

Who We Are

Columbia Legal Services is a legal advocacy organization that advances social, economic, and racial equity for people living in poverty. We hold government agencies, institutions, and other actors accountable to address the root causes of racism and their manifestation in unfair treatment and inequitable access to resources, power, and opportunities based on race. We focus on dismantling unfair systems of mass incarceration and immigration. We believe that communities should have a voice in the creation and implementation of the policies, laws, and legal systems that impact them.

We are committed to an environment of mutual respect, collaboration, and equal opportunity for all employees, and strongly encourage applications from people of color, immigrants, people who have been affected by mass incarceration, and other underrepresented and historically marginalized groups. We believe in building and sustaining an organization that is reflective of the communities we serve, and is diverse in work background, experience, education, race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, national origin, or sensory, mental and physical abilities. We believe that the resulting diversity is both a source of program strength and a matter of fundamental human fairness.

Position Summary

Columbia Legal Services seeks a full-time **Staff Attorney** to join our statewide advocacy team. Our staff attorneys engage in systemic, multi-forum legal advocacy and community engagement to dismantle the structures that perpetuate poverty, racism, and other injustices in Washington. All interested applicants who meet the qualifications are encouraged to apply. We envision this position as a growth and development opportunity. This position is based in **Olympia, WA**.

Responsibilities:

- Collaborate with advocates on complex trial, appellate, and class action litigation in state, federal, and administrative forums.
- Advance policy advocacy in the state legislature and at the local and federal level.
- Investigate practices and laws identified by the communities we serve that adversely affect their rights or benefits and devise creative strategies for addressing these problems.
- Collaborate with community groups to support their initiatives and strategies.
- Coordinate with other advocacy groups, legal services organizations, and the private bar to identify opportunities to advance the law for our client populations and communities.
- Analyze complex problems using a race equity lens and develop creative, practical, systemic solutions in conjunction with clients and communities most impacted by these problems.

This job description is not designed to contain a comprehensive listing of activities, duties or responsibilities that are required of the employee, and others may be assigned.

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, people of color, immigrant, or indigenous communities or the criminal legal system.
- Humility, humor, and flexibility.
- Commitment to exposing and dismantling all forms of structural bias and oppression.
- Demonstrated initiative and creativity, interest in learning and exploring different legal areas and ability to apply multi-forum advocacy approaches at a strategic level.
- Excellent written and oral communication, research, negotiation, and analytical skills.
- Commitment to continuous learning and openness to new ideas.
- Ability to work well on a team, prioritize responsibilities, and meet time-sensitive deadlines.
- Understanding of the importance of self-care, and a willingness to take breaks and vacations.
- Ability to travel occasionally around the state to engage with community and meet clients.
- Experience in policy advocacy, complex litigation, or appellate advocacy is a plus. Experienced attorneys are expected to provide mentorship to others at CLS.
- Language skills relevant to our client communities, particularly Spanish, are a plus.

Compensation

This full-time, exempt position is a bargaining unit position, eligible for representation by Washington Legal Workers, our in-house labor union. Salary is commensurate with years of experience, based on a scale governed by our collective bargaining agreement. The salary range for an attorney with 0-7 years of experience is \$55,932-\$70,138, including an annual cost-of-living adjustment. We also offer a comprehensive compensation package with 15 paid holidays, between 15-21 paid vacation days, 12 sick days, and between 3-5 personal days each year, as well as paid parental and family medical leave benefits and a partially-paid sabbatical every 7 years. We pay 100% of employee premiums for excellent health, vision, and dental benefits plus 50% of the maximum out-of-pocket deductible and offer heavily subsidized family premiums. We also offer a 403(b) retirement benefit with employer contribution and a match, disability and life insurance, a subsidized transit pass, and an employee wellness program.

To Apply

Send a cover letter, resume, a 5-10 page writing sample, and completed [Equity Statement](#) as one PDF document to careers@columbialegal.org. Please make **Olympia Staff Attorney** your subject line. We accept applications on a rolling basis, with priority given to those received before **September 6th**. CLS will only contact you if we decide to pursue your application. If you need a reasonable accommodation for the application process, please contact the above email.