Senior Statewide Attorney, Disability Advocacy Program (DAP)
Full Time – Rochester, Albany, Westchester, or Long Island

Empire Justice Center, a highly respected, statewide legal services organization, is seeking an experienced attorney to join our team as one of two senior attorneys responsible for coordinating the Disability Advocacy Program (DAP) statewide.

Empire Justice hires dedicated, determined, and passionate advocates to make a significant impact on the lives of low-income New Yorkers. We achieve our successes through a combination of direct legal representation, 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 County, and Long Island, our organization offers staff an exciting and dynamic working environment and a strong commitment to teamwork, diversity, and personal/professional development. This position can be based in one of Empire Justice’s offices in Rochester, Albany, Yonkers, or Long Island, with the possibility of remote work.

The Position:

The Disability Advocacy Program (DAP) is a network of attorneys and paralegals throughout New York State who represent low-income New Yorkers whose applications for federal disability benefits (SSI and SSD) have been denied, or whose federal disability benefits are being terminated. It is funded by the State of New York. Funding is administered by the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA).

The Senior Statewide Attorney is one of two DAP statewide attorney coordinators at Empire Justice, working to provide information, technical assistance, training and support to advocates on matters related to DAP. The senior statewide attorneys for DAP also provide leadership on policy issues, and undertake legislative and administrative advocacy relevant to this area. They also develop and participate in complex litigation matters in conjunction with other staff in the practice area.

Primary Responsibilities will include:

- Develop in-depth substantive knowledge of Social Security disability law;
- Provide legal education and substantive law training on Social Security law to the NYS DAP community through regional task force meetings and specialized trainings;
- Identify systemic issues that create barriers to the receipt of Supplemental Security Income and Social Security disability benefits;
• Undertake legislative and administrative advocacy aimed at improving access to justice, strengthening disability programs, and maintaining DAP funding;
• Represent individual Social Security disability claimants in the federal courts and undertake impact litigation;
• Provide leadership on policy issues that have relevance to the larger legal services community. This could be through research, writing reports, and engaging with advocacy groups and government agencies.
• Act as information clearinghouse, and keep NYS DAP advocates up to date on changes in Social Security laws, rules and regulations through the quarterly Disability Law News;
• Respond to requests for information posted on the DAP Listserv and received from individual advocates;
• Oversee the collection of case closing data from DAP contractors and provide both the contractors and OTDA with timely quarterly and annual reports; and
• Assist in the preparation of OTDA’s Biennial DAP Report to the Legislature

**Required Qualifications:**

• Background and substantive knowledge in Social Security disability law, especially Supplemental Security Income;
• Minimum seven years relevant legal experience;
• Experience planning and conducting substantive disability law trainings;
• Exceptional written and oral communication skills;
• Strong analytical skills;
• Mentoring and training abilities;
• Demonstrated commitment to enforcing and expanding the rights of low-income persons;
• A desire to pursue systemic change through litigation and policy advocacy;
• Clear commitment to principles of diversity and inclusion;
• Be admitted to practice law in New York or eligible for admission to the New York Bar and the various U.S. District Courts upon prompt application for admission (must be admitted within one year of hire);
• Ability and willingness to travel to provide training and/or to participate in policy advocacy.

**Preferred Skills and Qualifications:**

• Experience supervising;
• Experience with legislative and administrative advocacy;
• Experience representing Social Security claimants in federal court; and
• Experience in complex litigation.

**Salary and Benefits**

The top salary for this position is $107,000. Salary is commensurate with experience and based on the organization's salary scale. Empire Justice Center supports and encourages a work/life balance, hybrid work schedule, and generous time off. Full-time employees work 35 hours per week and enjoy 13 paid holidays per year, plus several weeks of paid vacation, personal days, and sick time. Empire Justice Center offers benefit packages including health, vision, dental, and life insurance, paid leave, opportunities to apply for loan repayment assistance, and more.
Empire Justice Center is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and values a diverse work force. People of color, women, persons with disabilities, persons who are elderly, gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender are welcomed and encouraged to apply.

**To Apply**
Position available July 1, 2022. Applications accepted until position is filled. To apply, e-mail a cover letter, resume, writing sample (preferably USDC memo in Social Security case and original training materials), and three professional references to the address below. Please add **DAP Senior Statewide Attorney, First/Last Name** to the subject line. No phone calls or hard copies please. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Senior Statewide Attorney, Disability Advocacy Program (DAP)  
[employment@empirejustice.org](mailto:employment@empirejustice.org)