

## **Staff Attorney, Public Benefits - Neighborhood Legal Services**

**Use your Law Degree to help people and change systems.** Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS), the largest provider of civil legal services in western New York, is seeking a dynamic staff attorney for the Public Benefits Unit in its Buffalo office. The staff attorney will help low-income and underserved residents obtain and/or maintain sufficient income for the essentials of daily living and ensure that those in need are served by systems that are just, equitable and responsive.

The staff attorney will learn the law and advocate for individuals in need of benefits such as Temporary Assistance, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing Assistance, SNAP, and Medicaid.

Advocacy will include representation of individual clients and will include identification and advocacy to obtain systemic change through affirmative advocacy, impact litigation, and policy work. Your clients will include people living with low incomes, disabilities, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and people experiencing homelessness.

The staff attorney will be responsible for case load management, legal research and writing, representation at administrative hearings and state and federal courts. The position will involve community outreach.

### **Essential Responsibilities / Functions:**

- Develop a substantive knowledge of the areas of law that impact the low-income community
- Provide a spectrum of legal assistance from advice and counsel by telephone to representation at Administrative Fair Hearings and state and/or federal court
- Identify systemic problems that affect clients' rights and address these challenges through affirmative advocacy, impact litigation, and policy work
- Collaborate and coordinate with NLS staff and community partners to assure effective referrals and holistic service delivery
- Conduct community outreach, education, and training
- Develop relationships and engage in collaborations with a range of public and private community partners including governmental agencies, courts, and community-based organizations to ensure integrative services and to address systemic barriers facing our client community
- Demonstrate cultural competency to work with low-income clients across the spectrum of diversity, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, immigrant status, religious identity, physical and mental disabilities, and those with limited English proficiency.

### **Core Competencies**

- Commitment to bringing justice to low-income WNY residents
- Cultural humility in working with clients across the spectrum of diversity, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, immigrant status, religious identity, physical and mental disabilities, and limited English proficiency
- Strong personal work ethic and ability to organize time, manage diverse activities, and meet critical deadlines with minimal supervision

### **Qualifications**

- J.D. and NYS Bar Admission (considered if bar exam passed and admission pending)
- Previous experience working with low-income and/or underserved communities *preferred*
- Demonstrated commitment and sensitivity to low-income and underserved communities
- Second language fluency *preferred*

### **Salary**

**Up to \$75,500 with generous benefits, paid time off and opportunity for student loan forgiveness.**

**How To Apply:** *NLS is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and welcomes all to apply. Employer recruits without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national or ethnic origin, citizenship, ancestry, sex, gender (including identity or expression), sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, or protected veteran status and any such candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.* To apply, please send cover letter, resume, writing sample and 3 references to [HR@nls.org](mailto:HR@nls.org) by October 15th. No phone calls please.