



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Staff Attorney Supportive Services for Veteran Families

AREA OF SERVICE: Southeastern Wisconsin

**Preferred Location: MILWAUKEE AREA
(Placement in other parts of eastern Wisconsin will be considered.)**

August 2, 2019

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. (Legal Action) seeks a full-time staff attorney to work with community partners on the Supportive Services for Veteran Families Project (SSVF). This attorney provides legal aid to qualifying veterans and their families on civil legal issues that affect housing sustainability and that prevent homelessness. There is no charge to the veteran for this legal aid.

Legal Action provides services to SSVF-eligible veterans in 21 counties, primarily in southeastern Wisconsin.

We value a diverse staff and work environment. We strongly encourage applications from women, people of color, people who identify as LGBTQIA, people with disabilities, and people with life experiences or education that add to our diversity and our capacity to provide high-quality legal aid. We encourage applicants to include a statement about the ways that their unique background and personal, professional, and life experiences contribute to the diversity, cultural vitality, and perspective of our staff and our law firm's mission along with their other application materials.

Preferred home location for this position is Legal Action of Wisconsin's Milwaukee office, 230 West Wells Street, Milwaukee, WI 53203. We will also consider candidates who wish to be based in Legal Action's Racine, Oshkosh, or Green Bay offices. Telecommuting arrangements may be considered if it would increase the project's capacity to serve clients located in geographically isolated areas. Please tell us where you would prefer to be located in your cover letter.

LEGAL ACTION OF WISCONSIN, INC: Since 1968, Legal Action has provided high-quality civil legal aid to those who otherwise would be denied justice. Whether it's securing FoodShare for a family in need, obtaining a domestic abuse restraining order for a single mother, preventing homelessness for a veteran, or disputing a predatory loan for a vulnerable elder, Legal Action delivers high-quality, personalized legal representation to every client. We emphasize the legal work that will create systemic change for all.

Legal Action fights tirelessly in the southern 39 counties of Wisconsin to ensure equal justice. With funding from the Legal Services Corporation, the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation, and other sources, our non-profit law firm represents low-income and elderly individuals at no cost to clients. Attorneys in Legal Action's six offices focus their work on housing, public benefits, family law, consumer issues, and removing barriers to employment.

To provide maximum access for its eligible client population, Legal Action maintains offices in Milwaukee, Madison, Racine, Oshkosh, Green Bay, and La Crosse. In addition, Legal Action operates a statewide Farmworker Project; and service-territory wide projects, including an Elder Rights Project (focusing on crime victims over sixty), the Disabled Offenders Economic Security Project (serving incarcerated individuals suffering from severe mental health issues), and the Crime Victims' Rights Project.

SSVF PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Our SSVF Project works with the Center for Veterans Issues (CVI) to provide free legal advice and direct representation to qualifying veterans on civil legal issues including: eviction defense; social security disability/SSI; child support; driver's license recovery; municipal citations; records review, correction, expungement and other re-entry matters; and other civil legal matters that directly relate to housing stability and preventing homelessness.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES & QUALIFICATIONS

For the SSVF Project:

- The attorney will conduct intake and provide information, advice, and/or direct legal representation to veterans referred by CVI on the civil legal issues described above.
- The attorney will provide advocacy in and outside of court on behalf of the client, including representing the client at court and administrative hearings, filing and arguing motions, claims, and requests, negotiating agreements with landlords and others, and providing information and advice to veterans on a wide range of civil legal issues. In sum, the attorney is expected to be a problem-solver, looking at the entire situation to find realistic solutions that will help prevent homelessness and improve short-term and long-term housing stability.
- The attorney will establish and maintain good working relationships with the Case Managers and other staff at CVI. (CVI provides rent and other housing assistance in addition to case management services.)

- The attorney will conduct intake hours at CVI office locations.
- Due to the large geographic area and diverse range of issues, the attorney hired will be comfortable in:
 - managing a large case load,
 - working independently,
 - practicing different types of law, and
 - practicing in new and unfamiliar courtrooms and other settings to advocate for veterans and their families.
- Prior experience with evictions and/or SSDI/SSI is preferred.
- A strong desire to work with veterans and to serve those who have served our country is a must.

For Legal Action:

- All Legal Action staff attorneys are responsible for providing quality and aggressive representation of clients in service cases and in impact work, and for performing all duties associated with such representation.
- Attorneys must keep up with the law as it changes and develops, particularly in their area of specialization.
- Attorneys are expected to share responsibility for the development and maintenance of good working relationships with community groups and state and local bar associations.
- Attorneys will be called upon to provide training and other assistance to members of Legal Action's Volunteer Lawyers Project.
- Each staff attorney is responsible for serving on at least one of the firm's Priority Committees.
- Admission to the Wisconsin Bar or the ability to become admitted by the Fall of 2019 is required.
- Valid driver's license.
- We welcome applications from candidates with varied experience and with any number of years of experience as a lawyer.
- Legal Action requires a commitment to our work and to providing quality and aggressive representation in both individual service cases and in impact work.
- Attorneys must be knowledgeable in state and federal law and procedure.
- Attorneys must meet high standards of written and courtroom advocacy.
- Attorneys must be able to communicate both orally and in writing in a clear and concise manner.
- Attorneys must work harmoniously with others.
- Enthusiasm for arguing motions and representing at trial.
- Self-motivated, diligent, and able to meet strict deadlines while under pressure.
- Respect for differences in race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socio-economic circumstances.
- Fluency in a language other than English and cultural affinity for the client community that speaks that language is highly desired.

Client Service and Travel and Schedule Requirements: The position involves regular, though not constant, travel to meet with clients and go to court in different Wisconsin counties. In addition, the attorney will have some responsibilities involving outreach to agencies and non-profits, including the Veterans Administration.

The attorney will be responsible for managing their own schedule with respect to client meetings, office hours, hearings, etc. The attorney should expect some, but not frequent, court appearances and events after regular business hours.

TRAINING & SUPERVISION: The amount and structure of the training will be determined by the attorney's experience with various areas of law. Legal Action has a significant archive of training materials, relevant law and secondary sources, and motion and briefing templates that will be helpful. We also have highly experienced attorneys who are ready and willing to share their expertise in their area of specialty.

The attorney will be supervised by a Managing Attorney.

SALARY AND BENEFITS: Starting salary depends upon experience and qualifications, with a minimum starting salary of \$45,727 for attorneys with 0 – 1 year of experience. A credit of \$1,324 will be given for each 12 months of prior, relevant work experience. For example, an applicant with 5 years (60 months) of documented, relevant experience as an attorney may be offered a minimum starting salary of \$52,347 for this position. In addition, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, staff members may receive an annual salary increase. In 2018 and prior years, the Board of Directors has approved a \$2,000 salary increase for this position.

Position includes a full fringe benefit package, which currently include:

- Employer-paid health, dental, life and long-term disability insurance premiums for employee, spouse (provided the spouse does not have coverage available through their employer), and children;
- Employer profit-sharing contribution plan;
- Four weeks of annual leave (for employees with less than 10 years of service);
- Four days of personal leave per calendar year for employees with less than six years of service;
- Four weeks of paid parental leave; and
- Twelve days of sick leave per year.

PERSONNEL POLICIES AND “AT WILL” EMPLOYMENT: The position is subject to a probationary period of up to one year. The position is governed by the Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. Personnel Policies which are subject to unilateral change by the Legal Action Board of Directors. As with any Legal Action position, there is no guaranteed period of employment and employment is “at will,” subject to termination at any time.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT: This position involves sedentary work, sitting at a desk on a computer for an extended period. Exerting up to 10 pounds of force on a regular basis to lift, carry, push or otherwise move objects.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to stand, sit, talk, hear and use hands and fingers to operate a computer and/or laptop keyboard and use a telephone. Specific vision abilities required for this job include close vision requirements due to computer work. Drives a motor vehicle on daily basis for meetings and to attend court hearings. Occasional reaching, bending, kneeling and stooping involved to retrieve various items and materials. This position works in an environmentally-controlled office environment with moderate noise from phones, printers and light office traffic.

HOW TO APPLY: Application materials must be submitted via email as a PDF. Applicants should email applications to: VeteransProjectHiring@legalaction.org

Applicants should send:

- 1) a cover letter that includes the name of this position and a brief summary of the interest, experience, and qualifications
- 2) resume
- 3) the names of and contact information for three references
- 4) recent writing sample(s) and
- 5) law school transcript(s)

DEADLINE: This position will be open until filled but we will review applicants on a rolling basis. To ensure early consideration, please submit application materials as soon as possible and no later than close of business at **5:00 pm Friday, August 23, 2019.**