



Engaging Communities • Eliminating Barriers • Securing Justice

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

LITIGATION AND ADVOCACY DIRECTOR

Opening Date: September 8, 2017. Closing Date: Applications accepted until position is filled.

Neighborhood Legal Services Program of the District of Columbia has an immediate opening for an experienced litigator with a deep commitment to lawyering in the public interest to serve as our Litigation and Advocacy Director.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF POSITION

Neighborhood Legal Services Program (NLSP) is a federally-funded, non-profit, civil legal aid law firm that provides free legal information, advice and representation to low-income District of Columbia residents. We help with problems involving housing, family, domestic violence, public benefits and barriers to employment. We also provide advice on some consumer issues and assist with preparing wills and advance directives. Our neighborhood-based, service delivery model -- which includes three offices in Wards 5, 7 and 8 -- allows us to bring dedicated legal services attorneys and enthusiastic pro bono lawyers into low-income communities across the city to provide legal help while they learn first-hand the myriad, daily challenges faced by residents living in poverty.

The Litigation and Advocacy Director (LAD) serves as the chief lawyer for the firm and is responsible for overseeing all of the legal work of a team of 15-20 staff attorneys, post-graduate fellows and loaned associates. In addition to the firm's traditional practice areas, NLSP also has recently launched, two new highly-specialized and successful practices focused on jobseekers and veterans. The successful candidate for this position must be an experienced, legal services litigator with a strong track-record of training, mentoring and supervising junior attorneys in a dynamic law firm environment. The (LAD) also oversees the firm's appellate work, impact litigation and our broad-based advocacy efforts.

The firm's four Managing Attorneys (Intake/ Brief Services Unit, Housing, Family, Barriers to Employment) all report directly to the LAD. The LAD reports directly to the Executive Director, serves on the Senior Management Team and is actively involved in all aspects of law firm management including setting case acceptance priorities, attorney hiring, budgeting, development (including grant-writing) and long-term, strategic planning.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Serves as the firm's chief lawyer and oversees all of the direct, legal services work of the firm at the trial and appellate level, including all affirmative and impact litigation. NLSP's service delivery model is anchored in a walk-in/telephone, neighborhood-based intake system that results in community members receiving referrals, legal information, brief services and/or extended service representation. Our multiple, intake sites include three library-based clinics and a monthly clinic at the VA Medical Center.
- Directly supervises the day-to-day legal work of the staff attorneys, post-graduate fellows and loaned associates in the firm's public benefits, veterans, and consumer law practices. The LAD may also directly represent clients and/or co-counsel matters with NLSP attorneys.
- Identify, shape and guide NLSP's broad-based, high-impact advocacy efforts.
- Play leadership role in developing and implementing litigation skills and substantive training programs.
- Ensure adherence to program and case handling standards, funder requirements and the highest, professional standards.
- Collaborate closely with other legal services providers locally and nationally to identify opportunities to better serve our shared, client community and to pursue, shared advocacy goals.
- Serve as a resource on professional responsibility and ethical issues for attorneys.
- Establish and implement firm program policies relating to legal work.
- Work closely with NLSP's Pro Bono counsel to promote community engagement strategies and use of volunteers in a manner that furthers NLSP's overall advocacy goals and strengthens its capacity to serve clients.
- Other responsibilities as assigned by the Executive Director.

EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Must be an active member of the District of Columbia Bar or eligible to immediately seek admission.

- At least eight (8) years of legal services experience with preference shown to candidates with substantial litigation experience in Housing, Family or Consumer Law. Must also have experience supervising attorneys in a litigation setting.
- Experience with complex litigation (state and/or federal) and appellate advocacy desirable.
- Demonstrated commitment to lawyering in the public interest and a familiarity with the local, legal services community.

COMPENSATION

Competitive salary and benefits package including: employer-paid medical, dental, and vision insurance; employer-subsidized family health coverage; paid vacation, holidays, personal days and sick leave; 8-week parental leave for birth or adoption of a child; employer-paid life and long-term disability insurance; 403(b) Thrift Plan (voluntary retirement savings program); and tax-free transit benefits.

ABOUT NLSP

Established in 1964, NLSP pioneered the concept of a law office rooted in the neighborhoods that it serves and established landmark precedents which have retained their vitality and relevance. NLSP remains embedded in D.C.'s most low-income communities, builds its work on strong partnerships with community-based organizations, and seeks to achieve lasting change for its clients and their communities by using a full range of advocacy tools. Its diverse, multi-lingual and passionate staff embrace an explicitly anti-poverty mission and share a deep commitment to securing meaningful access to justice.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Interested persons should submit a current resume and a cover letter (no longer than one page single-spaced) expressing your qualifications and interest in this position, two writing samples (no longer than 10 pages), and contact information for three professional references. Submit all requested documents to Karen Newton Cole, Executive Director at KNewtonCole@nlsp.org or by mail to Neighborhood Legal Services Program, 64 New York Avenue NE, Washington D.C. 20002, Attn: Karen Newton Cole, Executive Director.

Questions about the position or application process should be directed to Karen Newton Cole, Executive Director at KNewtonCole@nlsp.org.

NLSP IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

It is the policy of the Neighborhood Legal Services Program that no employee or applicant for employment or services will be discriminated against because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation, family responsibilities or family status, veteran's status, or any other basis prohibited by law, including the D.C. Human Rights Act and Language Access Act.
