-JOBS@lopdm.us](mailto:LOPD-JOBS@lopdm.us). The following must be attached:

- 1) a current resume,
- 2) a cover letter, and
- 3) current transcripts.

Please include in the subject line: "Application for Limited Practitioner Position" and your graduation month and year, and the following information in the body of the email:

- We encourage all applicants to consider working at any of our LOPD offices. Please include a list of offices in which you are considering employment and ranking in the body of your email.
  - A list of LOPD office can found below.
- If you are fluent in any languages other than English.

