**Staff Attorney Announcement**

**Children’s Legal Services Position**

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM) seeks a passionate, civil rights-oriented, full-time attorney to represent clients in judicial and administrative proceedings, engage in systemic advocacy and policy work, monitor the implementation of complex systemic reform efforts, conduct outreach and education, and provide legal advice and technical assistance.

DRM, a private, non-profit law firm, is a recognized leader in disability rights and the Congressionally-mandated Protection and Advocacy organization for individuals with disabilities in Maryland. We provide free legal services and advocacy to persons with disabilities in Maryland. DRM envisions a world where people with disabilities are fully included in the workplace, neighborhoods and all aspects of community life.  We help people with disabilities pursue opportunities to participate fully in all aspects of community life, and champion their rights to self-determination, dignity, equality, opportunity, and freedom from discrimination and harm.

We seek a Staff Attorney to be a part of our Children’s Legal Services Team, who will work predominantly on children’s mental health issues and represent youth with psychiatric disabilities. The attorney will be responsible for investigating allegations of serious abuse or neglect and monitoring conditions at psychiatric facilities; developing and presenting trainings on rights topics; advocacy and policy work; and developing strategies, including litigation, to address systemic issues. The attorney may also represent youth with psychiatric disabilities in special education and school discipline matters.

**Reports to:** Managing Attorney

**Supervises:** Legal Interns

**Responsibilities Include:**

* Conduct monitoring visits and give rights trainings to youth at residential treatment centers;
* Monitor, analyze, and report on trends and developments in the mental health field at the state and federal levels;
* Research conditions and related policies at various state institutions and residential treatment centers that place youth with psychiatric disabilities at risk of abuse and neglect;
* Conduct intakes to screen potential clients;
* Maintain an active caseload representing clients with psychiatric disabilities in a variety of contexts, including, but not limited to, administrative and/or judicial proceedings, as well as at Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings and school discipline conferences and appeals.
* Advocate for clients’ interests in communications with service providers;
* Work collaboratively as part of a litigation team to develop state and federal claims;
* Provide technical assistance to develop and implement strategies to address abuse, neglect, and rights violations at a systemic level; and
* Under supervision of DRM’s management and leadership teams, develop strategies to advance DRM’s advocacy priorities;
* Work collaboratively with community stakeholders, co-counsel, and others;
* Participate in various coalitions and task forces with clients, constituents, and community partners on matters relevant to the civil rights for persons with disabilities;
* Engage in administrative and legislative advocacy at the local and state level; and
* Travel throughout the State of Maryland.

**Minimum Qualifications:**

* J.D. degree from an accredited law school;
* Licensed to practice law in Maryland, or admitted after sitting for next available Bar exam;
* Strong commitment to DRM’s core mission of ensuring the civil rights of people with disabilities to self-determination, freedom from harm, due process protections, to develop physically, emotionally and intellectually, and to participate in community life, with meaningful choices and opportunities;
* Strong interest in social justice and equity issues impacting the disability community;
* Excellent organizational and project management skills;
* Excellent interpersonal and cross cultural communication skills, ability to communicate ideas with enthusiasm to diverse audiences;
* Ability to research and analyze complex legal issues, develop and execute a variety of advocacy strategies, and conduct legal research;
* Ability to work independently and to establish and maintain effective working relationships and collaborate with colleagues in a team environment;
* Excellent analytical and writing skills
* Ability to successfully manage multiple work priorities and work under deadlines.

**Preferred Qualifications:**

* 2-5 years’ experience;
* Experience with one or more of the following: mental health law, abuse and neglect investigations, children’s mental health issues, special education law, and laws and legal issues affecting individuals with psychiatric disabilities.
* Experience handling administrative appeals, representing clients in court, or working on systemic public policy issues such as commenting on proposed regulations, advocating for changes with state agencies, and working on coalitions with other legal and non-legal partners;
* Experience with community lawyering models and desire to empower DRM clients to grow as advocates for the civil rights of persons with disabilities;
* Experience working directly with persons with disabilities;
* A demonstrated interest or background in public interest work, particularly related to disability rights issues;
* Experience with public policy advocacy and the legislative process;
* Life experience with a disability; and
* Fluency in American Sign Language or Spanish.

**Salary and Benefits:**

Competitive, depending on experience. The salary range for an attorney with 0-5 years’ experience is $58,451- $63,756. DRM offers a generous benefits package that includes excellent medical insurance, employer-paid dental, prescription, vision, life, and disability insurance, as well as pre-tax savings plans, a retirement savings opportunity with generous employer contributions, and a telecommuting policy. DRM offers employee reimbursement for the some or all of the cost of spouse or partner-paid health insurance premiums, up to an established maximum amount. DRM also offers generous paid time off, including vacation, holidays, sick time, parental leave, and more.

Flex work schedules and telework arrangements are available.

This description can also be found at [www.DisabilityRightsMD.org/careers/](http://www.DisabilityRightsMD.org/careers/)

**To Apply:**

E-MAIL resume, cover letter, a writing sample to [jobs@DisabilityRightsMD.org](mailto:jobs@DisabilityRightsMD.org) with “Staff Attorney (ED/CMH) Position” in the subject line. This position remains open until filled. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis with priority given to those received by February 22, 2022. We are looking for thoughtful, personalized cover letters that demonstrate the applicant’s qualifications, work style and interest in being part of a team working to advance the civil rights of persons with disabilities in Maryland. Candidates should specifically and fully describe any experience in any of DRM’s Advocacy Priorities, including mental health and special education law.

DRM is an equal opportunity employer. DRM values diversity. People of color, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ individuals are especially encouraged to apply.