



Job Announcement
Staff Attorney or Senior Attorney:
Public Benefits & Access to Justice
Los Angeles, Oakland, or Sacramento Office

Western Center on Law and Poverty

For over 50 years, Western Center on Law and Poverty has led the fight to end poverty and secure housing, health care, a strong safety net, and racial and economic justice for all low-income Californians. Western Center brings about system-wide change through impact litigation, legislative, policy and administrative advocacy at the state and federal level, and support for legal services and community-based organizations. With offices in Los Angeles, Sacramento, and Oakland, we are California's largest legal services support center.

Position Summary

Western Center offers a unique opportunity for an experienced and enthusiastic attorney to join our successful and dedicated public benefits and access to justice litigation team. This position is distinctive, providing the exceptional attorney an exciting opportunity to litigate on a variety of public benefits-related and access to justice issues in state and federal courts throughout the state.

We seek a team member who has experience practicing in diverse forums, thrives in a collegial and dynamic team environment, and is committed to addressing race-based inequities. The ideal candidate will demonstrate a strong interest in California's safety net programs and working to eliminate government and private policies which result in poverty.

This position reports to the Deputy Director and can be based in any of the Western Center offices, with a preference for our Los Angeles and Oakland offices.

Responsibilities

- Design, execute and lead innovative litigation strategies, engage in class action and impact litigation and provide co-counseling support to legal services programs statewide.
- Provide expertise and direction in a variety of training and conference settings and through technical assistance, consultation, publications and education, particularly to legal services organizations.
- Work collaboratively with the public benefits and access to justice team to plan, design and implement future activities related to poverty issues.
- Work closely with Sacramento-based policy advocates on budget and poverty-related legislation.
- Work closely with community-based organizations and legal services programs statewide to identify potential cases and provide litigation support, including co-counseling and mentorship.
- Answer technical assistance inquiries from and provide updates and trainings to community-based organization and local legal services advocates in areas of expertise and related to advocacy work.
- Work within a team while engaging in most work independently.

- Represent Western Center in various coalitions.
- Some travel, including overnight travel, may be required when it is safe to travel.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate is a dedicated and committed attorney with knowledge of public benefits for low-income Californians and has the following attributes:

- A commitment to the mission of Western Center, available at www.wclp.org, with a demonstrated commitment to race equity.
- Strong litigation skills in any practice area. Experience representing clients in complex affirmative lawsuits. Familiarity with appellate advocacy is a plus.
- A minimum of nine years' experience (for senior attorney applicants) or a minimum of five years' experience (for staff attorney applicants).
- The ability and enthusiasm to lead litigation teams and to perform the necessary duties of a successful lead counsel.
- A desire to implement innovative advocacy strategies and to strive for exceptional legal results.
- Ability to write statutory language, interpret statutory language and work on administrative law issues.
- Ability to establish and maintain collaborative working relationships in a team environment and in political or potentially sensitive settings.
- Ability to think creatively, be strategic, and exercise good judgment.
- Ability to develop and work in diverse coalitions in which participants may have multiple interests.
- Ability to work in a team setting but independent enough to be able to implement team objectives effectively outside the team setting.
- Ability to work under time pressure.
- Strong writing and oral communication skills.
- Exemplary ethical standards.
- Admitted to practice law in California or willingness to take next California Bar Exam.
- Ability to travel, as needed.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience working with or coming from historically marginalized communities.
- Experience with community-based organizations or nonprofit legal services agencies.
- Knowledge and understanding of welfare law, economic security, access to justice, racial justice, and anti-poverty policy.

Compensation

Salary is very competitive and commensurate with experience. We provide a generous benefits package, including leave policies, vacation, and December holiday office closure at full pay. We provide numerous opportunities and support to ensure our staff are able to grow and develop their professional skills. The salary range begins at \$90,000 and increases based on experience.

Application Process

To promote racial and social justice and achieve our mission, Western Center is committed to maintaining a diverse staff and creating an inclusive and respectful workplace. Western Center strongly encourages applications from persons of color, women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, persons living with disabilities, and persons from other underrepresented groups whose background may contribute to effectively representing low-income people and underserved communities.

Applications received by April 15, 2022 will be prioritized but applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

Please email a cover letter, résumé, two writing samples, and a list of references to jobs5@wclp.org. In your cover letter, please explain how you think your experience or background has prepared you to contribute to a work environment with a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion.

At least one of the writing samples should be a brief in a closely contested case, and should reflect your personal work. Where additional attorneys appear on the caption, please explain the nature of your personal contribution to the document.