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**INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL JOB ANNOUNCEMENT**

**STAFF ATTORNEY**

**SOCIAL SECURITY & PUBLIC BENEFITS SPECIALIST**

**REENTRY LEGAL SERVICES (RLS) PROGRAM**

**OSHKOSH OFFICE**

**October 25, 2022**

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

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. has an immediate opening for a full-time staff attorney, who will specialize in obtaining Social Security and other public and health care benefits for people with mental and physical disabilities who are releasing from Wisconsin’s state prison system. The attorney may be assigned to Legal Action’s Oshkosh Office.

**LEGAL ACTION OF WISCONSIN, INC.**

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 14,000 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 Oshkosh Office is located at 300 Ohio Street, Oshkosh, WI, 54902. The Oshkosh Office currently consists of nine attorneys and three paralegals. The office provides direct services to low-income clients in Adams, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Outagamie, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Washington, Waushara, and Winnebago Counties.

**Due to COVID-19, Legal Action is limiting in-office and on-site work as much as possible; we prioritize staff and client safety by offering telecommuting options, flexible work hours, and remote access to job responsibilities.**

**REENTRY LEGAL SERVICES (RLS) PROGRAM**

Research has shown that people releasing from prison who are able to get and keep public benefits, such as Social Security, are more stable, less likely to reoffend, and less likely to become homeless. The Reentry Legal Services program is funded, in part, by the State of Wisconsin’s Department of Corrections (DOC) to provide lawyers for people with disabilities who are releasing from DOC institutions, so that they can obtain and keep Social Security, health care, and other public benefits.

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Legal Action’s RLS Program attorneys provide quality representation to clients releasing from state correctional facilities. This representation focuses on public benefits and Social Security law and includes but is not limited to: assisting project clients in applying for benefits (Social Security and health care and other public benefits), developing medical records to support their applications for benefits, and providing advocacy when Social Security and health care and other public benefits are denied. RLS project attorneys are expected to stay abreast with the law as it changes and develops, particularly in the areas of Social Security and health care and other public benefits. In addition to following Legal Action’s policies & procedures and Supreme Court rules governing the practice of law, program attorneys must follow RLS program operational protocols to receive client/case referrals, conduct intake, work with program clients, and other tasks.

RLS attorneys also share responsibility for developing and maintaining productive working relationships with other Legal Action staff, Wisconsin Department of Corrections and Community Corrections staff, state and local bar associations, community and human service organizations, and others. Attorneys may be called upon to provide training and other assistance to members of Legal Action's Volunteer Lawyer Project. Finally, each attorney is expected to attend quarterly meetings of Legal Action’s Public Benefits Law Priority Committees and may be assigned to participate in other Legal Action Priority Committees, such as Housing, Employment, Consumer, or Family Law.

**OTHER DUTIES**

All staff attorneys will be expected to perform intake duties and, where necessary, make appropriate referrals to other community agencies. Each staff attorney is responsible for serving on at least one Priority Committee. Attorneys will be assigned additional duties, including participation and training in race equity alignment and anti-racism; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and effects of trauma and trauma-informed care.

**TARGET POPULATION & WORK WITHIN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES**

An RLS Program attorney will be working with persons with mental and/or physical disabilities who have been convicted of a criminal offense(s) and who are housed in one of Wisconsin’s correctional facilities or are under community supervision.  Program attorneys deliver legal services in correctional facilities and prisons on a regular basis.

**TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS**

The RLS Program involves frequent travel. Program attorneys, regardless of the Legal Action office where they are housed, typically travel at least two times per week to State of Wisconsin prisons, correctional facilities and offices, and other sites.

**TRAINING**

The amount and structure of training provided to the RLS Program attorney will be determined by his/her experience and level of knowledge of Social Security, health care, and other public benefit laws.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

A Juris Doctorate degree. Admission to the Wisconsin State Bar is required upon hire or 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.

Legal Action will also consider the applicant’s:

* Knowledge and understanding of the civil legal problems and needs of people with disabilities, people reentering the community after incarceration, and/or low-income persons;
* Commitment to providing free, high-quality, civil legal services to such persons;
* Prior legal or other work in the client community or in other firms and programs providing help to the people with limited resources;
* Ability to communicate with people who speak a language other than English as their principal language (e.g., Spanish);
* Cultural affinity with the client community;
* Academic training;
* Knowledge of and/or experience with state and federal law and procedure but particularly with Social Security and/or other public benefits law;
* Ability to communicate orally and in writing in a clear and concise manner;
* Ability to work harmoniously with others; and
* Nature and extent of other legal experience and knowledge.

**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**

Enter information into computer accurately. Answer numerous emails, phone calls, and other electronic communications throughout the day. Occasionally move objects, usually about 1 to 20 pounds. Retrieve documents from printers and copiers and similar office equipment and files or distribute to others as needed. 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.)

The **Tier 1 Staff Attorney salary ladder** for full-time employment is as follows:

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| **Staff Attorney ANNUAL SALARIES – TIER 1** |
| **Starting** | $55,000 | **Step 10** | $83,500 | **Step 20** | $102.000 |
| **Step 1** | $57.000 | **Step 11** | $86,000 | **Step 21** | $103,000 |
| **Step 2** | $60,000 | **Step 12** | $88,500 | **Step 22** | $104,000 |
| **Step 3** | $62,500 | **Step 13** | $90,500 | **Step 23** | $105,000 |
| **Step 4** | $65,500 | **Step 14** | $92,500 | **Step 24** | $106,000 |
| **Step 5** | $68,500 | **Step 15** | $94,500 | **Step 25** | $107,000 |
| **Step 6** | $71,500 | **Step 16** | $96,000 | **Step 26** | $108,000 |
| **Step 7** | $74,500 | **Step 17** | $97,500 | **Step 27** | $109,000 |
| **Step 8** | $77.500 | **Step 18** | $99,000 | **Step 28** | $110,000 |
| **Step 9** | $80,500 | **Step 19** | $100,500 | **Step 29** | $111,000 |
|  |  |  |  | **Step 30** | $112,700 |

Generally, Tier 1 Staff Attorneys advance a step on the Tier 1 salary ladder on their anniversary date.

The **Tier 2 Staff Attorney salary ladder** for full-time employment is as follows:

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| **Staff Attorney ANNUAL SALARIES – TIER 2** |
| **Starting** | $58,750 | **Step 10** | $89,388 | **Step 20** | $109,275 |
| **Step 1** | $61,438 | **Step 11** | $92,075 | **Step 21** | $110,350 |
| **Step 2** | $64,125 | **Step 12** | $94,763 | **Step 22** | $111,425 |
| **Step 3** | $66,813 | **Step 13** | $96,913 | **Step 23** | $112,500 |
| **Step 4** | $70,038 | **Step 14** | $99,063 | **Step 24** | $113,575 |
| **Step 5** | $73,263 | **Step 15** | $101,213 | **Step 25** | $114,650 |
| **Step 6** | $76,488 | **Step 16** | $102, 825 | **Step 26** | $115,725 |
| **Step 7** | $79,713 | **Step 17** | $104,438 | **Step 27** | $116,800 |
| **Step 8** | $82,938 | **Step 18** | $106,050 | **Step 28** | $117,875 |
| **Step 9** | $86,163 | **Step 19** | $107,663 | **Step 29** | $118,950 |
|  |  |  |  | **Step 30** | $120,025 |

Generally, Tier 2 Staff Attorneys advance a step on the Tier 2 salary ladder on their anniversary date.

A description of the scope of authority for Tiers I and 2 staff attorney positions are identified below. 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.

**TIER 1 AND TIER 2 STAFF ATTORNEY DESCRIPTION & SCOPE OF AUTHORITY:**

All staff attorneys are required to utilize and follow Legal Action’s attorney performance standards in performing their duties.

Tier 1 Staff Attorneys are:

1. Relatively new to providing legal services to low-income clients.
2. Closely supervised and practices 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.

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:
	1. 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;
	2. consistently carry a caseload of substantial size and complexity suitable to an experienced attorney;
	3. 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.)

Legal Action’s organizational structure does allow 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 $4,800 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 AVAILABLE**

Relocation expenses may be available for reimbursement. Amount to be determined before or upon hire.

**GOVERANCE AND SUPERVISION**

TheProgram attorney must meet Legal Action’s high standards of written and courtroom advocacy. The Program attorney is expected to comply with Legal Action’s existing attorney performance standards, personnel policies, and project operating protocol. The Program Director and Assistant Program Directors use these standards, policies, and protocol to supervise legal work and overall job performance. The Program attorney will participate in regular reviews of all case work with the Project Director and/or other supervising attorneys.

This position is subject to a probationary period of up to one year. This position is governed by the Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. Personnel Policies which are subject to unilateral change by the Legal Action Board of Directors. In addition, as with any Legal Action position, there is no guaranteed period of employment and employment is “at will,” subject to termination at any time.

Depending on office location, this position will be supervised by Attorney Erica Loomis or Attorney Jacob Haller, Program Managers of the RLS Project.

**HOW TO APPLY**

Applicants must submit the following materials via Legal Action of Wisconsin’s online applicant portal by accessing the following link: [**https://secure.entertimeonline.com/ta/7988.careers?ApplyToJob=486706055**](https://secure.entertimeonline.com/ta/7988.careers?ApplyToJob=486706055)

* Cover letter which summarizes qualifications, skills, and experience;
* Resume;
* Legal writing sample;
* Names and contact information for three professional references;
* Law school transcript, which is required for applicants who graduated in **2020** or later.

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

Attorney Erica Loomis, RLS Program Manager, is the hiring manager for this position.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE**

Application materials will be reviewed upon receipt and virtual interviews scheduled for qualified applicants. To ensure early consideration for the Staff Attorney RLS program, **please submit application materials, on or before 11:59 pm Friday, November 25, 2022.**

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