Empire Justice Center’s Civil Rights Practice Group is seeking a Managing Attorney to join our team.

Empire Justice Center, a statewide not for profit law firm focused on systems change advocacy is looking for a dynamic civil rights litigator to manage and grow our Civil Rights Practice Group in Rochester, NY. Empire Justice Center’s systems change approach focuses on achieving high impact, lasting improvements by examining client and community experience with the law to identify systemic barriers and then pursuing solutions through training and technical assistance, impact litigation and policy change. This is an opportunity to join a highly respected organization that is focused on getting to the root causes of racial and economic justice.

Empire Justice Center hires dedicated, determined, and passionate advocates to make a significant impact on the lives of New Yorkers. We achieve our successes through a combination of direct legal representation and high-impact litigation and policy work. We also provide training and technical assistance to other advocates 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.

The Managing Attorney’s role is to oversee all work in the Civil Rights Practice Group and to ensure effective implementation of the 360-degree approach, working with Practice Group staff and Leadership Team members. They will supervise the staff within the Practice Group and maintain a client caseload and/or other deliverables. They are responsible for overseeing all work, including legal work of the practice group. This encompasses staffing patterns, financial and other resources, grant deliverables and long-term planning. They will communicate both the broader needs of Empire Justice Center to the Civil Rights Practice Group as well as the needs of the Practice Group to Empire Justice Leadership and the broader organization. The Managing Attorney also takes the lead in implementing Empire Justice Center’s 360-degree approach within the Practice Group by identifying emerging issues and opportunities derived from direct services work with client communities and developing effective strategies to effect systems change using the practice, teach, change model. The Managing Attorney also plays an external role by identifying and forming relationships with external organizations and agencies that enhance and uplift the Practice Group’s work and
ensuring members of the Practice Group do the same.

**Primary Responsibilities:**

- Independently managing and supervising attorneys handling a broad array of civil rights cases from inception through final disposition.
- Supervises attorneys and staff working on current practice group focus areas: language justice, police reform, LGBTQ+ rights, and discrimination in schools.
- A part of the attorney’s work also includes advocacy through local and state level policy initiatives, and collaboration with community organizations supporting the low-income and marginalized communities we serve.
- Managing the practice group’s school discrimination helpline, including taking calls to provide advice and counsel, supervising attorneys and paralegals providing advice and counsel, reviewing facts to bring potential cases before the New York State Division of Human Rights.
- Develop and implement the vision and goals of a legal practice area within Practice Group using the 360 degree model which includes—direct services, training and technical assistance, impact litigation and policy advocacy.
- Manage and supervise staff and ensure compliance with program policies and grant requirements.
- Support practice group efforts around staff recruitment and retention and promote professional development opportunities.
- Provide leadership, mentoring, co-counseling, lead counseling, technical assistance, and expertise, including support for impact advocacy efforts to attorneys, paralegals and all other staff in the Practice Group.
- Establish and implement Practice Group procedures for supervision, intake, workload, case distribution, meeting deliverables, communication and collaboration with other teams, including Leadership, Marketing and other operations.
- Ensure adequate quality control of all deliverables.
- Maintain regular communication with the advocacy and operations directors, including consultation on personnel, financial, administrative, and advocacy-related matters.
- Oversee case referrals and provide support to volunteer attorneys and law students.
- Staff, coordinate and supervise legal clinics and training as appropriate.
- Collaborate extensively with stakeholders including local, state, and national advocates, government agencies, and industry leaders.
- Pro-actively participate and encourage others to participate in the state or local bar association and in other Empire Justice related associations or organizational boards which collaborate with the organization.
- Maintain and develop relationships and collaborative efforts with current funders, community leaders, not-for-profit agencies, grass roots organizations, other public interest offices, and governmental and elected officials as appropriate.
- Work collaboratively with other Empire Justice Center substantive Practice Groups, as well as other legal services providers, community groups, and government officials.
Qualifications

Required
- 5+ years of relevant legal experience, including litigation experience.
- Admission to the New York State Bar, passed the NY bar and awaiting admission, or out of state admission with eligibility for pro hac vice status (with expectation of New York admission within two years).
- A fearless desire to work on challenging civil rights matters in representing low-income families and individuals.
- Self-starter, able to work independently, and entrepreneurial; enjoys creating and implementing new initiatives, highly organized.
- Unafraid to learn and practice new and changing areas of law.
- Experience representing clients in state court, federal court, or administrative agency proceedings.
- Excellent writing, research, and communication skills.
- Demonstrated understanding of the importance of DEIA within the Practice Group, at Empire Justice Center and in client work.
- Ability to balance client-advocacy and management responsibilities.
- Demonstrated leadership.
- Proven interest in and commitment to advocacy for the legal rights of low-income and/or other vulnerable populations.

Preferred
- Experience in civil rights law.
- Experience working with low-income families and communities.
- Experience in outreach, community education, organizing, or coalition-building.
- Supervisory experience.
- Bilingual (English & Spanish or English & ASL).

Salary and Benefits
Salary is commensurate with experience and based on our salary scale. Empire Justice Center offers a generous benefit package, including health insurance, life insurance, vacation, holiday 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 and inclusive work force. People of color, women, people who are disabled, people who are elderly, and people who are LGBTQ+ are welcomed and encouraged to apply.

This position is available immediately. Applications will be accepted until position is filled. To apply, please email (no phone calls or hard copy mail) a cover letter, resume, and writing sample to: employment@empirejustice.org.