



American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota
2300 Myrtle Avenue, Suite 180
St. Paul, Minnesota 55104

Position Description: Staff Attorney

Location:

St. Paul, Minnesota

The American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota seeks a self-motivated, creative, and experienced Staff Attorney to focus on policing practices, voting-rights restoration, impact litigation and general litigation. The Staff Attorney reports to the Legal Director.

For over 60 years, the ACLU-MN has been a guardian of liberty, working in courts, the Minnesota Legislature, and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States and Minnesota. Whether it's ending mass incarceration, achieving full equality for the LGBT community, establishing new privacy protections for our digital age, or preserving the right to vote or the right to have an abortion, the ACLU-MN takes up the toughest civil liberties cases and issues to defend all people from government abuse and overreach. With more than 40,000 members, activists, and supporters, the ACLU-MN is a strong and growing affiliate of the National ACLU, which fights tirelessly in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Washington, D.C., for the principle that every individual's rights must be protected equally under the law, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability or national origin.

The candidate should have a deep commitment to and passion for ensuring civil liberties for everyone and an understanding and ability to fight for advancing equity and social justice in partnership with community allies.

Position Overview

Under the direction of the Legal Director, the Staff Attorney will litigate cases and participate in non-litigation advocacy to advance civil liberties in Minnesota, with a particular emphasis on challenging discriminatory and unconstitutional policing practices, as well as restoring voting rights to those who have been unfairly excluded from our democratic process. The Staff Attorney will be responsible for

investigating, filing, and litigating civil liberties and civil rights cases in both federal and state courts. This includes legal research, investigative work, identifying and establishing relationships with clients, drafting pleadings, discovery and motion practice, and handling trials and appeals.

The Staff Attorney will maintain an active docket of their own cases, with assistance, when possible, from outside cooperating attorneys, as well as helping to supervise and mentor interns and volunteers.

The Staff Attorney will also have non-litigation advocacy responsibilities including: creating and supporting partnerships with community organizations, community education through outreach and “know your rights” presentations, public speaking, media interviews, and writing op-eds, newsletter articles and reports.

The ideal candidate will have prior successful experience representing and/or working with communities of color, LGBT individuals, persons with disabilities and/or other populations served by the ACLU.

Travel, as well as occasional work on nights and weekends, will be necessary. Along with all employees, the staff attorney is expected to help maintain a positive, respectful, welcoming, and professional work environment for employees and volunteers.

Specific Responsibilities

1. Legal

- Research, investigate, develop and litigate impact litigation in state and federal court to protect civil liberties and civil rights cases. This includes conducting factual and legal research, preparing memoranda, writing demand letters, drafting pleadings and briefs, conducting discovery, arguing motions, trying cases, writing appellate briefs, presenting oral arguments on appeal, and writing amicus briefs
- Research, investigate and develop impact litigation to support the right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures in violation of the U.S. and Minnesota Constitutions
- Develop advocacy and impact litigation aimed at restoring voting rights to felons and others unfairly excluded for participating in our democracy
- Supervise, lead, or participate in teams of associated attorneys; co-counsel cases with other public interest groups
- Recruit and work with volunteer attorneys
- Review, comment and edit letters and briefs of co-counsel and other staff
- Develop legal strategy and long-term strategic priorities with senior ACLU-MN

2. Advocacy/Public Education

- Work with other ACLU-MN staff to implement integrated-advocacy campaigns and high-impact strategies using ACLU-MN's communication, legislative, education/organizing and legal programs
- Provide strategic leadership and technical assistance to advocates and grass-roots organizers
- Engage with the community through building and nurturing relationships and participating in regular conversations with community members, partners and leaders

3. Administration, Coordination and Support

- Contribute to the maintenance of the legal docket
- Ensure that all pleadings are filed timely and according to court rules
- Supervise law students and interns

Qualifications

- A strong understanding of, and demonstrated passion for, civil liberties, civil rights and the mission of the ACLU, preferably with experience in non-profit advocacy or other community-based groups
- Juris Doctorate and at least three to five years of litigation experience, preferably with experience with federal litigation raising civil liberties and civil rights issues
- Admitted to practice and in good standing in the Minnesota Supreme Court (or eligible for admission within six months of hire date)
- Experience working effectively and collaboratively with diverse staff, coalitions, and community groups
- Excellent skills in legal research and writing; complex legal analysis; interviewing and fact investigation; oral advocacy; negotiation; and interpersonal communication
- A commitment to equity, inclusion, and diversity; a personal approach that values the individual and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability and socioeconomic circumstance.

The ideal candidate will also have the following qualifications:

- Experience in non-profit advocacy or with other community-based groups
- Knowledge of languages likely to be spoken by clients with limited English proficiency is preferable

- Demonstrated ability to work cooperatively on a variety of projects with lawyers, other staff members, and with community organizations and coalitions
- Ability to synthesize complex issues and communicate them effectively to diverse audiences including: elected officials, attorneys, judges, advocates, impacted communities, supporters, the media and the general public
- Highly self-motivated, organized, and adaptable

Salary & Benefits

Salary is commensurate with experience. Excellent benefits including health insurance and a 401(k) plan.

Application Procedure

Interested individuals should send a cover letter, CV, names and contact information for five references, and a writing sample of no more than five pages by e-mail to legal@aclu-mn.org with “Staff Attorney” in the subject line. Applications will be reviewed upon receipt.

Please indicate where you learned of this career opportunity.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

This posting provides a general but not comprehensive list of the essential responsibilities and qualifications required. It does not represent a contract of employment. The ACLU-MN reserves the right to change the posting at any time without advance notice.

The ACLU-MN is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU-MN encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, or veteran status.

The ACLU-MN undertakes affirmative action strategies in its recruitment and employment efforts to assure that persons with disabilities have full opportunities for employment in all positions.

We encourage applicants with disabilities who may need accommodations in the application process to contact: hrjobsincl@aclu-mn.org. Correspondence sent to this email address that is not related to requests for accommodations will not be reviewed. Applicants should follow the instructions above regarding how to apply.

The ACLU-MN comprises two separate corporate entities, the American Civil Liberties Union of Minnesota and the ACLU of Minnesota Foundation. Both entities are organizations with the same overall mission, and share office space and employees. The ACLU-MN has two separate corporate entities in order to do a broad range of work to protect civil liberties. This job posting refers collectively to the two organizations under the name “ACLU-MN.”

December 5, 2017