



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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**JOB ANNOUNCEMENT
INTERNAL & EXTERNAL POSTING
STAFF ATTORNEY
LA CROSSE OFFICE
June 16, 2020**

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. (Legal Action) is seeking to fill a full-time staff attorney position to work at its La Crosse office.

This position will be available immediately.

Some Legal Action staff members continue to work remotely because of the COVID-19 pandemic and this position may work remotely for an undetermined time period.

The attorney will provide representation to low-income persons with a focus in two of the following areas of law: housing, family, consumer, public benefits, and removing barriers to employment. The areas of law which this attorney will focus will be determined by the needs of the client community, the substantive focus of other Legal Action La Crosse office attorneys, the experience of the person hired, and other factors.

Please see our website for information about our work in all these areas of law: www.legalaction.org
Equal justice under law can only be achieved through the collaboration of a diverse staff. When we utilize our differences, we effect positive change for the communities we serve. We are committed to equitable inclusion across gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ability, sex, religion, economic circumstances, ethnicity, national origin, and culture. We are striving to transcend the construct of race and be an anti-racist law firm. We encourage staff to bring their whole selves to work each day and pledge to celebrate every aspect of who they are.

LEGAL ACTION OF WISCONSIN, INC.

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. (Legal Action) is a non-profit law firm, funded by the federal Legal Services Corporation, the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation, and other sources. Legal Action provides free civil legal aid to low-income persons in the southern 39 counties of Wisconsin. To serve its eligible client population, Legal Action maintains full-time offices in Milwaukee, Madison, Racine, Oshkosh, Green Bay, and La Crosse. In addition, Legal Action operates statewide farmworker, reentry, and elder abuse civil legal aid and victim rights projects (in conjunction with Wisconsin Judicare.)

Legal Action attorneys have expertise in a range of substantive law areas, including in housing, income maintenance, consumer, barriers to employment, and family law. Staff attorneys are expected to maintain a direct service caseload on behalf of individual and group clients and to engage in law reform litigation and other impact work. Attorneys are expected to specialize in specific areas of poverty law.

LA CROSSE AREA OFFICE

Legal Action's La Crosse office is located at 205 5th Avenue South, Suite 300, La Crosse, WI 54601. The La Crosse office currently consists of the managing attorney, three staff attorneys (including this vacancy), and one paralegal. In the future, some La Crosse staff members (attorneys or paralegals or other positions) may serve in projects or work that cover multiple offices or are firmwide. These staff will be jointly supervised by the La Crosse office managing attorney and another manager who is not located in La Crosse. The La Crosse office provides free legal services to low-income clients from Buffalo, Crawford, Grant, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Legal Action staff attorneys are responsible for providing high-quality and aggressive representation of clients in individual service cases and to undertake impact work (that which has impact on groups of low-income persons or the systems that have the most effect on the low-income community), and for performing all duties associated with such representation as defined by our attorney performance standards.
- Attorneys must stay current with the areas of law that pertain to the low-income community as they change and develop, 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 with state and local bar associations and others.
- Attorneys will be called upon to provide training and other assistance to volunteers who participate in Legal Action's Volunteer Lawyer Project and to other Legal Action staff attorneys.
- All attorneys perform intake duties and, where necessary, make appropriate referrals to other community agencies.
- All staff attorneys are responsible for serving on at least one of our Priority Committees: Housing; Barriers to Employment; Consumer; Public Benefits; and Family law. These priority committees are comprised of Legal Action attorneys practicing in those areas of law. They meet quarterly to discuss trends in the law and practicing in that area of law and to strategize the firm's work. This La Crosse area office staff attorney priority committee assignment is to be determined.
- Participate in regular case review by the managing attorney.
- The La Crosse office serves a ten-county service area. The staff attorney is responsible for traveling to each of these counties for case work and outreach activities.

The staff attorney may be assigned additional duties from time to time

QUALIFICATIONS

Legal Action values 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 the firm's diversity and our capacity to provide high-quality legal aid. Legal Action encourages 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 the firm's staff and our law firm's mission along with their other application materials.

- J.D.;
- Admission to the Wisconsin Bar is required at time of hire or within 3 months of hire;
- Enthusiasm for civil legal aid and equal justice for and service to our clients is required;
- Strong communication skills to engage key stakeholders, clients, and pro bono attorneys is required;
- Ability to manage a high-volume, fast-paced and work load is required;
- Ability to prioritize and organize resources while maintaining quality and attention to detail is required;
- Ability to work harmoniously and cooperatively with co-workers, clients, other managers, and other stakeholders is required;
- Familiarity with courtroom procedure (state and municipal) is encouraged;
- Ability to speak and write clearly and persuasively is required;
- Enthusiasm for arguing motions and representing at trial is required;
- Ability to meet high standards of written and courtroom advocacy;
- Self-motivation, diligence, and ability to meet strict deadlines while under pressure are required;
- Ability to communicate with persons in the client community who speak a language other than English as their principal language is highly valued;
- Respect for differences in race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socio-economic circumstances.
- Comfort with using Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Teams, etc.) and an electronic database;
- Ability to travel throughout the La Crosse office and Legal Action's service area, with occasional overnight stays, is required. Occasional out of state, with overnight stays, is also required; and
- While academic training and performance, writing ability, and the nature and extent of prior legal experience in legal services are important, we also value: knowledge and understanding of legal problems and the needs of low-income persons; commitment to providing legal services to low-income persons; prior work in the client community or in other programs that work with low-income persons; and cultural affinity with the client community.

Training will be provided. Upon hire, training needs will be assessed.

SALARY & BENEFITS

The salary for this position and all attorney positions are determined by Legal Action's attorney salary scale. Under our attorney salary scale, an attorney with 0 – 1 years of experience would receive an annual salary of \$45,727 for a 100% full-time position. An attorney with 5 years of experience practicing law would earn a salary of \$52,347. An attorney with 10 years of experience would earn a salary of \$58,967. In addition, the position may receive an annual increase if the Board of Directors approves it.

Legal Action attorneys receive a full fringe benefit package which currently includes employer-paid health and dental insurance for employee, spouse, and family, and life and long-term disability insurance; a retirement plan contribution; generous sick leave accrual; and four weeks of vacation leave and four days of personal leave per year. (Legal Action employees with a spouse may be required to contribute to the health insurance premium if the spouse has other health insurance available.)

GOVERNANCE & SUPERVISION

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.

The position is supervised by the La Crosse office managing attorney.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

The position is subject to a probationary period of up to six months.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

This position involves sedentary work, including sitting and/or standing at a desk while working a computer for an extended period. This position also exerts 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. The position may drive a motor vehicle while seated for extended periods of time daily. Occasional reaching, bending, kneeling and stooping involved to retrieve various items and materials are required. This position works in an environmentally-controlled office environment with moderate noise from phones, printers, and light office traffic.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants should submit the following:

- cover letter
- resume
- writing sample
- Optional, but highly encouraged: Statement about the ways your 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 and this position

Email applications are required. Submit all four documents, in PDF format, to:

LaCrosseAttorneyHiring@legalaction.org.

Deedee Peterson, Executive Director, or Nicole Zimmer, Director of Legal Services, will be the hiring manager for this position.

DEADLINE

The position will be open until filled. We encourage applicants to apply before June 26, 2020. Interviews will begin during the week of June 29th. Interviews will likely be conducted remotely.