



State Appellate Defender Office

Job Posting

Deadline: June 19, 2026

State Appellate Defender Office
3031 W. Grand Blvd., Ste. 450, Detroit, MI 48202

www.sado.org

@sadomich | @sadoreentry

Records Specialist – Juvenile Lifer Unit

Full-Time Position in Detroit or Lansing (Hybrid)

Join Michigan’s State Appellate Defender Office (SADO) as a full-time Records Specialist in our Juvenile Lifer Unit. The salary range for this position is \$50,926 to \$73,622, depending on experience.

Job Summary

SADO’s Juvenile Lifer Unit advocates for people who are serving unconstitutionally cruel and unusual life without parole sentences for crimes committed as youth and who are now entitled to resentencing hearings. The **JLU Records Specialist** works collaboratively with a multidisciplinary legal defense team of attorneys, mitigation specialists, reentry specialists, paralegals, and other staff. The Records Specialist aids in the mitigation investigation and preparation for our clients’ resentencing proceedings by obtaining, organizing, and analyzing documentary evidence.

The Records Specialist must be organized, creative, and persistent. At SADO we are dedicated to building a multidisciplinary team with diverse perspectives and experiences.

Job Responsibilities

Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- Obtain, organize, and review mitigation records and documents, such as prison records, school records, medical and mental health records, and newspaper/archival records;
- Review case files and proactively identify places to request records from;
- Meticulously document all record collection efforts by tracking progress in Excel spreadsheets, SADO’s case management system, and saving all record requests and communications to the case file;
- Ensure that paper and electronic records are organized and saved;
- Bates stamp mitigation records and maintain an updated Bates index for all records;
- Analyze mitigation records and synthesize information into summaries, digests, chronologies, timelines, and charts;
- May participate in client visits, team meetings, fieldwork, and witness interviews as needed to gather information relevant to record collection; and,
- May assist attorneys with general hearing preparation such as preparing exhibits and other necessary tasks.

Qualifications

- Commitment to SADO's mission and values and a belief in the inherent dignity and humanity of incarcerated clients with criminal convictions;
- Relevant education, training, or experience in obtaining, analyzing, and organizing documents;
- Persistence and creativity in searching for records that are difficult to obtain;
- Knowledge of the criminal legal system, preferably in Michigan;
- Ability to prioritize multiple client cases, deadlines, and demands;
- Meticulous attention to detail;
- Possession of a valid driver's license and ability to travel to locations throughout the state of Michigan to obtain records, such as courthouses, schools, and libraries;
- Ability to organize, interpret, and synthesize large quantities of information into summaries, digests, timelines, charts, and chronologies;
- The ability to work as part of the defense team under the lead of the case attorney and maintain confidentiality while handling sensitive and privileged documents;
- Advanced technical skills in the following areas:
 - PDFs and Adobe Acrobat (including the ability to extract, combine, OCR, and Bates Stamp PDFs),
 - Excel (including the ability to sort/filter and use formulas),
 - Familiarity with file-sharing technology, specifically SharePoint and Microsoft Office Suite (Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.),
 - Familiarity with case management software is preferred but not required,
 - Ability to troubleshoot technical difficulties and seek clarification when needed; and
- Self-motivated, with the ability to handle constructive feedback.
- Candidates must be a current resident of or relocate to Michigan by hire date.

About Us

SADO is an independently governed state legal agency with offices in Detroit and Lansing. Our [mission](#) is fighting injustice through access, advocacy, compassion, and education. We are driven by our values: freedom, inclusivity, empathy, respect, community, and excellence. Visit www.sado.org to learn more.

Benefits

- Medical, dental, vision, and life insurance
- 401k plan with up to a 9% employer contribution (partial vesting begins in 2 years)
- 13 paid holidays
- 3 weeks of paid vacation in year one
- Paid sick time and, for eligible employees, paid parental leave
- Long-term disability insurance
- Flexible work hours
- Hybrid work environment (remote/office)
- Paid training opportunities

SADO employees are members of the UAW Local 412.

To Apply

Submit a resume and a cover letter via email by June 19, 2026, to jobs@sado.org and include "Records Specialist 2026-04" in the subject line. **Applications without a resume and cover letter will not be considered.**

The cover letter should address the reasons underlying your interest in the work of the Juvenile Lifer Unit and explain your commitment to working with incarcerated people and people convicted of crimes.

SADO is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. A felony conviction does not prohibit employment at SADO.

If you have questions about this application or are unable to send application materials electronically, please contact Human Resources at 313-420-2942 for assistance.

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