



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
FOUNDATION

Wisconsin

American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin
207 E Buffalo St. Suite 325, Milwaukee, WI 53202

STAFF ATTORNEY/SENIOR STAFF ATTORNEY

Organization and Opportunity Overview

The ACLU of Wisconsin is the state affiliate of the national ACLU and is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, private organization with more than 14,000 members, dedicated to defending the civil rights and liberties of all Wisconsinites. The ACLU uses public education, advocacy, and targeted litigation to help maintain and advance civil liberties, including freedoms of association, press, religion, and speech, as well as core civil rights, including voting rights, due process, and privacy rights, and the right to equal protection, for all people in Wisconsin.

POSITION OVERVIEW

The American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin seeks to hire an experienced, passionate, and innovative Staff Attorney or Senior Staff Attorney to investigate and litigate selected civil liberties and civil rights cases in Wisconsin state and federal courts.

The position is a full-time, exempt, and salaried position. The position will report to the Legal Director and work with the Legal Department and other staff members across the organization to create high impact litigation strategies and handle all aspects of the affiliate's ongoing and future litigation. The position will be filled as either a Staff Attorney or Senior Staff Attorney, commensurate with experience as outlined below.

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Investigate and litigate a range of civil liberties and civil rights cases in state and federal courts, to include: conducting factual and legal research;

interviewing clients and witnesses; preparing legal memoranda, Open Records Act requests, demand letters, and other materials in advance of litigation; drafting pleadings and briefs; managing discovery; participating in trials and appeals, including conducting *voir dire*, taking witnesses' testimony, and giving oral arguments; negotiating settlements; and identifying and drafting amicus briefs;

- Ability to work in an environment that respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, immigration status, status as a person directly impacted by the carceral system, and socioeconomic circumstances.
- Center the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in all work, embedding the values in legal program development and organizational practices and processes;
- Cultural and social humility with colleagues, in interactions with clients, and with community partners. Provide supervision and mentorship to junior legal staff, including fellows and interns;
- Help assess requests for legal assistance as assigned, and identify appropriate cases for legal challenges;
- Develop and deliver trainings, CLEs, and other presentations to the Wisconsin legal community on ACLU issues;
- Develop and help maintain relationships with pro bono co-counsel, local officials, and others who can help the ACLU of Wisconsin accomplish its campaign objectives;
- Engage in legal advocacy work to advance civil rights and liberties through collaborative non-litigation means, such as writing public comments, participating in public education events, and assisting with analyzing or drafting public comment on proposed legislation, as necessary;
- Provide legal analysis to other ACLU staff as directed by the Legal Director;
- Serve as a spokesperson for the ACLU of Wisconsin on legal issues handled by our office, as assigned;
- Work with other program staff to implement campaign objectives and identify opportunities for reform through litigation;
- Ability to work in office and remotely based on a hybrid office model. Attorneys must be able to appear at hearings and trials remotely and in person throughout the State of Wisconsin.
- Strong writing, research and verbal skills in presenting both to lawyers and to non-lawyers; leadership and organizational skills in order to encourage volunteer lawyers and work cooperatively in coalitions; able to take initiative,

think strategically, and share responsibility and credit across the organization and with partners.

QUALIFICATIONS:

This position is for a Staff Attorney or Senior Staff Attorney, commensurate with experience. Minimum qualifications for each position level are noted below. Individuals with more significant litigation experience are preferred and are strongly encouraged to apply.

- **Staff Attorney:** at least three years of civil or criminal litigation experience, including experience taking/defending depositions, participating in evidentiary hearings and/or trials, and experience managing complex discovery. Experience in federal courts and in constitutional and/or civil rights litigation on the plaintiff's side is strongly preferred.
- **Senior Staff Attorney:** The designation of "Senior Staff Attorney" is given to a Staff Attorney who has attained either eight (8) years of experience as a practicing attorney, and at least one (1) year of experience working within an ACLU affiliate or national office, or, fifteen (15) years of experience as a practicing attorney. Senior Staff Attorneys will generally have significant civil or criminal litigation experience, including experience managing complex litigation and significant experience in all facets of litigation, including taking/defending depositions, participating in evidentiary hearings and/or trials, brief writing, and managing litigation teams.

For either Staff Attorney or Senior Staff Attorney, the following qualifications are required:

- Law degree from accredited institution.
- Licensed to practice law in Wisconsin or ability to waive into the Wisconsin Bar or sit for the next available bar exam.
- Substantive knowledge and understanding of constitutional law and civil liberties issues;
- Ability to litigate independently and collaboratively, juggle multiple projects at once, and exercise good judgment under stressful situations;
- Ability and willingness to research and quickly learn new, complex legal issues and build lawsuits on short notice in response to breaking events;
- Ability to think creatively about non-litigation solutions to promote ACLU of Wisconsin objectives, as part of an integrated advocacy team;
- Proficiency with Westlaw and electronic case filing (state and federal). Preference for familiarity with legal case management and timekeeping

software and other programs used in complex litigation, including discovery and document management software;

- Willingness to manage a fast-paced and occasionally demanding schedule to meet litigation or other programmatic deadlines;
- Experience taking initiative, being proactive, and anticipating litigation needs;
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, along with a willingness to be patient, collegial, and supportive to all affiliate colleagues;
- Comfort with challenging conversations and situations leveraging strong and engaging interpersonal skills;
- Willingness to receive and respond to feedback, communicate directly regarding issues that arise in cases, and work as a cohesive and collaborative member of a multi-person and multi-firm litigation team;
- A personal approach that values the individual, respects diversity, acknowledges the intersectionality of the identities of colleagues and clients and community members, and approaches the work with an anti-racist lens and commitment.
- A strong commitment to the ACLU's mission and goals toward the advancement of social justice, racial equity, dismantling white supremacy and incorporating a structural power analysis into work, with knowledge and understanding of how power is manifested in matters of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, ability, status as a person directly impacted by the carceral system, socio-economic circumstances, and immigration status.

For either position, the following qualifications are preferred, but not required:

- State or federal court clerkship,
- Experience litigating class actions,
- Experience litigating Section 1983 cases,
- Experience litigating emergency motions, including preliminary injunctions and temporary restraining orders, in state or federal court,
- Experience managing and/or mentoring other attorneys.

HYBRID/REMOTE OFFICE SCHEDULE

The ACLU of Wisconsin uses a permanent hybrid office environment where employees have the option of working remotely and in-person, prioritizing caregiving and work-life balance needs. Attorneys are expected to travel to state and federal courts throughout Wisconsin, as required.

COMPENSATION

Based on the experience necessary for this role, we anticipate an annual salary of no less than \$75,000 annually; commensurate with experience. The ACLU of Wisconsin offers excellent benefits, including medical and disability insurance, a 401(k) with a match program, professional development stipend and generous vacation, holiday, and sick leave.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested applicants should email a single document of the requested documents to hr@aclu-wi.org, please use '[YOUR NAME]-Staff Attorney/Senior Staff Attorney' in the subject line of the email. The requested items are the following:

- Cover letter explaining how you are qualified for this position and why you're interested in being part of the ACLU of Wisconsin;
- Resume.
- Final interviewees will need three professional references.

Applicants will be reviewed beginning immediately and will be accepted until the position is filled.

This job description provides a general but not comprehensive list of the essential responsibilities and qualifications required. It does not represent a contract of employment. The ACLU of Wisconsin reserves the right to change the job description and/or posting at any time without advance notice.

Commitments from the ACLU-WI

The ACLU is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, veteran status, and record of arrest or conviction.

- The ACLU of Wisconsin is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and strongly encourages people of color, people with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and formerly incarcerated people to apply.
- The ACLU of Wisconsin undertakes affirmative action strategies in its recruitment and employment efforts to assure that persons with disabilities have full opportunities for employment in all positions. We encourage

applicants with disabilities who may need accommodations in the application process to contact us at jobs@aclu-wi.org.

- The ACLU of Wisconsin is comprised of two separate corporate entities, the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin and the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin Foundation. Both are organizations with the same overall mission; they share office space and employees.
- Benefits include paid vacation and sick leave, paid parental leave, optional medical for employee and family (includes one plan at no cost to the employee), dental and vision coverage for employee and family, life insurance, short and long-term disability insurance; and an optional 401(K) with a stepped employer match.
- There is a permanent hybrid work environment.
- All offers of employment are contingent upon clear results of thorough background and reference checks.
- All inquiries about and interactions with candidates are kept in strict confidence.