JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Social Worker
Immigrants’ Rights Project (IRP)

Public Counsel’s Immigrants’ Rights Project (IRP) seeks a full-time, bilingual (Spanish/English) social worker to join our Refugee Families program. This position is currently grant funded for one year starting upon hire. This is an exempt position.

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

Public Counsel is the nation’s largest pro bono law firm and functions as the public interest arm of the Los Angeles County and Beverly Hills Bar Associations. It is also the Southern California affiliate of the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights under Law. Public Counsel provides representation to low-income individuals and non-profits in the areas of consumer fraud, immigration, homelessness prevention, children’s rights, community development, veteran’s benefits, and appellate law. Public Counsel also brings impact litigation on a range of issues both locally and nationally.

Public Counsel’s IRP provides direct legal representation to non-citizens seeking asylum, special immigrant juvenile status, VAWA, T and U visas, and other relief in immigration court. In addition to direct representation, IRP engages in advocacy at the local and national levels, represents detained immigrants, recruits and trains hundreds of pro bono attorneys each year, handles appeals before the Board of Immigration Appeals and Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, and conducts impact litigation. For 30 years, IRP has been at the forefront of protecting the rights of immigrants in Los Angeles.

Public Counsel follows all emergency state and local orders arising from the current COVID-19 crisis. Though generally this position is office based, currently all staff must work remotely from their homes. Public Counsel will assess when the physical office will reopen in a manner consistent with public health and local and state emergency orders.

JOB SUMMARY

The social worker will join the Refugee Families team within our Immigrants’ Rights Project (IRP). The Refugee Families team’s clients are families from Central America and Mexico with pending cases before the immigration courts and USCIS. The team is interdisciplinary, values each member’s contribution, and promotes a coordinated effort to provide client-centered legal services. The position will require a blend of micro and mezzo social work practice by supporting clients as they move through their legal process.
and connecting clients to the services that they need in order to thrive. The social worker will maintain a caseload of about ten families and provide additional social work support to other IRP clients on an as-needed basis. Specific tasks include conducting bio-psycho-social assessments of clients, linking clients to appropriate services (educational, medical, mental health, etc.), accompanying clients to court appearances (immigration, criminal, and juvenile delinquency hearings), meetings and appointments (such as helping clients enroll in Medi-Cal and other benefits), and facilitating client-centered services. The social worker will also provide case management support to attorneys (both IRP staff attorneys and outside volunteer attorneys) and other members of IRP to help the client maneuver the immigration system. The social worker will develop and sustain community relationships with service organizations and will represent IRP at community and coalition meetings (at this time, all such meetings are conducted virtually). When needed, the social worker will provide crisis intervention. The supervising attorney of the Refugee Families team will supervise the social worker. Please note that Public Counsel is unable to provide clinical supervision for licensing. The social worker may be asked to provide input, advice, and guidance on development of internal documents to ensure that the work continues to be client-centered.

**JOB REQUIREMENTS:**

- Master’s Degree in Social Work (MSW);
- Prior experience assisting immigrants strongly preferred, and non-profit experience a plus;
- Excellent verbal, written, and phone skills in both English and Spanish required;
- Experience working with trauma survivors, including children, strongly preferred;
- Experience and/or openness to working with clients facing delinquency or criminal charges;
- Attention to detail, outstanding organizational skills, ability to multitask;
- Ability to work well under pressure and to be a self-starter;
- Ability to work in teams and interest in working in a multidisciplinary environment;
- Ability and willingness to travel to meet with the clients in their homes or other safe locations (only if permitted and consistent with public health and orders by state and local authorities) to provide support or conduct assessments when needed (driver license preferred);
- Commitment to immigrants’ rights and the mission of Public Counsel.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE**

Deadline to apply: Candidates are encouraged to apply immediately, as we anticipate hiring within weeks of this posting.

**BENEFITS**

Public Counsel offers a competitive benefits package including: (1) medical, dental, and vision coverage with both HMO and PPO options, (2) the option to enroll in a Flexible Spending Account, (3) a 403(b) retirement plan with elective contribution and an employer contribution after a year of employments, as well as (4) employer-paid life insurance and disability plans.
TO APPLY

Please email cover letter, resume, and at least two references to Katka Werth, Supervising Senior Staff Attorney, Immigrants’ Rights Project (irpjob@publiccounsel.org).

Only those applicants selected for interviews will be contacted.
No phone calls please.

Public Counsel is an Equal Opportunity Employer

All qualified applicants shall receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ethnic group identification, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, political affiliation, condition of physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation, in accordance with requirements of Federal and State laws.

All qualified applicants with criminal histories will be considered in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Los Angeles Fair Chance Initiative for Hiring.