IMMIGRANT RIGHTS PARALEGAL

Yonkers, N.Y. Full-time, Non-exempt position

Empire Justice Center, a highly respected, statewide legal services organization, is seeking a Paralegal to join our Unaccompanied Minors Program practice. 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. Our organization offers staff an exciting and dynamic employment opportunity and a strong commitment to teamwork, diversity, and personal/professional development.

The Immigrant Rights Paralegal will be a critical member of our growing Immigration Practice and under the Acacia Center for Justice program’s Unaccompanied Children’s Program, a recently created initiative funded by the Acacia Center for Justice, will provide support and assistance to young people who are, or have been, in federal custody under the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). In addition to immigration-related services, the UMP paralegal will assist staff attorneys in their work defending the rights of young people to family unity, safety and bodily integrity while in government custody, and other emergent legal needs of immigrant youth. The position includes extensive contact with youth, including youth who have suffered abuse, abandonment, neglect, or other trauma.

**The Position:**

The Immigrant Rights Paralegal is a critical member of the Immigration practice group who will be working in the Unaccompanied Minors Program, a position funded position by the Acacia Center for Justice. The primary function of the Immigrant Rights Paralegal is to assist and support the Immigration Attorney in administrative oversight of the project and in all aspects of direct representation in immigration law matters to mostly Spanish-speaking immigrants in the lower Hudson Valley.

We anticipate hiring a team of 4-5 new staff to work on this project and to join our current staff of immigration lawyers, paralegals, and Immigrant Justice Corps Fellows in the Hudson Valley. Staffing will include two immigrant rights attorneys and two immigrant rights paralegals. The Immigrant Rights Attorney will work under the supervision of a Managing Attorney, and
alongside a second Immigrant Rights Attorney and two paralegals.

**Primary responsibilities will include:**

- Conducting legal intake interviews and “Know Your Rights” trainings for unaccompanied minors who are housed in or were recently housed in ORR shelters.
- Providing support services to children who are detained in Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) shelters in the lower Hudson Valley.
- Assisting in preparation of bond hearings for youth seeking less restrictive custody.
- Case support and document/data management.
- Administrative tasks associated with the Immigration Attorney’s responsibilities.
- Scheduling and follow-up of client and related meetings.
- Spanish/English interpretation as needed.
- Provide direct representation, under attorney supervision, in immigration transactional matters.
- other duties as assigned.

**Preferred Qualifications:**

- Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) accreditation, or willingness to pursue BIA accreditation desired.
- Ability to produce high-quality written material, meet tight deadlines, and to work both independently and as part of a team.
- Strong analytical and writing skills.
- Experience in interviewing and counseling clients desired.
- A bachelor’s degree with at least two (3) years of direct client experience or an Associate degree with no less than three (3) years of direct client experience.
- Have experience in trauma-informed representation and representation of minors.
- Be able to communicate in a way that is clear and supportive to young clients.
- Be able to produce high-quality written material, meet tight deadlines, and to work both independently and as part of a team.
- Be willing and able to serve a geographically wide-spread area.
- An attorney hired for this position must have a driver’s license and access to a vehicle for frequent trips to children’s detention facilities. Mileage and tolls will be reimbursed.

**Salary and Benefits:**

The range of salary is from $42,640 to $45,552 Salary is commensurate with experience and based on the organization’s salary scale. Empire Justice Center offers a generous benefit package, including health insurance, life insurance, a 403b retirement plan, vacation, holiday, and sick time. We are an organization that supports and encourages a work/life balance.
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Empire Justice Center is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and desires a diverse and inclusive workforce. Empire Justice Center provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment and prohibits discrimination and harassment of any type without regard to race, color, religion, age (40 or older), sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, disability status, genetics, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local laws.

TO APPLY:
Applications will be accepted until filled. If interested e-mail a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and three professional references to (no phone calls or hard copies please) Incomplete applications will not be considered.

employment@empirejustice.org