



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT
Staff Attorney Disability Advocacy Program (DAP)- Bath, NY

FULL TIME STAFF ATTORNEY
DISABILITY ADVOCACY PROGRAM (DAP)

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc. ® (LawNY®) is a not-for-profit law firm that provides free civil legal services to low-income clients in a 14 county area of Western New York, the Finger Lakes, and the Southern Tier. LawNY® has seven fully staffed field offices in Bath, Elmira, Geneva, Ithaca, Jamestown, Olean and Rochester, satellite offices in Lakeville and Lyons, and a business office in Rochester.

LawNY® has been providing high quality legal representation for 54 years, and today has over 180 employees, including attorneys, paralegals, and a legal support team who work closely across areas of specialization to bring a holistic approach to addressing legal issues affecting our clients and community. While our services are always expanding, our core priorities remain intact.

LawNY® is committed to equitable inclusion across race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ability, sex, religion, economic circumstances, ethnicity, national origin, and culture. We are increasingly committed to creating a law firm where race equity, diversity and cultural competency are integral components of our work, from client advocacy to internal operations.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Bath office of Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc. ® has an immediate opening for a full-time Staff Attorney in our Disability Advocacy Program (DAP). The staff attorney's primary responsibility will be to represent claimants who have been denied Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and/or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. This work will include administrative appeals within the Social Security Administration's appeals process, as well as litigation in federal court. Our objective is to have the position filled immediately.

We expect those who fill this position will grow and adapt their practice to the needs of the community and the organization. The candidate must have the caring, patience, and emotional maturity to help low-income people overcome crisis situations.

Staff Attorneys at LawNY® provide comprehensive legal services to eligible clients and the ideal candidate should have a strong understanding of how civil legal issues affecting low-income communities intersect with social and economic justice. Staff Attorneys play a critical role in realizing LawNY®'s vision of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Every Staff Attorney is expected to actively engage in learning and becoming increasingly skilled in practice that supports this vision.

ABOUT BATH

The Bath office serves Allegany and Steuben Counties which are located in the southern part of the Finger Lakes region of Western New York, an area noted for its beautiful lakes, scenery, and quality agriculture. Bath is home to the longest running county fair in the US and is abound with historic buildings and architecture as well as a grand town square where people still gather for farm markets and live music.

Bath is part of the Tiffany & Treasures Trail which includes local pottery studios and shops and features the breathtaking First Presbyterian Church of Bath designed corner-to-corner with Louis Comfort Tiffany stained glass windows and fixtures. A short distance from Bath is picturesque Keuka Lake, nicknamed "Lady of the Lakes," ideal for swimming, fishing, and boating. Notable nearby museums include Corning Museum of Glass, Rockwell Art Museum, and the Glenn H. Curtiss Motorcycle and Aviation Museum.

Bath has a relatively low cost of living and an abundance of public transportation options in town with a median home price of \$147,600 and 1 bedroom apartments available for around \$710/month.

QUALIFICATIONS *These are the basic requirements for the position.*

- Admitted to practice and in good standing in New York State, eligible for admission without examination, or willing to take the next available Bar examination.
- Demonstrated commitment of service to low-income people.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Ability to work under deadlines and manage multiple tasks.

RESPONSIBILITIES *These are the most significant responsibilities and primary functions of the position.*

- Maintain a full-time caseload representing low-income, disabled clients at all levels of SSA's administrative appeals process to include representation at field offices, at the Reconsideration appeal level, at Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) hearings, and at the Appeals Council, as well as in federal court on appeal to the U.S. District Court.

- Develop specialized knowledge of SSI and SSDI law, administrative law, and federal court practice, as it relates to claims for SSI/SSDI disability benefits.
- Collaborate with other LawNY® advocates, paralegals and support staff; human services providers; non-profit and community organizations; and client or other advocacy groups to address poverty-related legal issues, including providing community legal education.
- Coordinate with referral sources and assist with grant reporting requirements.
- Supervise case work, legal research, and client communications assigned to support staff, paralegals, interns and volunteers.
- Interact respectfully with clients from a wide range of backgrounds, with an awareness of the importance of cultural competence and humility.
- Contribute to a safe and healthy work environment for fellow employees.
- Cooperate in all grant reporting requirements, program reporting, timekeeping, file maintenance, case closing and compliance review.
- Maintain a high level of professional competence through attendance of training sessions, seminars and conferences and individual efforts to keep abreast of current developments in the area of poverty law and the application of an equity lens to client service.

ADDITIONAL TRAITS AND SKILLS *These are the traits, attributes, attitudes, and skills that speak to the candidate's ability to succeed in the position. While no one candidate will possess all of the qualities listed, the ideal candidate will have many of these qualities. LawNY® encourages each candidate to think about their own personal knowledge, skills, and experience, as well as professional skills and experience in relation to this list.*

- Experience incorporating an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens into legal practice.
- An understanding of the concepts of structural and institutional racism and their impact on underserved and underrepresented communities.
- Strong interpersonal skills, including a commitment to providing trauma-informed services.
- Lived experience with our client communities.
- True fluency in a language other than English that is spoken by our clients.

COMPENSATION

Salary is dependent on experience and based on a pay scale with annual increments. The beginning salary for a Staff Attorney is \$58,000 and the salary for a Staff Attorney with five years of experience is \$64,000. LawNY® staff may also qualify for public interest law school loan forgiveness programs.

LawNY® provides an excellent package of fringe benefits including 94% employer paid health insurance with significant HSA contributions, 100% employer paid dental and disability insurance, vision coverage, and \$50,000 automatic life insurance as well as generous leave provisions including, in the first year of employment, 20 days of vacation plus 13.5 holidays and two floating holidays. Employees also receive 12 sick days and five personal days per year. New parents receive 20 days of paid new parent leave.

LawNY® is committed to providing a **work-life balance** to their employees. We encourage and support a 35 hour work week to ensure our employees have this balance. We also offer a **remote work policy** where new staff are able to work from home up to 3 days per week during their 6 month probationary period with manager approval, as their case load permits. This increases to 5 days per week once successfully finished with a probationary period with manager approval, as their case load permits.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply, submit your cover letter and resume through LawNY®'s BambooHR platform, found [here](#) and at www.lawny.org/Employment. When outlining work experience on a resume, candidates are requested to label each position as full-time or part-time and describe unpaid volunteer/internships as such. If you advance in the hiring process, we will request that you provide three (3) professional references to contact.

To promote social justice and achieve our mission, LawNY® is committed to maintaining a diverse staff and creating an inclusive and respectful workplace. In your cover letter, please also include an explanation of how you think that your lived and/or professional experience or background has prepared you to contribute to support a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion at LawNY®.

Questions or Accommodations? Contact Sandra Coyne at scoyne@lawny.org

Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc. (LawNY®) is an equal opportunity employer.

LawNY® strongly encourages applications from Black, Indigenous and People of Color, women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, people with disabilities, and persons from other

underrepresented groups whose background may contribute to working in and sustaining an environment that enables staff and clients to feel empowered, valued, respected, and

safe. LawNY® welcomes applications regardless of race, color, religion, sex, gender

identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or any other consideration protected by law.

This position is considered Exempt pursuant to the Fair Labor Standards Act.