



## Job Announcement

### Temporary Paralegal - Native American Unit – Employment Benefits Navigator

The Northwest Justice Project (NJP) is a not-for-profit statewide law firm with a mission of **Combatting Injustice • Strengthening Communities • Protecting Human Dignity**. NJP secures justice for people in or near poverty through high quality legal advocacy that promotes the long-term well-being of low-income individuals, families and communities through legal representation, community partnerships, education, and other advocacy.

The Northwest Justice Project (NJP) has received one-time funding from the Office of Civil Legal Aid to expand its capacity to serve Native Americans accessing unemployment insurance and other employment benefits issues as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. As a result, NJP will add a temporary Employment Benefits Navigator within the organization's Native American Unit (NAU). The NAU is a specialized unit that advocates for the rights of Native American individuals and communities, on- and off-reservation. This is a full-time position with an anticipated employment duration through June 30, 2021. While all most staff are currently working remotely, this position is expected to be located in NJP's Seattle office. Other NJP office locations may be considered, depending on the availability of space.

The NAU seeks applications from qualified individuals to undertake mission-directed work assisting Native Americans in obtaining unemployment insurance and other employment benefits administered by the Employment Security Department (ESD). This is a new project that will provide information and assistance to Native American applicants navigating the process for approval and receipt of state unemployment benefits. The temporary Employment Benefits Navigator will also be responsible for engaging with tribal agencies and urban organizations serving Native American communities, and others, to facilitate Native Americans' access to unemployment benefits.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The temporary Employment Benefits Navigator will undertake a range of duties including but not limited to:

- Conduct initial client interviews to gather information, assess unemployment and ESD-administered employment benefits cases, and spot potential legal issues.
- Advise clients on matters related to employment benefits, under attorney supervision as appropriate.

- Prepare case files for referral to NJP advocates for further representation in cases that meet NJP field office priorities and require full representation.
- Provide brief services where appropriate to assist clients in completing unemployment benefits related forms and compiling supporting records.
- Refer cases not within NJP priorities to outside agencies and/or attorneys, as appropriate.
- Develop and maintain relationships with tribal employment offices, vocational rehabilitation programs, and other tribal personnel.
- Develop and maintain relationships with urban Indian organizations' employment support programs.
- Engage with the client communities and conduct community education presentations for client groups, social and human services providers, and civil and tribal justice system stakeholders.
- Help identify and develop online resources for use by attorneys and/or unrepresented litigants on unemployment benefits matters.
- Utilize NJP's case management and timekeeping systems and comply with all applicable regulatory requirements and reporting needs.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

- Experience working in at least one of the following: tribal courts, tribal employment departments or other agencies, or state or federal administrative agencies.
- Experience in at least one of the following: public benefits, employment law, administrative law, or related substantive areas.
- Experience navigating Washington's Employment Security Department's website and/or phone lines during COVID-19 is helpful but not required.
- Experience doing client intake in a legal setting is helpful but not required.
- High school diploma or equivalent required; four-year degree, or equivalent in years of professional experience in a tribal, state, or federal agency or another position helping people navigate agency/administrative processes, preferred.
- Prior experience in a paralegal position helpful but not required.
- Well-developed sense of empathy.
- Cultural competency.
- Demonstrated experience working with low-income Native American communities. Experience working with tribes is a plus.
- Ability to work well independently and with a team.
- Ability to learn, analyze, and apply legal principles.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Computer proficiency in MS Office Suite and the ability to learn software applications necessary for the efficient administration of the project.
- Excellent time management.

*\*Combination of equivalent education, certifications and experience may substitute for each requirement*

NJP has an organizational commitment to fight racism and to incorporate equity and inclusion in both the work we do and work environment we create. All staff are expected to uphold this commitment and approach their role with a desire to learn and grow in this area.

**Salary Range:** Starting salary is based upon years of experience, with an annual salary range starting at \$46,382. This is a non-exempt position. We offer a comprehensive benefits package, which includes 100% paid employee health premiums and significant premium shares for family health premiums, as well as generous time off.

**Hours of work:** NJP’s typical client office hours are 9:00 – 5:00, Monday through Friday.

**To Apply:** Submit a letter of interest, current resume and writing sample to Human Resources at [resume@nwjustice.org](mailto:resume@nwjustice.org). Cover letter and email subject line should clearly reference “Temporary Paralegal – NAU”. Cover letter should include description of any past experience, personal or professional, with low income or other marginalized communities. **The Northwest Justice Project is especially interested in qualified candidates whose professional, personal and/or service experience allow them to contribute to and support the legal aid community’s commitment to race equity.**

**Application Deadline:** August 10, 2020

*NJP is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and fosters an environment free of barriers and discriminatory practices. NJP actively promotes mutual respect, acceptance, teamwork and productivity. NJP is committed to maintaining an organization whose staff, Board and clients are diverse in background, experience, race, color, national origin, gender, age, religious reference, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sensory, mental or physical abilities, veteran status, and other qualities that strengthen the program while reinforcing its commitment to basic fairness. People of color, people who identify as transgender, lesbian, gay, or bisexual, and those with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. Individuals needing a reasonable accommodation for the application or interview process or for more information about the project should contact the Human Resources Department by calling (206) 464-1519.*