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Staff Attorney – Decarceration Project #23-168



New York, NY

LOCATION STATE

PRACTICE

Criminal

Job Title

Staff Attorney – Decarceration Project

Job Description

The Law Reform Unit of the Legal Aid Society’s Criminal Defense Practice is seeking experienced attorneys for its Decarceration Project. The Decarceration Project is a first-of-its-kind unit that reimagines how public defenders confront pretrial detention. Through strategic litigation, policy advocacy, and early intervention, the Decarceration Project fights to ensure as many of our clients return to their communities after arrest as possible.

Attorneys in the Decarceration Project are the Society’s in-house experts on bail and pretrial detention. They directly litigate pretrial detention matters with the potential for broader systemic impact, while also providing complex release advocacy and strategic support, drafting model papers and guides to enhance the practice of trial attorneys, and monitoring pretrial detention trends to inform broader policy and systemic litigation priorities.

Attorneys are assigned to a particular borough office and serve as the primary resource for litigating pretrial detention of the Society’s clients in their assigned borough. When needed, Staff Attorneys assigned to a particular borough may also be called on to provide assistance and client services in other boroughs. All members of this citywide unit work together to develop, implement, and coordinate Society policy and litigation strategy concerning bail and other pretrial detention matters.

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andidates will have a deep understanding of criminal trial practice in New York City and robust knowledge of New York's bail statute, with extensive on-the-ground experience in New York City criminal courts. They will have a demonstrated commitment to the liberation of incarcerated individuals.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES

- Work closely with trial attorneys, social workers, and paraprofessionals to advocate for the release of clients who are being detained pretrial in New York City jails
- Challenge adverse pretrial detention decisions using bail review hearings, writs of habeas corpus, appeals, and other strategic litigation and advocacy
- Conduct trainings on the law and practice relevant to pretrial advocacy in the assigned borough
- Develop advisories, model templates, and resource guides that elevate the Legal Aid Society's practice
- Monitor changes in the practices of the assigned borough, and work with colleagues in the Special Litigation Unit to identify the need for systemic litigation or policy reform
- Inform discussions with system stakeholders regarding pre-trial detention issues
- Timely collect data to inform strategic litigation priorities and to fulfill reporting requirements to funders
- Anticipate and respond to novel legal issues relevant to pretrial detention
- Other duties as assigned

Required Documents

Please submit these documents as a single combined PDF when you apply via the LAS (Legal Aid Society) Recruitment Portal.

- **Cover letter**
- **Resume**
- **Writing sample**

Deadline: Open Until Filled, Unless Date Is Posted Below (Deadline is 11:59 PM EST For Date Listed)

Location

Manhattan - Legal Aid Society Headquarters

Requirements

- Admission to the New York State Bar
- Minimum 5 years' experience in trial level criminal defense; additional experience in juvenile, family, immigration, or appellate defense a plus
- Demonstrative understanding of the various institutional and societal barriers to pretrial release
- Unwavering commitment to eradicating pretrial detention
- Comprehensive expertise in New York's bail statute and the constitutional law pertaining to pre-trial detention; working familiarity with habeas law a plus
- Experience with and passion for litigating issues involving pretrial detention
- Excellent written and oral advocacy skills
- Ability to prioritize tasks and manage one's time effectively to accomplish shared team goals



- Ability to interface professionally and effectively with judges, district attorneys and correctional personnel
- Ability to foster constructive, respectful working relationships with colleagues internal and external to the unit
- Enthusiasm for innovative approaches to release advocacy and the ongoing growth and development of the project
- Experience in policy development, coalition work, and legislative advocacy is a plus but not required

SALARY TRANSPARENCY

The posting reflects the range of potential salaries for the role. The specific salary offers will be dependent on candidate qualifications, including collectively bargained salary steps for unionized roles.



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Salary Range/ Salary: \$76,407, to \$132,914

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SALARY AND BENEFITS

The leadership of The Legal Aid Society believes in attracting and retaining exceptional talent committed to serving our clients. We offer a generous benefits package including health insurance, paid vacation, disability, and life insurance, and more. Salaries for our unionized jobs are governed by our Collective Bargaining Agreement. Please visit our Careers page for additional information. Salary and benefits information will be available to applicants, when and if, an offer is made.

OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The leadership of The Legal Aid Society is committed to a work culture of zealous advocacy, respect, diversity and inclusion, client-oriented defense, access to justice and excellent representation. We are dedicated to building a strong professional relationship with each of our clients, to understanding their diverse circumstances, and to meeting their needs. Our ability to achieve these goals depends on the efforts of all of us.

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HOW TO APPLY

All applications must be completed online. We do not accept paper submissions. Please visit our Careers Page to review all current job postings, and instructions on the application process. For technical difficulties or questions regarding this posting, please email jobpostquestions@legal-aid.org (<mailto:jobpostquestions@legal-aid.org>).

As an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Employer, The Legal Aid Society prohibits discriminatory employment actions against and treatment of its employees and applicants for employment based on actual or perceived race or color, size (including bone structure, body size, height, shape, and weight), religion or creed, alienage or citizenship status, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity (one's internal deeply-held sense of one's gender which may be the same or different from one's sex assigned at birth); gender expression (the representation of gender as expressed through, for example, one's name, choice of pronouns, clothing, haircut, behavior, voice, or body characteristics; gender expression may not conform to traditional gender-based stereotypes assigned to specific gender identities), disability, marital status, relationship and family structure (including domestic partnerships, polyamorous families and individuals, chosen family, platonic co-parents, and multigenerational families), genetic information or predisposing genetic characteristics, military status, domestic violence victim status, arrest or pre-employment conviction record, credit history, unemployment status, caregiver status, salary history, or any other characteristic protected by law.



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EEO is The Law - click here for more information (https://www.eeoc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-10/EEOC_KnowYourRights_screen_reader_10_20.pdf)



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The Legal Aid Society is an Equal Opportunity Employer -- Women, People of Color, Members of LGBTQ+ Community, Veterans and people with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

We endeavor to make this site accessible to any and all users. If you would like to contact us regarding the accessibility of our website or need assistance completing the application process, please contact us at: JobPostQuestions@legal-aid.org (<mailto:JobPostQuestions@legal-aid.org>), Monday through Friday 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

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