

Who We Are

Columbia Legal Services is a legal advocacy organization that advances social, economic, and racial equity for people living in poverty. We hold government agencies, institutions, and other actors accountable to address the root causes of racism and their manifestation in unfair treatment and inequitable access to resources, power, and opportunities based on race. We focus on dismantling unfair systems of mass incarceration and immigration. We believe that communities should have a voice in the creation and implementation of the policies, laws, and legal systems that impact them.

We are committed to an environment of mutual respect, collaboration, and equal opportunity for all employees, and strongly encourage applications from people of color, immigrants, people who have been affected by mass incarceration, and other underrepresented and historically marginalized groups. We believe in building and sustaining an organization that is reflective of the communities we serve, and is diverse in work background, experience, education, race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, national origin, or sensory, mental and physical abilities. We believe that the resulting diversity is both a source of program strength and a matter of fundamental human fairness.

Position Summary

Columbia Legal Services seeks a committed, hardworking, and organized full-time legal assistant to support all aspects of advocacy and office administration and contribute to our efforts to meet our clients' civil legal needs and fulfill our mission. The Legal Assistant works under the direction of the Deputy Advocacy Director and assumes responsibility for complex litigation support and other advocacy-related activities, and the administrative and advocacy-related needs of the local office. CLS offices have a collegial atmosphere that emphasizes teamwork, flexibility, and mutual accountability. All staff members are expected to strive to understand the values, cultures, and concerns of the client communities we serve.

The Legal Assistant is expected to proficiently:

- Assist with preparing pleadings, correspondence and other needed documents, and perform other legal assistant tasks as needed.
- Provide general, local office administrative support.
- Maintain electronic and hard-copy files, organize documents and enter data.
- Distribute information by mail, fax and e-mail.
- Communicate effectively orally and in writing with clients and client communities (often internationally), community agencies and organizations, and government agencies.
- Organize meetings, trainings and conference calls.

- Conduct general research on the internet and in libraries, etc.

Experience with the following duties is a plus (please indicate in your resume/cover letter):

- Conduct intensive fact development supporting advocacy, including research and client/witness interviews.
- Support complex litigation in state and federal courts, including managing voluminous discovery files and information.
- Provide in-person support for trials/hearings and policy hearings/presentations.
- Use eDiscovery software and tools.

Qualifications

- Must be bilingual in English and Spanish and able to provide effective and accurate translation and interpretation (written and oral) assistance.
- Commitment to civil legal services and sensitivity to people from diverse backgrounds - all staff members are expected to strive to understand the values, cultures, and concerns of the client communities we serve.
- Comfortable with technology and willing to learn new software programs; demonstrated proficiency in the use of law office technology including Microsoft Office applications for the creation and management of complex documents, spreadsheets, and e-mail; proficiency with Access or other database software preferred.
- Ability to work independently while participating as an effective member of the office team.
- Willingness to expand skills and responsibilities and participate in community outreach.
- Ability to establish effective working relationships with a variety of individuals including members of various internal departments, co-counsel, and partner organizations.
- Willingness to work across offices (primarily using online tools).
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills (oral and written).
- Lived or other demonstrated meaningful and sustained experience with people living in poverty, people of color, immigrant, or indigenous communities or the criminal legal system is a plus.

Compensation

This full-time, non-exempt position is a bargaining unit position, eligible for representation by Washington Legal Workers, our in-house labor union. Salary is commensurate with years of experience, based on a scale governed by our collective bargaining agreement. The salary range for 0-7 years of experience is \$40,000 - \$48,200 and includes an annual cost-of-living adjustment (plus a \$60/month stipend for bilingual capability) and increases with each year of experience. We also offer a comprehensive compensation package with 15 paid holidays, between 15-21 paid vacation days, 12 sick days, and between 3-5 personal days each year, as well as paid parental and family medical leave benefits and a partially-paid sabbatical every 7 years. We pay 100% of employee premiums for excellent health, vision, and dental benefits plus 50% of the maximum out-of-pocket deductible and

offer heavily subsidized family premiums. We also offer a 403(b) retirement benefit with employer contribution and a match, disability and life insurance, a subsidized transit pass, and an employee wellness program.

To Apply

Send a cover letter, resume, and completed [Equity Statement](#) in PDF format to careers@columbialegal.org. Please make **Bilingual Legal Assistant** your subject line. We accept applications on a rolling basis, with priority given to those received before November 15th. CLS will contact you only if we decide to pursue your application. If you need a reasonable accommodation for the application process, please contact the above email.