



Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: Advocate

The Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee (MHLAC) seeks a paralegal or attorney to help discharge its mission of providing legal representation to persons who have or are perceived to have mental health concerns. The advocate hired will staff a (not yet established) satellite office in Western Massachusetts, working closely with community members and groups and allied advocates to help propel systemic advocacy projects. While working primarily from this local satellite office, the advocate will be required to travel periodically to meet with other MHLAC staff at MHLAC's main office (Boston then Quincy beginning Feb. 2022).

MHLAC is a state agency of the Supreme Judicial Court, created by the legislature in 1973. MHLAC offers free legal assistance to indigent people with mental health challenges throughout the Commonwealth. MHLAC's experienced and talented staff focuses on identifying and addressing issues faced by significant numbers of clients in common. Approaches to solving client problems depend on the issue itself and the best strategy for accomplishing results. Tactics include class-based and targeted individual litigation, as well as legislative, administrative, and public advocacy.

MHLAC also serves as a statewide resource on mental health law and policy. It generates legal and policy materials, testifies on proposed laws and regulations, and has a long history of providing educational and training programs for public counsel, legal services attorneys, social workers, judges, and the general public. See <http://mhlac.org/what-we-do/> for a description of MHLAC's approach and work.

MHLAC is committed to addressing racial equity concerns. In making strategic work choice decisions, priority is given to issues affecting persons with multiple characteristics that expose them to bias (e.g. persons of color who have or are perceived to have mental health concerns). This is consistent with workplace values. MHLAC is committed to creating an inclusive environment that promotes and values racial equity and diversity. We strongly encourage and welcome people of color, people with disabilities, those with personal experience related to mental health concerns, members of the LGBTQ+ community and people with diverse life experiences and backgrounds to apply.

Title: Advocate

Full/Part Time: Full Time

Position Type: Non-Civil Service / Staff

- Confidential: Yes
- Salary Range: \$58,174 – 83,404, commensurate with experience and qualifications.
- Benefits: Strong package includes access to Massachusetts' excellent retirement plan for State employees.
- Main Office Location: 24 School Street, Suite 804, Boston, MA 02108 (February 2022, MHLAC's Main office is relocating to Quincy, MA)
- Work location: Based in Western Massachusetts (Springfield area) / Ability to travel independently by car (mileage reimbursement provided) to meet with clients, attend court sessions and other required work-related events. This includes meeting with MHLAC staff at the main office location as needed.
- Website: www.mhlac.org
- Deadline: Still accepting applicants for Advocate position.

Qualifications

- Ambition to make positive change happen for significant numbers of clients by undertaking the most potentially effective strategies available
- Ability to work efficiently and multi-task
- Ability to work effectively and collaboratively with clients and co-workers under sometimes stressful circumstances
- Experience in the delivery of legal services to indigent persons preferred
- Experience with persons with mental health issues and/or institutionalized persons preferred
- Bachelor's degree required
- Law degree a plus but not required
- Fluency in Spanish required
- Willingness to travel between Boston and Western Massachusetts required
- Familiarity with Western Massachusetts communities strongly preferred.

Duties

- Advocate on behalf of indigent adults, adolescents and children who have or are perceived to have mental health concerns on a range of civil legal matters
- Interact and collaborate with community groups and others that also are concerned about the rights of person with mental health concerns

- Identify and interview persons, and otherwise investigate, systemic public and private practices negatively impacting a substantial numbers of clients
- In concert with MHLAC staff members, engage in litigation or pursue other advocacy approaches, including legislative, administrative, or public advocacy
- Participate in office processes for determining advocacy priorities and case strategies

Due to the pandemic, initial and perhaps subsequent interviews will be conducted remotely. It is anticipated that office staff will largely work from remote locations until we relocate to our Quincy location. References and writing samples will be requested of finalists. A criminal background check will be completed for the selected candidate.

How to Apply

Please submit resume and cover letter via email to [hiring@mhlac.org](mailto: hiring@mhlac.org), with the Subject line – “Advocate position”

Email submissions are strongly encouraged. We will accept submissions mailed or faxed to our office. Please contact us at (617)338-2345 or send an email to [hiring@mhlac.org](mailto: hiring@mhlac.org) if further accommodations are necessary.

Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee
24 School Street, Suite 804
Boston, MA 02108
ATTN: Hiring

617-338-2347 FAX

The Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee is an Equal Opportunity Employer. As the representative of the Commonwealth and its residents, the Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee strives to ensure that those working in our office reflect the diversity of the communities we serve. The Committee encourages applicants from a broad spectrum of backgrounds to apply for positions. We will gladly assist applicants who need reasonable accommodation.