



555 WEST BEECH STREET, SUITE 300
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101
619.696.0282
adi-sandiego.com

Thank you for your interest in Appellate Defenders, Inc. (ADI) and our panel of attorneys. ADI is a nonprofit law firm that contracts with the Judicial Council of California to appoint attorneys for indigent parties in criminal, dependency, and limited civil appeals within the Fourth Appellate District. To this end, ADI has recruited and developed a panel of private attorneys who represent indigent clients on appeal. Our panel attorneys handle the majority of indigent appeals within the Fourth Appellate District Court of Appeal.

Panel attorneys work as private practitioners under a Court of Appeal appointment. As independent contractors, panel attorneys are compensated at hourly rates set by the judiciary. ADI recommends a panel attorney of appropriate experience and skill for appointment, and then assists that attorney with the appeal. It evaluates the attorney's work in each case and recommends compensation. It also provides training programs and resource materials for the panel and acts as a liaison between attorneys and the court. An ADI staff attorney is available throughout the appeal to brainstorm possible appellate issues and tactics, to review the opening brief, and to confer regarding key decisions such as whether to request oral argument or petition for review in the California Supreme Court.

The essential common denominator shared by panel attorneys is a strong interest in appellate advocacy (legal research, analysis, and writing) and a commitment to providing quality representation for each client. Appointed counsel are not compensated as well as private work, but many attorneys place a high value on the *nonfinancial* rewards of this work. Not only are the cases interesting, but the nature of the appellate process allows attorneys great flexibility in determining when and where they work. This allows attorneys who so desire to work in or near home, to fulfill family obligations, and to work as many or as few hours as their circumstances allow. The ability to turn to ADI as a source for support and guidance offers reassurance and a sense of collegiality. In addition, panel work eliminates the need to be a rainmaker and locate clients or collect attorney fees. Attorneys run their own firm and work independently unless they want help. Finally, appointed appellate work takes place within a culture of mutual professional respect that is largely free of the corrosive acrimony that often infects other areas of practice. Because the clash of ideas takes place for the most part on the written page, appellate practice, although rigorously adversarial on the merits, tends not to be personally confrontational.

For more information, please visit our webpage on "[How to Become a Panel Attorney](#)." We look forward to hearing from you!

- Great Flexibility
- Interesting Cases
- Fight for Justice
- Collegial Environment