

**STAFF ATTORNEY
HOUSING LAW
MILWAUKEE OFFICE**

EXTERNAL JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

August 25, 2020

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. is seeking a full-time staff attorney to work at the Milwaukee Office, 230 West Wells Street, Room 800, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The attorney will provide representation in housing law, eviction defense, and other civil matters to low-income persons and homeless individuals. The attorney may be called upon to provide client services under a number of special grants which the firm receives including but not limited to the HUD Emergency Shelter and Community Development Block grants.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this position may be remote for some period of time.

Legal Action of Wisconsin (LAW) is a large, vibrant non-profit law firm funded by the federal Legal Services Corporation, the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation, and other sources. LAW provides free legal aid to about 13,500 low-income persons annually in the southern 39 counties of Wisconsin with offices in Milwaukee, Madison, Racine, Oshkosh, Green Bay, and La Crosse. In addition, LAW operates a statewide farmworker= project, and several state-wide projects serving crime victims, including victims of sex and labor trafficking. LAW attorneys have expertise in a range of substantive areas, but the majority of our work is in the areas of housing, public benefits, removing barriers to employment, consumer law, and family law. Staff attorneys are expected to maintain a direct service caseload on behalf of individual and group clients, as well as to engage in law reform litigation and other impact work. Attorneys are expected to specialize in specific areas of poverty law.

The Milwaukee Area Office staff of 30 attorneys, 14 paralegals, and 22 other administrative, professional and technical staff provides representation to residents of Milwaukee and Waukesha County. Intake is done by telephone, on a walk-in basis, or at neighborhood outstations in Milwaukee and Waukesha. The Milwaukee Area Office also houses the Legal Action administrative staff, the SeniorLAW Project, and a Volunteer Lawyers Project. Two attorneys are located at the Center for Driver=s License Recovery & Employment at Milwaukee Area Technical College.

Equal justice under law can only be achieved through the collaboration of a diverse staff. When we utilize our differences, we effect positive change for the communities we serve. We are committed to equitable inclusion across gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age,

ability, sex, religion, economic circumstances, ethnicity, national origin, and culture. We are striving to transcend the construct of race and be an anti-racist law firm. We encourage staff to bring their whole selves to work each day and pledge to celebrate every aspect of who they are.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Legal Action is seeking a full-time attorney to provide legal representation on housing matters, collaborate with project attorneys, and act as the public face of the Milwaukee office's housing law work. The attorney will handle cases in both Milwaukee and Waukesha County. Staff attorneys may be reassigned to other legal practice areas and duties as the staffing needs of the firm change. Responsibilities will include:

- Advice and representation in eviction cases to prevent homelessness;
- Advice and representation in both court and administrative hearings;
- Representation of clients with a termination notice or eviction from public or subsidized housing (including housing with a Section Eight rent assistance voucher);
- Representation of clients in denials of admission to public or subsidized housing;
- Representation of clients terminated from or denied eligibility to rent assistance programs;
- Representation of tenants involved with certain problem landlords;
- Representation of tenants whose landlords are in foreclosure;
- Representation of tenants in motions to seal their eviction cases;
- Representation of clients in appeals;
- Attendance at Milwaukee Housing Coalition meetings; and
- Perform intake duties as needed and make appropriate referrals to other community agencies.

The attorney will identify and help develop impact litigation in coordination with the Housing Priority Committee, the Assistant Director of Litigation, and other attorneys. The lawyer will be expected to plan and initiate affirmative litigation in state and federal courts.

The housing lawyer may also conduct community education sessions, become familiar with community needs, attend job fairs, update housing and eviction training materials, and assist in training volunteer attorneys working with the Eviction Defense Project.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide rigorous and high-quality representation in all direct service cases;
- Work effectively with clients from a wide range of backgrounds;
- Develop expertise in the areas of law that affect housing and homelessness, including state and federal constitutional law, basic housing law, fair housing, and eviction defense;
- Collaborate with staff and volunteer attorneys to provide representation at the Eviction Defense Project in Milwaukee County;
- Participate in at least one of Legal Action's firm-wide Priority Committees; and
- Staff attorneys may supervise interns or paralegals in addition to other duties that may be assigned from time to time.

QUALIFICATIONS

We value a diverse staff and work environment. We strongly encourage applications from women, people of color, people who identify as LGBTQIA, people with disabilities, and people with life experiences or education that add to our diversity and our capacity to provide high-quality legal aid. We also encourage applicants to include a statement about the ways that their unique backgrounds and personal, professional, and life experiences contribute to the diversity, cultural vitality, and perspective of our staff and our law firm's mission along with their other application materials.

- Admission to Wisconsin State Bar;
- Superior writing, research, and analytical skills;
- Enthusiasm for representing clients in court as well as through motions and other written work;
- Self-motivated, diligent, and able to meet deadlines and manage a case load that includes various kinds of cases;
- Commitment to serving low-income clients, the Milwaukee community, and to improving access to justice;
- Cultural competence and respect for differences in race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socio-economic circumstances;
- Prior legal aid or other relevant experience is preferred;
- Some experience with federal or state courtroom procedure is helpful; and
- Ability to travel throughout Legal Action's service area to meet with clients and to attend court hearings.

SALARY, BENEFITS AND OTHER INFORMATION

The salary for this and all positions are determined by Legal Action's attorney salary scale as set forth in the firm's salary administration plan. The attorney salary scale and the salary administration plan is determined by Legal Action's Board of Directors. The position may receive an annual increase if the Board of Directors approves it. For example, under Legal Action's attorney salary scale, an attorney with 0-1 years of experience practicing law would earn a salary of \$45,727. An attorney with 5 years of experience practicing law would earn a salary of \$52,347.

Legal Action provides a generous fringe benefits package, including employer-paid health and dental insurance for employees and eligible dependents. Some employees are required to contribute to the health insurance premium for their spouse, if the spouse has group health insurance provided by their employer. Legal Action also provides life and long-term disability insurance, a profit-sharing retirement plan, salary deferral options for retirement planning, low-cost employee paid vision coverage, four weeks of vacation per year, four days of personal leave per year, a sick leave accrual rate and four weeks of paid parental leave for eligible employees.

The position is governed by Legal Action's Personnel Policies, subject to unilateral change by the firm's Board of Directors. All positions at Legal Action are "at will"; there is no guaranteed period of employment.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

This position involves sedentary work, sitting at a desk on a computer for an extended period. Exerting up to 10 pounds of force on a regular basis to lift, carry, push or otherwise move objects. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to stand, sit, talk, hear and use hands and fingers to operate a computer and/or laptop keyboard and use a telephone. Specific vision abilities required for this job include close vision requirements due to computer work. Drives a motor vehicle while seated for extended periods of time daily. Occasional reaching, bending, kneeling and stooping involved to retrieve various items and materials. This position works in an environmentally-controlled office environment with moderate noise from phones, printers and light office traffic in the Milwaukee Office.

TO APPLY

Applicants must submit the following items in one PDF file to Molly Gena at MKEhiringEDP@legalaction.org:

- A cover letter;
- Resumé;
- A recent legal writing sample;
- Name and contact information for three professional references;
- Law school transcript (only required for applicants who graduated in 2017 or later);
- Optional (but highly encouraged): A statement about the ways your unique background, and personal, professional, and life experiences contribute to the diversity, cultural vitality, and perspective of our staff and our law firm's mission and this position.

Molly Gena, Managing Attorney for the Milwaukee Office, is the hiring manager for this position and will lead a panel of Legal Action staff who will conduct virtual interviews with candidates selected for position.

Deadline to Apply: The position will be open until filled. We encourage applicants to apply by **Wednesday, September 9, 2020** for early consideration.

**Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. is an
Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer**