

# Staff Attorney - Housing Protection and Community Reinvestment

Staff Attorney - Bath, New York (Hybrid)

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Department

Staff Attorney

Employment Type

Full-Time

Minimum Experience

Entry-level

Compensation

No experience: \$70,000; 30 years experience: \$106,100

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## POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Bath office of LawNY® seeks to fill an immediate opening for a full time Staff Attorney working regionally on housing preservation and community reinvestment advocacy. The Staff Attorney will provide direct legal services across a range of housing cases, including representation of low-income tenants in landlord-tenant matters and representation of homeowners in mortgage and tax foreclosure litigation, Chapter 13 bankruptcy proceedings, and land contract/rent-to-own disputes. The Staff Attorney may also handle government benefits, substandard conditions issues, and subsidized housing matters as they relate to homelessness prevention cases. This position is a quasi-regional position to represent tenants in Steuben and Allegany Counties, and homeowners primarily in Steuben and Allegany Counties, but with a few cases representing homeowners in Chautauqua and Cattaraugus Counties, as well as to provide regional CRA advocacy.

Additionally, the Staff Attorney will have the opportunity to participate in a special regional project focused on advocacy under the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) in Western New York. This project emphasizes advocating alongside other organizations and agencies for greater investment in regional community development projects (such as affordable housing) and working with regional banks to increase rural residents' access to financial services, low-interest mortgages, and loans. The CRA project is aimed at reversing the impacts of redlining and disinvestment in low-income Western New York communities and communities of color. This innovative project allows the staff attorney to advocate for long-range solutions to root cause issues that impact LawNY's client communities.

We encourage applicants with a wide range of substantive legal experience and interests to apply. 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.

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

- Admitted to practice and in good standing in New York State.
- Demonstrated commitment of service to low-income people.

**COMPENSATION PACKAGE**

The beginning salary for a Staff Attorney at LawNY with no experience is \$70,000 and the salary for a Staff Attorney with thirty years of experience is \$106,100. Salary will be based on experience. LawNY is a qualifying employer for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program(PSLF).

LawNY® provides an excellent package of fringe benefits including:

- 94% Employer paid Medical Premium with 100% Employer paid in-network deductible
- 100% Employer paid Dental Insurance
- 100% Employer paid Life Insurance
- 100% Employer paid Enhanced Short-term Disability
- 100% Employer paid Long-term Disability
- Vision Insurance
- 20 Paid Vacation days per year
- 12 Sick days per year
- 5 Personal days per year
- 13.5 Holidays plus 2 floating Holidays per year
- 35-Hour Work Week
- Hybrid Work Schedule (new staff are able to work from home up to 3 days per week. After 6 months, this increases to 5 days per week with Manager approval, as workload permits)

*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, veteran status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, genetic information or any other consideration protected by law.*

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

- Maintain a full-time caseload representing eligible clients served by our Housing and Homeownership Protection Units
- Develop and maintain specialized knowledge in housing matters, particularly: mortgage and tax foreclosures, manufactured home parks, land contracts, landlord-tenant, habitability issues, subsidized housing, bankruptcy, government benefits, and local community reinvestment issues.
- Provide legal services to low income clients and client groups regarding these matters including advice, negotiation, litigation and administrative advocacy.
- Interact respectfully with clients from a wide range of backgrounds, with an awareness of the importance of cultural competence and humility.
- Collaborate with other LawNY® advocates, human services providers, non-profit organizations and community groups as well as the courts, administrative

tribunals and the private bar to address legal problems within our community, including providing community legal education.

- 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.*

- Litigation and advocacy experience in state and/or federal court and/or administrative forums within at least one related area of poverty law, especially landlord-tenant, foreclosure, bankruptcy, homelessness prevention, fair housing, and/or government benefits.
- Familiarity with and interest in community lawyering, systemic advocacy, and equitable community development
- 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.

## **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.

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.

Research shows that women and people from under-represented groups often apply to jobs only if they meet 100% of the desired competencies. We encourage you to apply even if you do not believe you meet all the desired competencies.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

To apply, submit your cover letter, resume, and three professional references through LawNY®'s BambooHR platform found [here](#). 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. The application for this position is open until filled. 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 Michelle Grillone at [mgrillone@lawny.org](mailto:mgrillone@lawny.org)

[BambooHR](#)