



Justice. Community. Inclusion.

Disability Rights Connecticut

“Connecticut’s protection and advocacy system”

846 Wethersfield Avenue
Hartford, CT 06114

STAFF ATTORNEY POSITION

The position of Staff Attorney advocates on behalf of children and adults with disabilities. This position reports to the Legal Director of Disability Rights Connecticut, Inc. (“DRCT”).

ABOUT DRCT

Disability Rights Connecticut, Inc. (“DRCT”) is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the civil and human rights of persons with disabilities in Connecticut. **DRCT’s mission is to advocate, educate, investigate and pursue legal, administrative, and other appropriate remedies to advance and protect the civil rights of citizens with disabilities to participate equally and fully in all facets of community life in Connecticut.** DRCT is a statewide organization authorized by federal law and funded by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and Social Security Act and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

JOB DESCRIPTION

The responsibilities of the person in this position will include:

- Individual and systemic advocacy or representation to ensure protection of the rights of eligible clients in formal and informal legal and administrative proceedings, including conducting client and other interviews, identifying issues, determining course of action, developing and implementing appropriate legal strategies both within DRCT and with outside counsel, negotiating solutions to problems, and/or encouraging self-advocacy, when appropriate. Emphasis of this position will be on systemic advocacy so as to benefit the most individuals.
- Supervise advocates with oversight from the Legal Director.
- Analyze existing cases and other complaints and materials to determine if they present systemic issues which may be appropriate for DRCT to address systemically, and, with the Legal Director, formulate broad strategies for their prevention, reduction, elimination or promotion. This includes significant participation in developing and conducting class

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action litigation in state and federal court, and the use of media and other strategies in support of such litigation.

- Work with outside counsel to develop and act as co-counsel in class action and systemic impact litigation.
- Act in accordance with identified mission, priorities and goals of DRCT.
- Consult with professionals such as attorneys, physicians, psychologists, therapists, educators, and others to identify options and barriers for individuals and groups and prepare cases for litigation.
- Assist people with disabilities in advocacy and systems change efforts.
- Create and participate on task forces, coalitions and committees as assigned, as well as conduct training and outreach activities.
- Supervise advocates, assist with facility monitoring, address allegations or complaints of abuse and neglect from people with disabilities, family members, friends or other concerned parties in state and private facilities such as hospitals, nursing homes and community facilities.
- Maintain accurate, confidential files that document legal services provided.
- Assist in preparing reports to funding sources.
- Maintain accurate time records and client records, including accurate use of the Disability Advocacy Database (DAD), which is necessary for DRCT to meet its programmatic and fiscal responsibilities, and to obtain prevailing party attorney fees when appropriate.
- Perform related tasks consistent with skills, abilities, and general responsibilities as required to support DRCT.
- Travel throughout Connecticut and outside Connecticut as necessary to perform assigned job tasks.

Minimum qualifications for this position include:

- Juris Doctorate degree from an accredited law school or other law school approved by the Connecticut Supreme Court
- Active Connecticut law license or at least five years' practice while admitted to the bar of another state.(Admission to the Connecticut Bar within 12 months of employment is required and is the responsibility of the applicant)
- A minimum of five 5 years of substantial litigation experience (or significant experience in class action civil rights or disability law litigation) representing plaintiffs. Legal clerkships may be counted as up to one year of litigation experience.
- Ability to take a lead role in case planning and management.
- A demonstrated ability to handle routine and complex litigation in state and federal courts
- Experience in working with and for people with disabilities.

- Knowledge of the disability services system in Connecticut.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Ability to work efficiently, independently and collaboratively. Demonstrated interest and commitment to public interest law.

The Staff Attorney should also demonstrate competence in the following:

- Behave ethically
- Support diversity
- Build relationships
- Communicate effectively
- Focus on client needs
- Demonstrate professionalism
- Make decisions
- Organize priorities, work, progress, data and activities
- Work collaboratively, including with outside counsel employed by other organizations.
- Solve problems

DISCLAIMER

This position description serves as a general summary and overview of the major duties and responsibilities of the job. It is not intended to represent the entirety of the job nor is it intended to be all-inclusive. Management reserves the right to modify, or rescind, this position description at any time, with or without prior notice.

TO APPLY

Applications must include: (a) a letter expressing your interest in the position, your qualifications, and how you might contribute to the future of DRCT; (b) a current resume including the names and contact information of three references.

Materials should be submitted in Microsoft Word or PDF format. Applications must be emailed to Catherine Cushman, DRCT Legal Director, by 4:00 PM on May 31, 2019. Her email address is Catherine.Cushman@disrightsct.org.

 DRCT is a fair employment practices/equal opportunity/disability accessible employer committed to maintaining a diverse workplace. We value diversity of culture, disability and other life experiences and are an equal opportunity employer by choice. Qualified candidates from

diverse personal, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds are encouraged to apply. DRCT also complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Connecticut Fair Employment Practices Act and is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants and employees with disabilities.

Job Type: Full-time