



*Legal Action of Wisconsin (LAW)
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JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL POSTING

**EVICITION DEFENSE PROJECT ATTORNEY
& GENERAL STAFF ATTORNEY**

LA CROSSE OFFICE

July 29, 2022

Open until filled but with a minimum of 10 days of posting

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. is seeking two full-time staff attorneys to work at our La Crosse Office. One attorney will provide representation to low-income people with a focus on preventing evictions and the other staff attorney will provide representation to low-income people in a variety of other civil legal matters such as consumer, barriers to employment, and public benefits law.

LEGAL ACTION OF WISCONSIN

Legal Action is a large, vibrant non-profit law firm funded by the federal Legal Services Corporation, the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation, and other sources. Legal Action provides free legal aid to about 9,000 – 12,000 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 other 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. Legal Action attorneys specialize in specific areas of poverty law, maintain a direct service caseload on behalf of individual clients, and engage in law reform litigation and other impact work.

Legal Action believes that equal justice under law can only be achieved through the collaboration of a diverse staff. We strongly encourage applications from women, people of color, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, and people with life

experiences or educational backgrounds that add to the firm's diversity and our capacity to provide high-quality legal aid.

OFFICE LOCATION

The La Crosse office has recently moved to a new office located at 700 North Third Street, Suite 203, La Crosse, WI, 54601. The La Crosse Office staff currently consists of a Managing Attorney, 3 staff attorneys and 1 paralegal. Most staff in the La Crosse Office have returned to the physical office, but a schedule that combines remote work and in office work may be considered upon hire. Our La Crosse office serves 10 counties in south central Wisconsin. However, the Eviction Defense Project attorney will work almost exclusively in La Crosse County.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Legal Action is seeking one full-time attorney to provide legal representation primarily in eviction defense cases and one full-time attorney to provide legal representation in various other civil legal matters. Staff attorneys may be reassigned to other legal practice areas and duties as the staffing needs of the firm change. Responsibilities for both positions will include:

- Provide high quality legal representation to low-income clients in civil legal matters at all levels, including but not limited to administrative hearings, circuit court trials, and appeals.
- Perform all duties associated with such representation as defined by our attorney performance standards.
- Participate in regular case acceptance and case review meetings.
- Stay current in the areas of law that pertain to the low-income community as they change and develop.
- Perform intake duties and, where necessary, make appropriate referrals to other community agencies.
- Actively participate in at least one of Legal Action's Priority Committees: Housing, Consumer, Barriers to Employment, Public Benefits, or Family Law.
- Identify and help develop impact litigation and advocacy in coordination with the Priority Committee Coordinators, the Assistant Directors of Litigation, and others.
- Occasionally conduct community education sessions and other forms of outreach.
- Become familiar with and stay current in understanding community needs.
- Develop and maintain productive working relationships with other Legal Action staff, community partners, local bar associations, among others.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Juris Doctorate Degree;
- Admission to the Wisconsin Bar is required upon hire or the candidate must be eligible to be admitted to the Wisconsin Bar by virtue of reciprocity or by passing the Wisconsin bar examination at the earliest possible opportunity;

- Enthusiasm for civil legal aid, equal justice, and service to our clients;
- Commitment to providing the highest quality legal services;
- Prior work within civil legal services, with volunteers, producing training events, or other relevant experience is desired though not required: Recent graduates may be considered for this position;
- Strong communication skills;
- Enthusiasm for arguing motions and representing clients at trial and/or in administrative hearings;
- Ability to prioritize and organize resources while maintaining quality and attention to detail;
- Self-motivation, diligence, and ability to manage a large and robust caseload and to meet strict deadlines while under pressure;
- Ability to travel throughout Legal Action’s service area to meet with clients and to attend court and administrative hearings in-person when necessary;
- Cultural competence and respect for differences in race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socio-economic circumstances;
- Willingness to receive direction and supervision and to implement feedback;
- Ability to work harmoniously and cooperatively with others;
- Comfort with using Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Teams, etc.) and an electronic database.

COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY

At Legal Action of Wisconsin, health and safety is a top priority. We require all new, unrepresented employees and interns, law clerks, volunteers, and contractors from employment agencies or consulting firms to have completed their COVID-19 vaccinations and booster and to provide medical proof from Wisconsin’s Immunization Registry or from a medical provider of their fully vaccinated status as a condition of employment with Legal Action of Wisconsin within 28 days of their first day of employment. Individuals may request a medical or religious exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement. Exemption requests must be completed and approved on or before the first day of employment.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

This position involves sedentary work, including 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 LAW office and during on-site prison appointments.

Legal Action employees are required to wear a mask that always complies with CDC recommendations when in a Legal Action office or when representing Legal Action in a professional capacity.

SALARY

Our Racine, Oshkosh, Green Bay, Milwaukee, and La Crosse offices have two salary tiers available for Staff Attorneys. (Attorneys in our Madison office are represented by ULW and a collective bargaining agreement.)

Tier 1 Staff Attorneys are:

1. Relatively new to providing legal services to low-income clients.
2. Closely supervised and practicing law under close control and structure.
3. Closely adhering to Legal Action's guidelines, rules, policies, and procedures and have little or no authority to deviate from them without supervisor's approval.

The salary range for Tier 1 Staff Attorneys who begin work on or after September 1, 2022 is \$55,000 for an attorney with no prior experience to \$112,000 for an attorney with 30 or more years of experience.

Tier 2 Staff Attorneys have:

1. At least 3 years of post-J.D. experience that includes work relevant to the skills required for staff attorneys and;
2. Skills and abilities to:
 - a. consistently perform most Tier 1 Staff Attorney duties with minimal assistance or direction, a high level of efficiency and/or independent initiative, and less immediate, regular supervision than a Tier 1 Staff Attorney;
 - b. consistently carry a caseload of substantial size and complexity suitable to an experienced attorney;
 - c. consistently adhere to Legal Action administrative and programmatic procedures such as, but not limited to contemporaneous timekeeping and accurate completion of administrative and client service forms; and
3. Demonstrated initiative and ability to undertake the additional duties that the Tier 2 Staff Attorney level requires such as, but not limited to mentoring, training, and otherwise supporting Tier 1 staff attorneys and others. (Tier 2 Staff Attorneys do not have the authority to discipline others and are not confidential management positions.)

The salary range for Tier 2 Staff Attorneys who begin work on or after September 1, 2022 is \$66,813 for an attorney with the minimum 3 years of experience to \$120,025 for an attorney with 30 or more years of experience.

All staff attorneys are required to utilize and follow Legal Action's attorney performance standards in performing their duties. Legal Action's salary plan provides for annual step increases as long as the attorney is meeting performance expectations. Salaries are not

negotiable and will follow this scale. In addition, Legal Action's organizational structure allows for additional career advancement opportunities, such as: Attorney Managers; Managing Attorneys; Project Managers; Supervising Attorneys; and Priority Coordinators. Legal Action posts these opportunities as they become available.

SPANISH OR HMONG LANGUAGE FLUENCY PREMIUM: Legal Action's Salary Administration Plan includes additional pay of up to \$4800 annually for those employees who are fluent in Spanish or Hmong and utilize their language skills in performing their work.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Legal Action offers a generous fringe benefit package, including employer-paid health and dental 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 401K retirement plan, a profit-sharing plan; and four weeks of vacation leave, four days of personal leave per year and 12 days of sick leave per year. New employees and any employee classified as part-time, receive a pro-rated allotment of annual (vacation), personal and sick leave upon hire. The firm also provides four (4) weeks of paid parental leave to eligible employees.

MOVING EXPENSES

Relocation expenses may be available for reimbursement. Amount to be determined.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

This position is subject to a probationary period of up to one year.

SUPERVISION

This position is supervised by Amanda Schamens, the Managing Attorney of the La Crosse Office.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants must submit the following application materials via Legal Action of Wisconsin's online applicant portal:

<https://secure.entertimeonline.com/ta/7988.careers?ApplyToJob=469917378>

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Legal writing sample
- Names and contact information for three professional references (current LAW staff members are not required to include references)
- Law school transcript (only required for applicants who graduated 2019 or later)

Please submit and upload all the documents required. If required documents are not submitted, your application will be considered incomplete and we may not be able to consider you for this position.

Nicole Zimmer, Director of Legal Services, is the hiring manager for these positions and will interview applicants virtually.

Deadline for Applications:

These positions will be open until filled. For early consideration, we encourage applicants to apply by **Friday, August 12, 2022.**

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