



IMMEDIATE JOB OPENING QUEENS LEGAL SERVICES SEEKS DIRECTOR OF DISABILITY ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION RIGHTS

Queens Legal Services (QLS) seeks a Director for its Disability Advocacy (DAP) and Education Rights Projects (ERP) in our vibrant community-based civil legal advocacy organization in Queens.

About Us

Founded in 1967, QLS seeks equal access to justice for all low-income residents of Queens through a range of legal advocacy, education and community partnerships. We provide free legal counseling, representation and referrals in civil matters involving the essentials of life including housing, public and disability benefits, domestic violence prevention, consumer and homeowner protections, access to education and employment rights to eligible low-income individuals and families. We work with our clients and partners to identify and address root causes for systemic inequalities in Queens and throughout New York City. We provide civil legal services from our Community Law Center (Center) in Jamaica and at the Queens Family Justice Center (QFJC) where we are the founding on-site community partner. We are part of a network of local programs that make up Legal Services NYC (LSNYC), the largest free civil legal services provider in the United States.

The DAP project assists low-income residents of Queens who seek federal Social Security benefits based on mental and/or physical disabilities. The Project assists clients with case development, representation at administrative hearings, appeals in federal court, and issues that arise after an award of benefits. We also collaborate with other providers and community partners to develop and implement strategies to remove systemic barriers to disability benefits. The Unit works with people with a wide range of disabilities, including home-bound clients, clients with mental illness and clients with complex treatment schedules. The Unit's highly qualified advocates are experts in assisting clients obtain disability benefits.

The ERP project helps with the educational needs of all children, with a focus on children with special needs, and their families. Attorneys investigate and develop disability, school suspension and special education claims and represent students at suspension hearings, impartial hearings, and proceedings before the Office of State Review, and federal court.

The Director will work to support the existing advocacy efforts of both units as well as be responsible for broadening the work to address systemic barriers facing the clients of these units.

Responsibilities

The Director will be responsible for working with staff to develop and implement a strategic vision for the work of the units. The Director will also devise creative, policy and high impact advocacy strategies to address systemic barriers facing people with disabilities and children with special needs. The Director will supervise attorneys and



paralegals on a range of litigation including administrative proceedings, appeals and affirmative litigation in State and Federal Court. The Director will also be responsible for strengthening relationships with community partners and elected officials; addressing systemic disability issues; and handling administrative and grant responsibilities. The Director will be expected to work collaboratively with and provide leadership for LSNYC's city-wide disability and education rights practices.

Experience and Qualifications

We seek an attorney admitted to the New York State Bar with:

- A demonstrated expertise in Social Security law and practice, including experience with administrative proceedings before the Social Security Administration and litigation in federal court;
- At least 7 years of experience in federal court practice;
- A demonstrated expertise in disability and special education law and policy;
- A demonstrated passion for social justice and a commitment to working with diverse, low-income communities;
- Excellent analytical, and written and oral communication skills;
- Strong interpersonal and organizational skills;
- Ability to supervise and train a diverse team of attorneys, paralegals, administrative staff, fellows and volunteers in a fast paced and high-volume practice;
- Basic knowledge of current technology in a law practice; and
- Fluency in a second language (preferred).

How to Apply

Applicants should **email** a cover letter, resume, names of three references and two recent writing samples to jobs@queenslegalservices.org. Please write "**DAP_ERP Director**" in the subject line of the email. Only candidates selected for interviews will be contacted. No telephone calls please.

Salary is commensurate with experience. Benefits include excellent health and dental insurance, an employer contribution to a pre-tax 403(b) pension plan, and generous leave time.

QLS is an equal opportunity employer. It is an organization committed to race, gender and economic justice in our work and within our workplace. QLS staff are members of the LSSA/NOLSW UAW Local 2320. People of color, women, people with disabilities, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people, and people over the age of 40 are welcome and encouraged to apply.

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