



Staff Attorney – Crime Victims’ Rights Project

**OFFICE LOCATION NEGOTIABLE
(currently some remote work)**

AREA OF SERVICE: STATEWIDE

Internal/External Job Announcement

September 1, 2020

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. (Legal Action) seeks a full-time staff attorney to work with a state-wide Crime Victims’ Rights project. This project is staffed by attorneys from Legal Action and Wisconsin Judicare. Legal Action Crime Victim Rights Project lawyers provide service to clients in the southern 39 counties of the state.

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 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. We value a diverse work environment and strongly encourages people of color, people who identify as LGBTQ, people with disabilities, and women to apply. LAW 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.

We will consider candidates for this position who wish to be based in any of Legal Action’s six offices: Madison, Milwaukee, Racine, Oshkosh, Green Bay, and La Crosse.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, currently, this position is partially remote. (The level of in-person office work and remote work is different in each of our offices, but all our offices have some level of remote workers currently.) Long-term remote work arrangements may be considered if it would increase the project’s capacity to serve clients located in geographically isolated areas. Please indicate your office location preference in your cover letter.

LEGAL ACTION OF WISCONSIN, INC.

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. is a law firm funded by the federal Legal Services Corporation, the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation (WisTAF), and many other sources and supporters. Our mission is to ensure equal justice under law for low-income people by providing high-quality civil legal aid.

To provide maximum access for our 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 Reentry Legal Services Project (serving incarcerated individuals suffering from severe mental health issues), and the Crime Victims' Rights Project. Our Volunteer Lawyers Project has hundreds of attorneys who donate their time to our clients and cases.

CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Legal Action's Crime Victim Rights' Project provides free legal services to protect and enforce the rights of crime victims as provided under both Chapter 950 and the newly passed constitutional amendments known as "Marsy's Law". The Crime Victim Rights Project has two main focuses: (1) representing and advocating for victims (both adults and children) of sexual assault, and domestic violence; and (2) actively protecting the privacy rights of those victims in criminal cases where the confidential and privileged medical and mental health records of the victim are being requested to be admitted in court.

The project's staff attorneys represent clients' rights and legal interests in criminal proceedings by both preventing violations of rights and seeking appropriate remedies when a violation does occur. This includes actively filing and arguing motions, pursuing appeals, and participating in administrative proceedings. This project also provides representation in state and federal victim rights, under the federal Crime Victim Rights Act. In addition, we represent clients who have or are facing sex-based discrimination, harassment or other illegal behavior in violation of key federal laws such as Title VII and Title IX. When able, we may also provide ancillary civil legal services that contribute to the safety and security of crime victims (e.g. assisting with a restraining order, name change, or injunction).

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

For the Project:

- The attorney will assist victims where perpetrators are actively being prosecuted, in order to protect and assert their victims' rights under both Chapter 950 and the new Marsy's Law amendment.
- The attorney will provide advocacy in and outside of court on behalf of the client, including accompanying clients to meetings with law enforcement, communicating with the District Attorney's Office, providing support and information during the criminal proceeding, asserting standing in court, filing and arguing appropriate motions, and pursuing relief and recourse for rights violations.

- The attorney will pursue actions and provide advocacy under federal anti-discrimination laws; including cases involving the Crime Victim Rights Act, employment discrimination, and Title IX.
- The attorney will advise and represent clients in bringing complaints when their rights have been violated, including filing grievances with the appropriate office or agency, and filing complaints seeking recourse through the Crime Victim Rights Board.
- The attorney will be working on new issues where precedent is not fully established in this developing area of law; working as part of a collaborative group. The attorney will be required to attend regular meetings (every two weeks by video), and actively participate in case discussions, substantive law issues, intake concerns, and overall strategic planning for the overall strategies of promoting and protecting victims' rights.
- The attorney may be asked to train and mentor non-attorney staff and volunteers. Experienced advocates may be asked to train and mentor other attorneys.
- The attorney must conduct outreach to agencies, non-profits, members of the criminal justice system, referral sources, and potential clients.
- Other duties may be assigned from time to time as the needs of our clients vary.

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 using our Attorney Performance Standards.
- 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, as well as with state and local bar associations.
- Attorneys will be called upon to provide training and other assistance to members of Legal Action's Volunteer Lawyer Project.
- Each staff attorney serves on and actively participates in at least one firmwide Priority Committee.
- Contributing to a collegial, supportive, and interactive work environment.

Travel and Schedule Requirements:

- The position involves regular, though not constant, travel to meet with clients and go to court in the southern counties of Wisconsin.
- The project attorney must be able to set and maintain their schedule as to court hearings and client meetings. Scheduling must be documented through Outlook calendar. Scheduling with clients should reflect crime victims' rights to dignity and an understanding of the traumatic situations many project clients are in.

Training: The amount and structure of the attorney's training will be determined by their experience with the criminal justice system, Wisconsin Chapter 950, Marsy's Law, and other areas of substantive law that are important in our practice including privacy and confidential

records, family law, employment discrimination, and sexual harassment. Legal Action's attorneys in the Crime Victims' Rights project participate in video-conference meetings every two weeks to discuss cases, substantive law, intake issues, and other matter, and these meetings will serve to train the new attorney as well. The project will fund specialized crime victims' rights trainings presented by outside groups. The project and the firm have built a significant archive of training materials, relevant law and secondary sources, and motion and briefing templates that will be helpful for a less-experienced attorney,

QUALIFICATIONS

- Prior experience with the criminal justice system is preferred, though not required.
- Past work with crime victims, including victims of sexual assault and sexual or gender violence. Experience with trauma informed advocacy preferred, but not required.
- Past work or familiarity with clients with a history of mental illness or other health issues. Familiarity with reading and evaluating medical or mental health records is preferred but not required.
- Interest in work that combines direct client representation with a focus on law development and systemic change.
- Demonstrated research and legal writing skills especially the ability to think creatively, tackle new laws and changes in law, and address issues of first impression.
- Desire for an active courtroom representation of clients is required. Actual experience arguing motions and advocating for clients in court is preferred.
- Admission to the Wisconsin Bar or the ability to become admitted by the Fall of 2020 is required.
- A valid driver's license.
- A commitment to legal aid and to providing quality and aggressive representation in service cases and in impact work.
- Attorneys must be knowledgeable in state and federal law and procedure.
- Able to meet high standards of written and courtroom advocacy.
- Ability to communicate both orally and in writing in a clear and concise manner and work harmoniously with others.
- Cultural competence and respect for differences in race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socio-economic circumstances.
- Ability to work independently, maintain own calendar, keep case notes updated and regularly document daily work in case management software. An ability to handle and prioritize many pressing matters in various locations is needed.
- We are seeking to increase the diversity of our client population so skills, therefore fluency in Spanish, or other experiences that will contribute to that goal will be valued.

We welcome applications from candidates with varied experience and with any number of years of experience as a lawyer.

SALARY, BENEFITS AND OTHER INFORMATION

The salary for this and all positions are determined by Legal Action's attorney salary scale as set forth in the firm's salary administration plan. The attorney salary scale and the salary administration plan are determined by Legal Action's Board of Directors and is not negotiable. The position may receive an annual increase if the Board of Directors approves it. For example, under Legal Action's attorney salary scale, an attorney with 0-1 years of experience practicing law would earn a salary of \$45,727. An attorney with 5 years of experience practicing law would earn a salary of \$52,347.

Legal Action provides a generous fringe benefits package, including employer-paid health and dental insurance for employees and eligible dependents. Some employees are required to contribute to the health insurance premium for their spouse, if the spouse has group health insurance provided by their employer. Legal Action also provides life and long-term disability insurance, a profit-sharing retirement plan, salary deferral options for retirement planning, low-cost employee paid vision coverage, four weeks of vacation per year, four days of personal leave per year, a sick leave accrual rate and four weeks of paid parental leave for eligible employees.

The position is subject to a probationary period of up to one year. As with any Legal Action position, there is no guaranteed period of employment and employment is "at will," subject to termination at any time.

HOW TO APPLY

Application materials must be emailed and submitted as a PDF to Andrea Rufo, Project Director of the Crime Victims Project, at: crimevictimsrightsattorneyposition@legalaction.org.

Interested applicants must submit the following application materials:

- Cover letter, including office preference;
- Resume;
- Recent legal writing sample;
- Name and contact information for three professional references;
- Law school transcript (only required for applicants who graduated in 2017 or later);
- Optional, but highly encouraged: A statement about the ways your unique background and your personal, professional and life experiences contribute to the diversity, cultural vitality and perspective of our staff, our law firm's mission and this position.

Interviews for this position will be conducted virtually; the interview panel will consist of the hiring manager and Legal Action staff.

Deadline to Apply: This position will be open until filled but we will review applicants on a continuous basis as application materials are received. To ensure early consideration, please submit application materials no later than close of business (5:00 pm) **Friday, September 11, 2020.**