

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 full-time legal assistant with a minimum of 1 year of experience to join our Advocacy Team. This position supports all aspects of advocacy and office administration to meet our clients' civil legal needs and fulfill our mission. CLS offices have a collegial atmosphere that emphasizes teamwork, flexibility, and mutual accountability. This position is based in our Seattle office and reports to our Deputy Director of Advocacy. Due to COVID-19, CLS staff are currently working from home; however, this position will resume office work when safely allowed to do so. Duties laid out in this description will be adjusted accordingly. Duties include:

Advocacy Support

- Support teams of attorneys on complex litigation and other advocacy-related activities, such as preparing pleadings, correspondence, and other needed documents.
- Maintain electronic and hard-copy files, organize documents and enter data.
- Communicate effectively orally and in writing with clients, community agencies and organizations, and government agencies.
- Conduct general research on the internet and in libraries, etc.
- Organize large amounts of documents and data, prepare charts, one-pagers, and presentations in support of advocacy.
- Perform other legal assistant tasks as needed, including general administrative and advocacy-related support.

Legal Intake

- Answer frequent incoming calls from our prison and jail intake line and manage a high volume of written prison and jail correspondence.
- Coordinate confidential collect phone lines for attorneys.

Office Administration

- Distribute information by mail, fax and e-mail, manage calendars for staff attorneys, and prepare attorneys for meetings, presentations, testimony, and court appearances.
- Organize and schedule meetings, trainings and conference calls.
- Provide light reception for the Seattle office by receiving guests and monitoring front door activity.

Qualifications

- A minimum of one year of demonstrated proficiency supporting litigation in a law office and familiarity with federal and state court rules.
- Proficiency in the use of law office technology including court document filing programs. Willing to learn new software programs as needed, including LegalServer and case management tools (e.g., CaseMap).
- Intermediate experience with Microsoft Office365 applications, including SharePoint and Microsoft Teams, for the creation and management of case documents, spreadsheets, and e-mail.
- Ability to work independently and participate as an effective member of our advocacy team, including an ability to work across offices using online and virtual tools.
- Ability to coordinate multiple projects at the same time.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills (oral and written).
- Willingness to engage with the public, client groups and participate in community outreach.
- Strong preference for experience with electronic file management.
- Proficiency with Access or other database software preferred.
- Bilingual skills in Spanish/English are a plus (additional \$720/year).

Compensation

The salary for a Level 1 Legal Assistant begins at \$42,024 and increases with each year of experience. This is a bargaining unit position and is eligible for representation by Washington Legal Workers, our in-house labor union. We also offer a competitive and comprehensive compensation package with generous paid time off for 15 paid holidays, between 15 - 21 paid vacation days, 12 sick days, and between 3 and 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 resume in PDF format to careers@columbialegal.org and make **Legal Assistant** your subject line. We accept applications on a rolling basis, with priority given to those received before August 7th. 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.