

The Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc.
Chief Attorney – Appeals and Post-Conviction Unit

The Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo seeks to provide access to justice and due process to the most vulnerable individuals, children and families in the Western New York community through quality legal representation and assistance.

Definition: Under the direction of the Chief Operating Officer (“CEO”), performs a variety of appellate, administrative and supervisory activities in the area of criminal law; predominantly the perfection of indigent criminal appeals on behalf of individuals convicted in various counties in Western New York; performs related duties as required.

Distinguishing Characteristics: The Chief Attorney is responsible for supervising every aspect of the appeals assigned to the Appeals and Post-Conviction Unit (“Unit”), from overseeing the communication with clients, to important public outreach activities with the legal community, to coordinating moot court sessions for staff attorneys, to monitoring the gathering of documents for records on appeal, to overseeing the proper filing of pleadings and briefs with both the Appellate Division and the NYS Court of Appeals. The Chief is also responsible for monitoring the investigation and filing of post-conviction motions handled by the Unit, including those seeking the vacatur of judgments and extending the time to file notices of appeal.

Examples of Duties:

1. Participates in contract negotiations with municipalities and not-for-profit indigent defense providers in order to secure work for the Unit.
2. Handles his or her own case load, taking on all of the duties that a staff attorney has in representing a client, including the drafting of the brief, conducting oral argument and visiting clients in prison.
3. Supervises the managing attorney, all staff attorneys and all administrative personnel within the Unit.
4. Coordinates with other Units in the Bureau regarding legal projects.
5. Supervises the staff attorneys’ handling of their cases, including, but not limited to, putting together the record on appeal by securing the necessary documents (and the review of the record on appeal), the drafting of the brief, legal research, communication with the client, oral argument, the drafting of motions, administrative issues that arise in the filing of briefs, the securing of stipulations to the record on appeal with the prosecution, the pace at which progress is being made on each case and any other human resources-related issue that arises.
6. Conducts monthly meetings with Unit and weekly meetings with individual attorneys.
7. Submits a written monthly report to the CEO and answers any inquiries from the CEO; while keeping the CEO up to date on the happenings of the Unit whenever appropriate.
8. Keeps abreast of recent developments in criminal law and provides case law updates to the Unit and to other Units at the Bureau.
9. Participates, often in a leadership role, in statewide and countywide bar association activities in order to further the interests of the Bureau, our indigent clients and the system as a whole.
10. Is responsible for assuring that each assigned client of the Unit receives “meaningful representation” consistent with the state and federal constitutions.

11. Reviews drafts of every pleading, motion and brief that is filed in court by the Unit.
12. Communicates with clients and their families.
13. Communicates regularly with representatives of the Appellate Division and trial judges regarding the administration of our appeals and post-conviction work.
13. Oversees the administration of all correspondence in and out of the Unit, as well as the securing of extensions for the perfection of appeals from the Appellate Division.
14. Makes sure that the Unit disposes a satisfactory number of cases per calendar year, the number to be determined by the CEO.
15. Oversees pro bono work conducted by outside counsel.

Employment Standards: Active membership in the New York State Bar; and

1. Five years of experience as an attorney in the practice of criminal appeals preferred; or
2. A combination of training, education and experience that is equivalent to the above employment standard and that provides the required knowledge and abilities.
3. Managerial experience preferred.
4. Computer proficiency, including, but not limited to, word processing skills and computerized legal research.
5. Reliable transportation and license to operate a motor vehicle in New York State or demonstrated capacity to meet the transportation needs of the position.

Knowledge of: all statutory laws related to practicing criminal law in New York State, including the Penal Law, Criminal Procedure Law, Corrections Law, and Judiciary Law; trial and appellate court procedures; legal research methods; rules of evidence; standard legal office practice and procedures; and ethical and professional rules of conduct.

Ability to: effectively supervise diverse personalities, perform all administrative responsibilities in monitoring cases, as well as to perfect criminal appeals; work independently; perform legal research; analyze and apply legal principles, facts, evidence and precedents in legal problems; present statements of law, facts and arguments clearly, logically and forcefully; both in written and oral format; maintain confidentiality and objectivity; manage a caseload; operate personal computer and computer applications used by the Units; establish and maintain effective working relationships with those encountered in the course of work; and interact well with the public.

This position is full-time.

Salary Range: \$120,000 - \$145,000, depending on experience

Comprehensive benefits package including medical, dental, and vision benefits is available to you and your dependents. In addition, we offer generous vacation, personal, and sick time. Other benefits available to you are long-term disability insurance, supplemental term life insurance, parking expense reimbursement plan, transit plan, a flexible spending account, and a 401(k) retirement plan.

Many of our attorneys apply for New York State Higher Education Services Corporation District Attorney and Indigent Legal Services Attorney Loan Forgiveness Program and the Federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program

The Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc. values Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Minorities / Females / Disabled / Veterans / Sexual Orientation / Gender Identity

Please send your cover letter, at least three references, resume, and writing sample to resume@legalaidbuffalo.org or The Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc., Attention: Human Resources, 290 Main Street, Suite 400, Buffalo, NY 14202 by July 31, 2022.

Interviews will be conducted on a rolling basis.

For more information about life in Buffalo, please visit the following:

<http://info.buffaloniagara.org/blog/top-reasons-to-live-in-buffalo>

<https://teleport.org/cities/buffalo/>

<https://www.buffalospree.com/>

<https://www.mymovingreviews.com/move/moving-to-buffalo-ny/>

<https://www.movoto.com/guide/buffalo-ny/move-to-buffalo/>