



Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: ADVOCACY DIRECTOR

The Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee (MHLAC) seeks a senior manager to collaborate with the Executive Director and staff to advance the work of the office in defending the rights of people with mental health concerns. The person hired will directly participate in advocacy, provide supervision to Program advocates, and will work closely with the Executive Director to oversee advocacy and ensure that work product is of high quality.

MHLAC is a state agency, 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, often in cooperation with other advocacy organizations and community partners. Approaches to solving client problems are driven by 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.

In making strategic work choice decisions, priority is given to issues affecting people with multiple characteristics that expose them to bias (e.g., people 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 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 LGBTQIA+ community and people with diverse life experiences and backgrounds to apply.

Position Type: Staff/ Full-time

Salary Range: \$142,496 – \$174,809, commensurate with experience and qualifications.

Benefits: Strong package includes access to Massachusetts' excellent retirement plan for State employees.

Office Location: 100 Hancock Street, 10th Floor, Suite 1002, Quincy, MA 02171

Website: www.mhlac.org

Deadline: Applications received after November 22 may not be considered.

Qualifications

- Admission, or ability to “waive in,” to the Massachusetts Bar required;
- Demonstrated strong commitment to public interest law practice;
- At least 15 years of experience in the delivery of legal services to people with limited income or with disabilities, including those with real or perceived mental health issues and/or institutionalized persons;
- At least 10 years of experience in leading litigation and other advocacy that affects substantial numbers of clients;
- Ability to produce high quality legal work;
- Strong communication and time-management skills;
- Ability to work effectively and collaboratively with clients and co-workers in a team environment;
- At least 10 years experience in the provision of supervision to advocates;
- Demonstrated commitment to valuing diversity, equity, and inclusion and contributing to an inclusive working and learning environment.
- Ability to communicate in a language used by significant numbers of potential clients a plus.

Duties:

- The Advocacy Director will report to and share oversight and supervision duties with the Program’s Executive Director (ED) and other senior staff. This includes:
 - Teaming with the ED in the coordination of advocacy and in the supervision and evaluation of other advocates;
 - Meeting with the ED regularly to discuss the progress of projects and the needs of advocates;
 - Serving on a three-person executive management team that includes the Deputy Director (DD) to discuss issues that overlap between substantive and administrative matters:
 - Providing direct supervision to Program advocates;
 - Drafting, reviewing and editing documents produced in litigation efforts and other advocacy;
 - In cooperation with the ED and Program advocacy staff, responding to requests from advocates in other organizations for collaboration in advocacy campaigns and projects;
 - In cooperation with the ED and Program advocacy staff, responding to requests for participation in, or support for, drafting of amicus briefs, as well as regulatory or legislative provisions and amendments;
 - In cooperation with the ED and DD, participate in the planning and facilitation of Program events intended to advance advocacy efforts.

- In cooperation with advocacy teams, take on a substantial role in litigation or other advocacy, independently or in partnership with other organizations or community groups, that is intended to address problems that significant numbers of MHLAC clients share in common;
- Participate in legal representation in prioritized individual cases as needed to advance systemic advocacy projects and the pursuit of MHLAC's mission;
- Travel to meet with clients and client groups throughout the Commonwealth to provide representation, information, or strategic assistance that is connected to the pursuit of systemic reforms;
- Field requests from legal advocates and attorneys in Massachusetts seeking technical assistance in cases they are handling for MHLAC eligible clients;
- Attend training conferences and events relevant to MHLAC priorities in order to stay up to date on, and gain insight into mental health law and policy issues;
- Represent MHLAC client interests in public forums, including legislative and rulemaking hearings and on statewide task forces.

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 both a resume and cover letter via email or mail to:

Ms. Beth Heinrich
Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee
100 Hancock Street, Suite 1002
Quincy, MA 02171
hiring@mhlac.org

ATTN: Advocacy Director

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.