



CONNECTICUT LEGAL SERVICES

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HOUSING CAMPAIGN ATTORNEY POSITION

Connecticut Legal Services, Inc. (CLS) seeks a skilled and committed attorney to lead a new campaign for affordable housing. The attorney will work closely with community members and groups to build and implement a campaign to create more high-quality, affordable housing for low-income people in Bridgeport, Connecticut. This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced attorney to deploy a range of advocacy skills – from litigation to policy development – and play a leadership role in lifting up the voices of directly-impacted community members to drive systemic change.

ORGANIZATIONAL DESCRIPTION

Connecticut Legal Services (CLS) is Connecticut's largest non-profit law firm, providing free legal help to low-income people in areas including housing, consumer rights, family law, public benefits, education, immigration, employment and disability. With a staff of almost 80 in seven offices across Connecticut, CLS fights for equal justice and improved life opportunities for more than 12,000 people every year.

THE HOUSING CAMPAIGN POSITION

Bridgeport, Connecticut's largest city, is a community with a high poverty rate and an aging affordable housing stock, in the middle of one of the wealthiest counties in the country. CLS has a long history of advocating on behalf of the right of low-income people in Bridgeport to safe, stable, and affordable housing. Every year, CLS' Bridgeport housing attorneys open more than a hundred individual cases to protect low-income people from unfair evictions and promote safe living conditions in low-income housing. We also work closely with tenant groups in the city's public housing developments, the housing authority, and community organizations concerned about affordable housing in Bridgeport

The housing campaign position opens a new front in CLS' fight for affordable housing in Bridgeport. The attorney in this two-year, grant-funded position will play a leadership role in working across the city to organize and support community members – including tenant associations and other interested neighborhood or community organizations and individuals – in identifying goals, developing strategies, and implementing a campaign for more high-quality, affordable housing.

Strategies may range from impact litigation to transactional law to legislative reform, and will be implemented in collaboration with CLS' staff of attorneys and other advocates. The Housing Campaign Attorney will manage and be supported by an AmeriCorps Public Allies member, who will assist with

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community outreach and organizing, and by one or more consultants with expertise in advocacy campaigns and/or grassroots organizing.

POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

- *Grassroots Community Engagement:* Build relationships with individuals and groups who are directly-impacted by Bridgeport's affordable housing crisis, working with the community to identify problems, craft solutions, and ensure that community voices are considered in addressing issues related to housing in Bridgeport;
- *Coalition Building:* Identify partners and allies, perform outreach, and build and maintain a campaign coalition, developing and maintaining relationships with a diverse array of stakeholders to further advocacy goals;
- *Campaign Strategy Development:* Gather and analyze information, assess conditions, convene stakeholders, articulate clear goals and measurable objectives, and develop a detailed plan for effecting systems-level change;
- *Policy Development and Advocacy:* Research policy options, draft policy papers, legislation, and municipal ordinances, and advocate with policymakers;
- *Litigation and Direct Representation:* Collaborate with other CLS staff to launch systemic litigation and/or engage in direct representation of community members to further the campaign strategy;
- *Communications:* Develop and implement communications strategies to advance campaign objectives, including drafting reports, white papers, and other public education materials, engaging in media outreach and advocacy, and using social media;
- *Project Management:* Regularly assess campaign progress, work with other CLS staff on evaluation and reporting, and manage the project's AmeriCorps member and consultants.

REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The housing campaign attorney will report to the managing attorney of CLS' Bridgeport office and to the managing attorney of CLS' Housing Unit. The attorney will supervise an AmeriCorps member and will manage at least one external consultant.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Deep and demonstrated commitment to advocacy on behalf of low-income, vulnerable, and marginalized communities, and to CLS' mission, vision, goals, and values;
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills, including the ability to write persuasively and clearly and the ability to communicate effectively with diverse populations;
- Strong analytical skills;

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- Demonstrated ability both to collaborate closely with colleagues and also to work independently when necessary;
- Demonstrated creativity and flexibility in solving problems and meeting challenges;
- Strong work ethic and willingness to travel within Connecticut and to work late hours and/or weekends when circumstances demand it;
- At least three years of post-law school litigation and other relevant experience – for example, working with low-income populations, building advocacy campaigns, and community organizing;
- Admitted to the Connecticut Bar.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Experience working closely with low-income communities and individuals who are directly impacted by the lack of affordable housing;
- Experience developing and implementing campaign strategies, including experience with media advocacy;
- Experience with policy development and advocacy;
- Familiarity with the Bridgeport community;
- Conversational or better knowledge of Spanish;
- Knowledge of substantive housing law and relevant procedural law.

START DATE

As soon as practicable.

COMPENSATION

Salary will be commensurate with experience and competitive in the nonprofit legal advocacy field, with extremely generous benefits.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants should send a cover letter clearly describing their qualifications, resume, 5-10 page writing sample, and the names and contact information for three references to alupia@connlegalservices.org. CLS invites all applicants to include in their cover letter a statement about how your unique background and/or experiences might contribute to the diversity, cultural vitality, and perspective of our staff and legal services practice.

Applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

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