JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Attorney, Education Practice Team
Children’s Rights Project

Public Counsel’s Children’s Rights Project (CRP) seeks a full-time staff attorney to join our Education Practice team, which provides direct legal representation to families of students encountering special education and disciplinary issues and engages in local and statewide policy advocacy to create equitable educational opportunities for all students in California. This position will focus primarily on supporting our local and statewide policy work.

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

Public Counsel is the largest pro bono public interest law firm in the country. Founded in 1970, it is dedicated to advancing equal justice under law and addressing economic, racial, and other inequities by delivering free legal and social services to the most vulnerable members of our community. Public Counsel operates eight legal projects: Children’s Rights, Community Development, Consumer Rights, Homelessness Prevention, Immigrants’ Rights, Veterans’ Rights, the Audrey Irmas Project for Women & Girls’ Rights, and our impact litigation project, Opportunity Under Law. Public Counsel has a full-time staff of over 140. We seek to have a racially inclusive staff.

Public Counsel’s Children’s Rights Project (CRP) serves children, youth, and their families on a variety of legal issues, including probate legal guardianship, public benefits, and adoption. The Education Practice Team is part of the larger Children’s Rights Project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Education Rights Practice Team is an interdisciplinary team that combines legal advocacy with social work support to address racial and economic inequalities and confront the school to prison pipeline and the opportunity gap for students of color. Our direct services prioritize representation of our most marginalized students, including students of color, students who are being pushed out of comprehensive schools, and students who are involved in the dependency or delinquency court systems. We leverage what we learn in our direct service cases and from our community partners to inform reform efforts seeking both local and statewide education solutions. We apply a racial justice and human rights framework as well as a systems-change approach to our advocacy. We believe in an education system that honors
the dignity of all students and their families —where access to education is valued as a human right and students are free from discrimination and criminalization in the school setting.

Our focus areas include:

- Advocating for effective, research-based reforms to end the school to prison pipeline;
- Reforming education conditions for youth who are incarcerated;
- Ending racial and other discrimination in school policies and practices; and
- Expanding educational opportunities for all students.

**JOB SUMMARY**

Public Counsel is currently seeking a staff attorney for our Education Practice Team who is excited and able to work within and build diverse coalitions, analyze data, draft policy documents, survey instruments, reports and community tools, identify systemic problems and solutions, and work well independently and collaboratively. The attorney will help lead the project’s effort to augment effective tools available on our Fix School Discipline website and provide trainings across the state at conferences and to community partners. The attorney will also help facilitate statewide advocacy and legislative efforts to support positive discipline policies in California. Some travel is required for legislative efforts and to effectively collaborate with the communities that will be the primary focus of the work. Although this position will primarily focus on policy, the attorney will have an opportunity to represent individual students in both disciplinary and special education proceedings.

We strongly encourage applications from applicants whose personal experiences match those of the community we serve.

**ESSENTIAL JOB SKILLS AND ABILITIES REQUIRED**

- Juris Doctor degree and California bar admission;
- Five years of practice experience preferred, with emphasis on community policy and/or legislative experience strongly desired;
- Excellent oral and written communication, and creative problem-solving skills;
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively within diverse coalitions;
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work well with teams;
- Ability to communicate in an empathetic and professional manner with the community we serve;
- Ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously and effectively prioritize workload;
- Understanding of California’s education, dependency and juvenile justice systems strongly preferred;
• Spanish language fluency preferred;
• A commitment to economic and racial justice;
• Applicants with prior community organizing experience are encouraged to apply.

START DATE AND COMPENSATION

• Salary is commensurate with abilities and experience
• Immediate full-time, exempt position
• 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 employment, and (4) employer-paid life insurance and disability plans.
• 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.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Continuous until position is filled.

TO APPLY

Please send a cover letter and resume (as PDF documents if sent via email) to:
Mayra Lira, Senior Supervising Attorney
Children’s Rights Project
Public Counsel
610 South Ardmore Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90005
Email: edu@publiccounsel.org

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, gender identity 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.