

# LEGAL ACTION OF WISCONSIN

Providing free legal services to low-income Wisconsin clients since 1968 • Proporcionando servicios legales gratuitos a clientes de bajos ingresos en Wisconsin desde 1968

## JOB ANNOUNCEMENT INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL POSTING

### STAFF ATTORNEY CONSUMER LAW MILWAUKEE OFFICE

April 7, 2021

Legal Action of Wisconsin has an immediate opening for a full-time Staff Attorney to work at the Milwaukee Office. This position will provide representation in consumer law, foreclosures, and other civil matters to low-income persons.

### LEGAL ACTION OF WISCONSIN

We are a large and vibrant non-profit law firm funded by the federal Legal Services Corporation, the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation, the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, Victim of Crime Act funding, the Wisconsin Equal Justice Fund, and many other sources. Each year, we provide free legal aid to about 11,000 – 14,000 low-income persons in Wisconsin's southern 39 counties. In addition, the firm operates statewide farmworker and human trafficking victim projects

Most of the firm's work is in the areas of housing, public benefits, removing barriers to employment, consumer, family law, and victim rights. Legal Action attorneys specialize in specific areas of law, though they may be called upon to work in multiple areas. They provide high-quality and aggressive representation, maintain a direct service caseload of individual clients, and contribute to the firm's work to engage in strategic advocacy and law reform litigation. As the firm moves toward purposeful race equity alignment work, all Legal Action staff will contribute in this area as well.

During the pandemic, most Legal Action attorneys are working remotely, and all attorneys are allowed flexibility in their work schedules. New hires will work remotely until Legal Action returns to the physical offices and will work with their supervisors if flexible scheduling (outside of regular business hours) is needed. When it is safe to do so, new hires will be required to work from a physical Legal Action office but may request remote/telework and flexible scheduling. New hires may receive some training in the physical office and may receive some in-office time now. We require face masks and social distancing in all Legal Action offices.

**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, the Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic, and a Volunteer Lawyers Project. Two Milwaukee office 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.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Legal Action is seeking a full-time attorney to provide legal representation on consumer matters, collaborate with project attorneys, and act as the public face of the Milwaukee office's consumer law work. The attorney will handle cases in both Milwaukee and Waukesha County. Staff attorneys may be reassigned to other legal practice areas and duties as the staffing needs of the firm change. Responsibilities will include:

- Provide high-quality and aggressive representation in consumer law cases to preserve income and assets for clients;
- Provide advice and representation in both court and administrative hearings;
- Represent clients in cases including garnishment defense, debt collection defense, student loan collection efforts, identity theft, and mortgage foreclosure actions;
- Represent clients in appeals;
- Perform intake duties and, where necessary, make appropriate referrals to other community agencies.
- 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;
- Perform all duties associated with such representation as defined by our attorney performance standards and participate in regular case review with a supervisor;
- Stay current with the areas of law that pertain to the low-income community as they change and develop, particularly in the area of consumer law
- Share responsibility for and contribute to the development and maintenance of good working relationships with community groups and with state and local bar associations and others;

- Provide training and other assistance to volunteers who participate in Legal Action's Volunteer Lawyer Project and to other Legal Action staff attorneys;
- Perform administrative and recordkeeping duties;
- Serve on our Consumer Law Priority Committee;
- Work effectively with clients from a wide range of backgrounds;
- Supervise interns or paralegals; and
- Other duties that may be assigned from time to time.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

- Juris Doctorate Degree;
- Admission to the Wisconsin Bar at time of hire or within three months of hire;
- Enthusiasm for civil legal aid and equal justice and for service to our clients and commitment to providing the highest quality legal service;
- Ability to understand our clients' situation and problem-solve to find realistic solutions to civil legal problems;
- Strong communication skills;
- Enthusiasm for arguing motions and representing clients at trial;
- Ability to prioritize and organize resources while maintaining quality and attention to detail;
- Self-motivation, diligence, and ability to manage a large and robust caseload and 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;
- Respect for differences in race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socio-economic circumstances;
- Willingness to receive direction and supervision and to implement feedback;
- Ability to work harmoniously and cooperatively with others; and
- Skill in using Microsoft Office software (Word, Excel, Teams, etc.) and an electronic database.

## **ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (These qualifications are desired. Candidates may have these qualifications or must have a willingness and desire to acquire them.)**

- Prior work within civil legal aid, with volunteers, producing training events, or other relevant experience;
- Cultural affinity with the client community;
- Prior work in the client community or in other programs that work with low-income persons; and
- Written and oral proficiency in a language other than English.

## **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 Legal Action office.

## **SALARY**

All salaries for Legal Action staff are set by our Board of Directors annually with a Salary Administration Plan. Our current Salary Administration Plan sets a minimum annual starting salary for this position at \$45,727 for attorneys with 0 – 1 year of experience. Starting salary will increase with years of legal experience. For example, an attorney with 5 years of experience practicing law would earn a salary of \$52,347. A full-time attorney with 10 years of experience would earn a salary of \$58,967. In addition, the position generally receives an annual step increase subject to approval of the Board of Directors.

## **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, three weeks of vacation per year, four days of personal leave, and a generous sick leave benefit. In addition, Legal Action offers four weeks of paid parental leave for eligible employees.

## **PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

This position is subject to a probationary period of up to one year.

## **GOVERNANCE**

This position is supervised by the Milwaukee office Managing Attorney. The position is governed by the Legal Action of Wisconsin Personnel Policies and these policies 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.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Applicants must submit the following application materials via Legal Action of Wisconsin's online applicant portal:

<https://secure.entertimeonline.com/ta/7988.careers?ApplyToJob=352507913>

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Legal writing sample
- Names and contact information for three professional references
- Law school transcript (only required for applicants who graduated **2018** 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.

Molly Gena, Managing Attorney of the Milwaukee office, is the hiring manager for this position and will lead a panel of Legal Action staff to interview applicants. All interviews will be conducted via video conference call.

## **DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS**

This position will be open until filled. We will review applicants on a rolling basis. To assure early consideration, please submit application materials by **Friday, April 30, 2021**.

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