



Legal Director

Empire Justice Center, a highly respected, statewide civil legal services organization, is seeking a Legal Director to join our team. The Legal Director is a full-time, exempt position based in our Rochester office that will serve as a member of the leadership team and will lead the legal work for the entire organization. This is an opportunity to join one of the most effective organizations serving low-income individuals and families in New York State.

Empire Justice Center attracts and employs dedicated, determined and passionate advocates who, together, make a significant impact on the lives of low-income New Yorkers. We achieve our successes through direct legal representation and high impact litigation, legislative and administrative advocacy, and by providing training and technical assistance to other advocates who are working towards the same goals.

With offices in Rochester, Albany, Westchester and Long Island, our organization offers staff an exciting and dynamic working environment and a strong commitment to teamwork, diversity, and personal/professional development.

The Position

As a member of the leadership team, the Legal Director will lead the legal work of Empire Justice. The Director will provide information, technical assistance, supervision, training and support to legal staff regarding litigation and will serve as a resource in overseeing and managing ongoing relationships and capacity related to litigation and legal assistance. The Director will also provide input and initial consultation to the organization on internal legal matters.

Primary responsibilities will include

- Litigation development and support
 - Develop, support and oversee Empire Justice Center's complex litigation and advocacy activities, including Empire Justice Center's impact litigation;
 - Develop and manage scope and structure of individual litigation and direct client services provided by Empire Justice Center;
 - Develop and expand co-counseling and collaborations with partner organization and private firms
 - Develop systems and processes that support collaborative and efficient delivery of superior legal representation to our clients.
- Leadership and Supervision
 - Active participation in the leadership of the organization;
 - Support and supervise a team of experienced and newer attorneys;
 - Develop and implement policies and procedures related to litigation, representation, and related matters
 - Ensure the coordination and systems change planning with VP for Policy and Government Relations and policy staff.

Skills

- Project management experience in assessing, identifying, and implementing programming based on the needs of the organization;
- Proven supervisory and leadership skills in a legal program;
- Ability to shift priorities while working in a fast paced environment with multiple competing objectives;
- Effective decision making skills that balance overall organizational and leadership objectives with employee needs;
- Strong writing skills in legal drafting of complex briefs, pleadings, and motions;
- Strong verbal communication skills required.
- Experience conducting all phases of complex civil litigation, including but not limited to: depositions, motion practice (including oral argument), discovery (including use of experts), and trial work required. Experience with appellate practice strongly preferred.
- Effective interpersonal skills and the ability to cultivate partnerships and to work with a diverse workforce.

Qualifications

- Juris Doctorate from an accredited law school; or equivalent combination of experience and education will be considered; including an equivalent degree from countries outside of the U.S.;
- Be admitted to practice law in New York or eligible for admission to the New York Bar at the time of hiring (must be admitted within one year of hire);
- 12 years relevant litigation experience, including experience with complex civil litigation;
- Experience in practicing in both state and federal courts (strongly preferred);
- Demonstrated commitment to expanding the rights of low income persons and increasing social justice through individual and systemic litigation;
- A demonstrated history of achieving positive systemic change via class action, major impact or other systemic litigation;
- Clear commitment to principles of diversity and inclusion;
- Ability and willingness to mentor supervise and train legal staff in all five Empire Justice Offices through video conferencing/communication and travel when necessary.

Salary and Benefits

Salary is commensurate with experience and based on the organization's salary scale. Empire Justice Center offers a generous benefits package, including health insurance, pension and life insurance, vacation, holiday, personal and sick time. We are an organization that supports and encourages a work/life balance.

Empire Justice Center is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and desires a diverse work force. People of color, women, persons with disabilities, persons who are elderly, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender are welcomed and encouraged to apply.

This position is available immediately. **Applications accepted until position filled.** To apply, e-mail a cover letter, resume, writing sample and three professional references to address below. No phone calls or hard copies please.

employment@empirejustice.org