



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.

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

# Employment Opportunity

Children and Youth Project  
Gates Policy Assistant  
Seattle

## Program Description

For many years, Columbia Legal Services has represented some of the most marginalized people in our community. We use every legal tool available on their behalf. Our role to serve people and use advocacy that might otherwise not be available makes our work an integral part of the Washington Alliance for Equal Justice. As a proud member of the Alliance, our vision of justice is when people have the necessary tools and opportunity to achieve social and economic justice, a more equitable and inclusive society is possible. Through large-scale litigation, policy reform, and innovative partnerships, our lawyers and staff work in furtherance of our mission. The ideal candidate for any position at Columbia Legal Services will be able to articulate their role in the achievement of that vision.

## Position

The Children and Youth Project of Columbia Legal Services is looking for a temporary policy assistant for our School Housing Connection Project. The assistant will work with attorneys in the Seattle Office to develop policy options to improve education outcomes and housing options for Washington's 32,494 homeless students. The assistant will work closely with staff to collect and evaluate all relevant research and data that will be used to create a compelling public policy narrative to address student homelessness.

## Responsibilities

- Policy Analysis: assist in developing policy proposals, conduct basic qualitative and quantitative research, monitor external research at the state and national levels, help communicate policy positions to partners, and educate decision makers about student homelessness and potential policy proposals;
- Data Analysis: collect, organize, and draw inferences from data to achieve clearly defined analytical objectives;
- Communications: conceptualize, draft, and distribute communications-based advocacy products including press releases, talking points, reports, one-page summaries, and other products using qualitative and quantitative research;
- Work collaboratively with our partners to further develop and maintain a website providing policy updates and resources for those interested in student homelessness or in need of assistance.

## Qualifications

- Interest in working closely with a passionate legal team to further systemic legal and policy advocacy on behalf of students experiencing homelessness;

- Proactivity in suggesting new ideas, improvements to existing efforts, and solutions to ongoing challenges;
- Talent in exploring creative solutions to complex communications problems and ability to describe complex issues in simple language;
- Problem-solving, policy and data analysis skills;
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively;
- Good research and writing skills and strong attention to detail;
- Experience or interest in education or housing policy;
- Experience in WordPress and data visualization tools (Google Fusion Tables and Tableau) a plus;
- Experience writing or procuring grants a plus;
- Familiarity with the state legislature, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and/or advocacy among school boards or districts a plus.

The position is open to individuals of any background who meet the skill requirements and have an interest in social justice work, particularly issues affecting homeless students and families. Graduate, law, and undergraduate students with experience in public policy and administration, social welfare, education, sociology, or statistics are encouraged to apply.

### Compensation Package

This is a temporary, part-time, paid position (21 hours a week). Position begins as soon as possible and ends on April 30, 2016. Salary is commensurate with experience, and includes a competitive compensation package including pro-rated (60%) holiday, paid time off, and generous health care benefits.

### Applications

**Deadline to apply is May 22, 2015.** Please note that due to the volume of applications received, CLS is unable to respond to every application. We will contact you if we decide to pursue your application. No phone calls please. . **If e-mailed, please make CYP Gates Policy Assistant your subject line. Please send your letter of interest, resume and two references to:**

Trisa Kern, Director of Program Administration  
 Columbia Legal Services  
 101 Yesler Way, Suite 300  
 Seattle, WA 98104  
 jobs@columbialegal.org

### 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.