



MILWAUKEE OFFICE

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new caller/ intake 855-947-2529 | www.legalaction.org

**JOB ANNOUNCEMENT
INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL POSTING
STAFF ATTORNEY
COMMUNITY LAW PROJECT (CLP)
MILWAUKEE OFFICE
JANUARY 11, 2021**

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. (Legal Action) is hiring a full-time staff attorney in Milwaukee for its Community Law Project, also known as the Community Redevelopment Legal Assistance Project. The project is funded by a special grant from the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation and staffed by five attorneys: two in Milwaukee, one in Racine, one in Madison, and one in Green Bay. Attorneys in the project use a community lawyering service delivery model to stabilize and redevelop targeted neighborhoods. In Milwaukee, these neighborhoods are Sherman Park, Harambee, Near West Side, and Havenwoods/Silver Spring.

LEGAL ACTION OF WISCONSIN, INC

Legal Action is a large, vibrant non-profit law firm funded by the federal Legal Services Corporation, the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation, and other sources. Legal Action provides free legal aid services to about 13,500 low-income persons annually in the southern 39 counties of Wisconsin with offices in Milwaukee, Madison, Racine, Oshkosh, Green Bay, and La Crosse. In addition, LAW operates a statewide farmworker project, and several other state-wide projects serving crime victims, including victims of sex and labor trafficking. LAW attorneys have expertise in a range of substantive areas, but the majority of our work, is in the areas of housing, public benefits, removing barriers to employment, consumer law, and family law. Legal Action attorneys specialize in specific areas of legal aid work and provide high-quality and aggressive representation and maintain a direct service caseload on behalf of individual clients and engage in law reform litigation and other impact work.

Legal Action believes that equal justice under law can only be achieved through the collaboration of a diverse staff. We strongly encourage applications from women, people of color, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, and people with life experiences or educational backgrounds that add to the firm's diversity and our capacity to provide high-quality legal aid.

OFFICE LOCATION

The Milwaukee Area Office staff is housed at 633 W. Wisconsin Ave. and is comprised of 41 attorneys, 19 paralegals, and 18 other administrative, professional and technical staff. Intake is done by telephone, on a walk-in basis, or at neighborhood outstations in Milwaukee and Waukesha. The Milwaukee Area Office also houses the Legal Action administrative staff, the SeniorLAW Project, and a Volunteer Lawyers Project. Two attorneys are located at the Center for Driver's License Recovery & Employment at Milwaukee Area Technical College and one attorney and one paralegal are housed at the Student Legal Aid Project at Milwaukee Area Technical College.

Serving Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties

Green Bay Office Brown, Calumet, Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, and Outagamie Counties

La Crosse Office Buffalo, Crawford, Grant, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Trempealeau, and Vernon Counties

Madison Office Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Rock, and Sauk Counties

Farmworker Project Statewide

Oshkosh Office Adams, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Washington, Waushara, and Winnebago Counties

Racine Office Kenosha, Racine, and Walworth Counties

tel 920-432-4645 | toll-free 800-236-1127

tel 608-785-2809 | toll-free 800-873-0927

tel 608-256-3304 | toll-free 800-362-3904

tel 608-256-3304 | toll-free 800-362-3904

tel 920-233-6521 | toll-free 800-236-1128

tel 262-635-8836 | toll-free 800-242-5840

Many of Legal Action's operations and services continue to be delivered remotely because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Long-term remote work may be established for this position.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

A community lawyering service delivery model requires that the attorney create strong, long-lasting partnerships with the community organizations and residents in the target neighborhoods. It also requires an ongoing assessment of the needs of the community and a willingness to adjust the services provided when they no longer align with community needs.

Key responsibilities will likely include legal representation to address the following issues:

- Unstable and unhealthy rental housing conditions;
- Lack of affordable housing;
- Threats to homeownership because of civil legal problems such as denial of public benefits, barriers to getting and keeping a job such as past criminal background records and lack of drivers' licenses, and consumer law problems;
- Lack of counsel for low-income neighborhood residents (homeowners and tenants) to represent their needs and interests during revitalization and redevelopment efforts and to ensure their neighborhoods and communities are revitalized and redeveloped;
- Foreclosures; and
- Evictions.

Key responsibilities may also include:

- Advising and educating community-based organizations (CBOs) on business and housing development opportunities and provide legal representation for transactional work (e.g. land acquisition, real estate closings, zoning, drafting and reviewing contracts, zoning compliance) when they undertake these opportunities.
- Providing legal representation for CBOs in seeking injunctive relief and litigating other claims to force repairs of properties blighting the neighborhood and to challenge destructive behaviors by non-resident property owners.
- In conjunction with municipal government enforcement strategies, providing civil litigation on behalf of CBOs and tenants by bad actor landlords.
- Identifying current and potential federal, state, and local laws, policies, and practices that affect neighborhood and community stabilization; informing and advising community members and community groups about their effects and potential remedies; developing plans to address them; and assisting those community members and CBOs in implementing that plan.
- Providing representation to CBOs, associations, neighbors, property owners, etc. to assist with legal incorporation (IRS and the State).
- Advising, educating, and providing representation to community groups to increase desirable development and to protect against unwanted development (e.g. companies or industry that harms the environment or worsens neighborhood isolation) and illegal activities (e.g. drug houses and drug dealing, human trafficking).
- Providing representation to resident homeowners, family members, and older homeowners who have title issues and other problems in transferring their homes.
- Addressing the range of other civil legal problems that individual clients (both tenants and homeowners) face that lead to economic, housing, and neighborhood instability, and that prevent them from being long-term community residents.

Other responsibilities Include:

- Provide rigorous and high-quality representation in all direct service cases using Legal Action's attorney performance standards.
- Work effectively with clients from a wide range of backgrounds
- Participate in at least one of Legal Action's firm-wide Priority Committees
- Supervise interns and/or paralegals
- Provide training and other assistance to volunteers who participate in Legal Action's Volunteer Lawyer Project.
- Perform intake duties and, where necessary, make appropriate referrals to other community agencies.
- Other duties as may be assigned from time to time.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Commitment to serving low-income clients, the Milwaukee community, and to improving access to justice.
- Admission to the Wisconsin Bar, by diploma privilege or by passage of the first available bar exam.
- Prior legal aid or other relevant experience is desired, though not required.
- Some experience with federal or state courtroom procedure is helpful.
- Superior research and analytical skills.
- Demonstrated ability to speak and write clearly and persuasively.
- Enthusiasm for representing clients in court as well as through motions and other written work.
- Self-motivated, diligent, and able to meet strict deadlines while under pressure.
- Ability to travel throughout Legal Action's service area to meet with clients and to attend court hearings in person when once again safe to do so.
- 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 harmoniously with others.
- Fluency in a language other than English and cultural affinity for the client community that speaks that language is desired, though not required.
- Legal Action will provide training and support, as needed.

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

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

This position involves sedentary work, including 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. Drives a motor vehicle while seated for extended periods of time daily. 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 in the LAW office.

SALARY

The salary for this and all positions are determined by Legal Action's attorney salary scale as set forth in the firms' salary administration plan. The attorney salary is determined by Legal Action's Board of Directors. 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.

FRINGE BENEFITS

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, generous sick leave accrual, and four weeks of paid parental leave for eligible employees.

GOVERNANCE

The position is governed by Legal Action's Personnel Policies, subject to unilateral change by the firm's Board of Directors. All positions at Legal Action are "at will"; there is no guaranteed period of employment.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants must submit the following application materials via Legal Action of Wisconsin's online applicant portal by using this link [Staff Attorney - Community Law Project \(CLP\) - Milwaukee:](#)

- Resume
- Cover letter
- Writing sample
- Provide the names and contact information for three professional references (current LAW staff members are not required to include references)
- Law school transcript (only required for applicants who graduated 2019 or later)

Please submit and upload all the documents required. If the required documents are not submitted on or before the deadline, your application will be considered incomplete and we will not be able to consider you for this position.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS

The position will be open until filled. We will review applicants on a rolling basis. To assure early consideration, please submit application materials as soon as possible. Interviews will be conducted remotely.

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employee