

Hiscock Legal Aid Society Seeks an Executive Director/President/CEO

Hiscock Legal Aid Society (“HLA”), a non-profit agency located in Syracuse, New York, seeks an Executive Director/President/CEO (“Executive Director”) to succeed its current Executive Director, Linda Gehron, who has announced her intention to retire at the end of January 2022.

HLA provides high-quality, high-volume, cost-effective legal assistance to low-income residents of Central New York and the surrounding region, primarily Onondaga County. For more than 70 years, HLA has been dedicated to the principle that no one in its community shall be denied justice because of a lack of means. HLA provides representation in civil and mandated family court cases, as well as criminal and family court appeals, parole revocation, and extradition cases.

About the Position

The next Executive Director of HLA will lead a strong, client-centered organization with a dedicated Board of Directors and management team, and skilled legal and administrative personnel who consistently deliver high-quality, compassionate, and effective representation for clients.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Executive Director

- Serve as the public face of HLA and provide leadership in local and state civil legal aid and criminal defense networks; in legislative, administrative, and private forums; in the community; and with the private bar.
- Continue to grow and diversify private and governmental funding, with responsibility for all major grant applications.
- Lead the HLA management team and promote collaboration and teamwork among all of the HLA programs, personnel, and services.
- Promote and contribute to the professional development and job satisfaction of staff, positively impacting retention.
- Think creatively about gaps in civil and indigent defense services and work in partnership with others at the local, regional, and state levels to close those gaps.
- Lead and promote collaboration with other civil and criminal legal providers and human services organizations in the region and throughout the state.
- Continue technological innovations that enhance staff efficiency and effectiveness.

Qualifications of the Executive Director

- Juris Doctor degree and New York law license (or ability to obtain New York license by waiver)
- Minimum of 10 years overall professional experience, including substantial experience in the practice of law and in the management of a law practice and/or non-profit organization; legal aid or other public interest experience preferred.
- Passion for the mission of HLA, evidenced by a demonstrated commitment to both civil legal services and indigent defense
- Demonstrated management experience involving staff supervision, financial oversight, reporting, and budget development
- Experience in compliance with grant, contract, and legal requirements
- Excellent leadership and communication skills, positive leadership style, collaborative approach, and “big picture” vision
- Enthusiasm for developing relationships and for resource/fund development activities
- Commitment to diversity in the workplace; capacity to foster relationships with diverse groups of people
- Commitment to the use of technology to improve and enhance legal services and job satisfaction
- Experience and skill in engaging with an active board of directors
- Maturity, sense of humor, emotional intelligence

About HLA

Mission: HLA promotes the fundamental right of every person to equal justice under the law by providing high-quality legal assistance to individuals and families in need in Onondaga County and the surrounding region.

Vision: Recognized as the most trusted source for legal assistance to those in need, HLA will ensure that no one in the community is denied justice because of a lack of means.

Board of Directors: HLA has a 25-member board of directors that meets bi-monthly. All board members serve on one or more active committees.

Legal and Administrative Personnel: HLA employs a team of 75 attorneys, legal assistants, and administrative staff in its offices in downtown Syracuse, New York.

Programs and Services:

Civil Program

The HLA Civil Program provides legal representation in divorce, domestic violence, housing/eviction defense, foreclosure, and unemployment insurance benefit matters in Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse court and administrative proceedings.

Family Court Program

Representation is provided for adults in Onondaga County Family Court for “mandated cases” in which New York State law requires the assignment of counsel to those who cannot afford an attorney. Mandated cases include abuse/neglect, custody/visitation, termination of parental rights, paternity, family offense and support violations, usually assigned to HLA by the Court. Some clients work both with a staff attorney and an HLA licensed master social worker to receive both legal assistance and social work services or referrals for such services as mental health or substance abuse treatment or housing assistance.

Immigration Program

With grant support, HLA is able to provide immigration legal services to three regions of New York State (18 counties) in Central New York, the Mohawk Valley, and Northern New York. Services include assistance with naturalization, adjustment of status, family reunification, asylum, employment authorization, travel documents, temporary protected status, and deportation and removal defense.

Appeals Program

HLA represents persons on appeal from criminal convictions and from Family court judgments. Cases are assigned by the Appellate Division of the Fourth Judicial Department and the New York State Court of Appeals.

Parole

HLA represents parolees in parole revocation proceedings brought by the New York State Division of Parole. Cases are assigned by the Onondaga County Court.

Extradition

HLA provides representation in Onondaga County Court for persons facing extradition to another state to answer criminal charges. Cases are assigned by the Onondaga County Court.

Application Process

Applications will be accepted until August 20, 2021. To receive full consideration, please include the following:

- Cover letter expressing in detail your interest in the position, your qualifications, and what you hope to contribute to the organization's future;
- Current resume; and
- Names and contact information for three professional references.

Application materials should be submitted to hlasearch@o2consult.org. Questions about the position or process should be submitted in writing to that email address; a representative of the search committee will respond.

Compensation of the Executive Director is commensurate with experience and must be approved by the HLA Board of Directors. The search committee expects to make a hiring decision by October 1, 2021 and to have the successful candidate join the organization in early November 2021.

HLA is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes applications from all qualified candidates.