



Columbia Legal Services advocates for people who face injustice and poverty. We seek to achieve social and economic justice for all, using policy reform, litigation, and innovative partnerships to reveal and end actions that harm the communities we serve.

[columbialegal.org](http://columbialegal.org)

# Employment Opportunity

Staff Attorney  
Olympia, WA

## Program Description

For many years, Columbia Legal Services (CLS) has represented communities facing poverty and oppression, and we use every legal tool available on their behalf. CLS has a special responsibility to serve people whose access to free legal services is restricted, due to institutionalized or immigration status. Through impact litigation, policy reform, and innovative partnerships, our staff works together to further our mission to achieve social and economic justice for all, and to reveal and end actions that harm the communities we serve. We share a deep commitment to serve and advocate alongside our clients as we seek justice together. **Our vision of justice:** when people have the necessary tools and opportunity to achieve social and economic justice, a more equitable and inclusive society is possible. The ideal candidate for any position at Columbia Legal Services will be able to articulate their role in the achievement of that vision.

## Position

Columbia Legal Services seeks a full-time Staff Attorney to work in our Olympia office. The Attorney will engage in systemic, multi-forum legal advocacy to dismantle the structures that perpetuate poverty, racism, and other injustices in Washington. This position will focus primarily on advancing policy reforms. Current examples of policy work include safeguarding essential social safety net protections, defending low-income consumers, improving systems for youth in foster care, and removing barriers to reentry from incarceration. CLS is undergoing an organization-wide strategic planning initiative, so the permanent roles and responsibilities assigned to this position will be informed by our organizational priorities. All interested applicants that meet the qualifications are encouraged to apply; however, we envision this position as a growth and development opportunity for an attorney with 0-7 years of experience.

## Responsibilities

- Advance policy advocacy in the legislature and at the local and federal level, and in administrative forums.
- Work with a team of attorneys and staff on complex trial and appellate litigation and class actions.
- Creatively investigate and identify practices and laws that adversely affect the rights or benefits of our client populations, and devise creative strategies for addressing these problems.
- Assist with the development of campaigns and strategies to advance the goals of our organization.
- Coordinate with community groups, other advocacy groups, legal services organizations, and the private bar to identify opportunities and execute strategies to advance the law for our client populations and communities.
- Be available to travel occasionally around the state and work flexible hours.

## Qualifications

- Law degree and license to practice in Washington, or ability to take next Washington bar exam.
- Lived or other demonstrated meaningful and sustained experience with people living in poverty, persons of color, immigrant, or indigenous communities.
- Ability to analyze complex problems and develop creative, practical, systemic solutions.
- Demonstrated initiative and creativity, including ability to master new legal areas, operate at a high advocacy level, and consider multi-forum advocacy approaches.
- Commitment to tackling, exposing and dismantling all forms of structural bias and oppression.
- Excellent written and oral communication, research, negotiation, and analytical skills, and superior attention to detail.
- Ability to work well independently and on a team, prioritize responsibilities, and meet deadlines on time-sensitive projects.
- Experience in policy advocacy, complex litigation, or appellate advocacy is a plus.
- Language skills relevant to our client communities, particularly Spanish, are a plus.

**This job description is not designed to cover or contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee.**

## Compensation

CLS offers a competitive and comprehensive compensation package including generous holiday and paid time off, excellent employee health care benefits, paid parental leave, and a sabbatical every 7 years. Salary is commensurate with years of experience, is based on a salary scale governed by a collective bargaining agreement, and includes an annual cost-of-living adjustment. The salary range for an attorney with 0 - 7 years of experience is \$54,835 - 68,762. This is a bargaining unit position, eligible for representation by Washington Legal Workers' (WLW), our in-house labor union.

## Applications

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with priority given to those submitted before **July 20, 2018**. Please note that due to the volume of applications received, CLS is unable to respond to every application. CLS will contact you if we decide to pursue your application. **If e-mailed, please make Olympia Staff Attorney your subject line. If you are interested in this position, send a cover letter, resume, a short (5-10 pages) writing sample, and the completed Equity Statement to [jobs@columbialegal.org](mailto:jobs@columbialegal.org) or to:**

Trisa Kern, Director of Program Administration  
Columbia Legal Services  
101 Yesler Way, Suite 300  
Seattle, Washington 98104

## Program Policy

Columbia Legal Services is committed to a policy of pluralism and equal opportunity in an environment free of barriers and discriminatory practices for its client communities, Board, and staff. Pluralism refers to the active promotion of mutual respect, acceptance, teamwork and productivity among people who are diverse in work background, experience, education, race, color, national origin, sex, age, religious preference, marital status, sexual orientation, sensory, mental and physical abilities, veteran status, or any other perceived differences. The resulting diversity is both a source of program strength and a matter of fundamental human fairness. If you need a reasonable accommodation for the application process, contact [jobs@columbialegal.org](mailto:jobs@columbialegal.org).