



American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan
Position Description: Immigrant Rights Attorney

Position Overview

The Immigrant Rights Attorney will expand the ACLU of Michigan's work to protect the rights of immigrants. The Immigrant Rights Attorney will have four primary responsibilities: (1) educate immigrant communities and the general public about immigrant rights; (2) develop and manage a successful program to engage, teach and deploy volunteer attorneys to protect immigrant rights; (3) identify systemic government abuses of power that the ACLU should challenge through advocacy or litigation; and 4) work on immigration issues that arise in the Michigan legislature or Congress. The attorney will closely collaborate with the Michigan Immigrants Rights Center (MIRC) to ensure coordination and strategic deployment of resources. This is a two-year grant-funded position.

Specific Responsibilities

Outreach, Education, and Advocacy

- Develop relationships with immigrant communities throughout the state.
- Conduct and teach others to conduct know-your-rights trainings for immigrants on issues such as emergency preparedness and interacting with the police, immigration agents and the FBI.
- Speak to community groups, law enforcement, community leaders and policy makers on a wide range of issues, including Freedom Cities/Welcoming Cities policies and resolutions.
- In coordination with the communications director, give interviews to the press and help develop media strategies related to local organizing and enforcement abuses.
- Manage ACLU outreach to schools, non-profit organizations, religious organizations and cities on immigrant rights issues.
- Advocate with school districts to adopt statements affirming the rights of immigrant children to a public education.
- Work with Executive Director and Political Director to coordinate legislative advocacy, prepare testimony, and draft briefing papers to advance immigrant rights.
- Amplify and coordinate immigration-related work driven by the National ACLU office, including the new online activist vehicle PeoplePower.com.
- Create content for use by the communications staff on social media and elsewhere.

Coordinating Attorney Volunteers

- Collaborate with the MIRC to recruit and train volunteer attorneys to represent immigrants in bond hearings, document abuses by immigration enforcement agents and the police, hold government agencies accountable to the rule of law, and other issues that arise on which the ACLU can have impact.
- Develop and manage an infrastructure system to deploy volunteer attorneys to most effectively advance immigrant rights.
- Supervise and advise volunteer attorneys on their assigned cases and projects.

Identify and Develop Potential Impact Cases

- Identify and document patterns and practices of abuse by government.
- Prepare Freedom of Information Act requests and demand letters to government officials about abuses of power.
- Work with ACLU legal staff and cooperating attorneys in developing impact litigation.

Administration

- Ensure volunteer attorney information is collected and systematized.
- Create and implement systems to document immigrant rights abuses and manage materials related to potential litigation.
- Proactively communicate with ACLU staff, ensuring legal, communications, policy, and development staff are aware of on-going work and provided with information and materials to enable them to amplify the work.
- Work with development staff to prepare reports for foundation grants and individual donors.
- Facilitate inter-departmental meetings on immigration issues as needed.

Qualifications

- J.D. with at least three years of immigration law experience.
- A strong understanding of, and demonstrated commitment to, advancing the ACLU's values, mission, and the entire range of civil liberties issues upon which we work.
- Outstanding organizing skills with the ability to inspire and lead.
- Exceptional writing, communication and analytical skills.
- Attention to detail and first-rate administrative skills. Ability to develop and manage systems to coordinate and track a large volume of cases, information, and relationships.
- Must be a member of the State Bar of Michigan, waive into the Michigan Bar or pass the next bar examination.
- Ability to speak Spanish, Arabic and/or other languages is a plus.
- Team player and problem solver with demonstrated ability to work cooperatively on a variety of projects with lawyers, community members, organizations and coalitions.
- Commitment to diversity and values differences of race, national origin, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ability and socio-economic circumstance.
- Willingness to travel for trainings, meetings, speaking engagements and outreach and willingness to work in the evenings and on weekends as necessary.
- Emotionally mature and self-confident, with a sense of humor in order to maintain balance and perspective.
- Experience in non-profit advocacy or with other community-based groups is a plus.

Supervision

The Immigrant Rights Attorney will report to the Legal Director and Deputy Director. Location is flexible and may be at the Detroit Headquarters or in our regional offices in Grand Rapids or Lansing.

Compensation and Benefits

Salary is commensurate with experience. Excellent benefits including health insurance and a 401(k) plan. This is a grant-funded position.

Application Procedure

Please submit in digital form, a detailed letter of interest, resume, writing sample and contact information for three references to ACLU of Michigan Legal Director Michael Steinberg at immattorneyjob@aclumich.org. Include Immigrant Rights Attorney and your name in the subject line of the email.

Application review begins May 5, 2017. Position will remain open until filled.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan is an equal opportunity/ affirmative action employer. Women, people of color, persons with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are encouraged to apply.

The ACLU of Michigan comprises two separate corporate entities, the ACLU of Michigan and the ACLU of Fund of Michigan. The ACLU of Michigan and the ACLU Fund of Michigan share the same mission, office space, and employees. This job posting refers collectively to the two organizations under the name "ACLU of Michigan."