



Job Announcement Legal Director

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is the nation's foremost defender of constitutional rights and civil liberties. ACLU of Colorado (ACLU-CO) is an affiliate of the national ACLU, and it is the state's guardian of freedom, working in the courts, in the legislature, and in communities across the state to protect and advance civil rights and civil liberties for all. Founded in 1952, ACLU-CO is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to fulfilling the promise of equal justice under the law for all Coloradans. For more information about the work of the ACLU-CO and the civil liberties principles we uphold, please visit our website at www.aclu-co.org.

Commitment To Equity, Diversity, Belonging, and Inclusion

ACLU-CO is an equitable opportunity employer. We believe that having a board, staff, and volunteer base with diverse personal and professional backgrounds enhances our ability to meet our mission and creates an environment where all community members can thrive. We strongly encourage applications from all qualified persons, including people of color, immigrants, women, people with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ community, those who have been formerly incarcerated, and other members of underrepresented and marginalized groups.

ACLU-CO does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, veteran status, or record of arrest or conviction. We are committed to providing a work environment that practices equitable and inclusive treatment and quick to act to prevent and address harassment or discrimination of any kind.

Job Description

ACLU-CO is seeking a creative, dynamic, and visionary Legal Director to lead and grow the ACLU-CO's legal department in advancing and shaping the civil rights and civil liberties landscape in Colorado. The Legal Director reports to the Executive Director, serves as a member of ACLU-CO's senior leadership team, and works with other members of the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that litigation and legal strategies are aligned in support of the organization's long-term issue priorities. The Legal Director is responsible for overall strategy, coordination, and management of the legal department and its litigation docket, staff, and network of volunteer cooperating attorneys. The ideal candidate will be a skilled constitutional rights litigator, an inspiring leader, an experienced and visionary manager, and will have executed litigation as part of multi-disciplinary teams. Strong candidates will have demonstrated ability to initiate, develop and pursue impact litigation as part of an integrated advocacy strategy and a demonstrated ability to work with, support and inspire others in innovative advocacy.

Primary Responsibilities:

- Build, maintain, and oversee a robust docket of impact litigation and legal advocacy that advances the ACLU's strategic priorities and responds to threats to civil rights and civil liberties
- Work collaboratively with an inter-disciplinary team to design litigation and legal strategies that are aligned with and supported by strategic communications, organizing, policy advocacy, electoral programs, and other strategies and tactics
- Help determine near- and long-term policy objectives for the ACLU-CO's core issue-area campaigns by providing input to the Director of Advocacy on where litigation or legal strategies can be deployed to help teams achieve long-term policy goals
- Manage all aspects of the ACLU's litigation program, including coordinating case selection with the Legal Panel and senior leadership team; oversee the investigation and development of cases prior to filing litigation; and build litigation teams with in-house lawyers, volunteer cooperating counsel, allied advocacy organizations, ACLU national legal staff, and other partners
- Oversee litigation in federal and state courts and ensure effective client counseling
- Serve as a spokesperson for the ACLU, working closely with our communications and policy team to engage in strategic public forums, advocacy discussions, and media opportunities
- Maintain an individual caseload and manage demand letters, public records requests, legal and policy reports and analysis, pre-litigation investigations, discovery, motion practice, brief writing, hearings and trials, appellate work, and amicus briefs
- Supervise a team that includes five attorneys, including a Managing Attorney, as well as a paralegal, intake coordinator, and law student interns; coordinate recruitment and onboarding of additional legal staff with team members; foster an organizational culture that empowers staff, encourages professional development, and emphasizes a commitment to upholding the highest ethical ideals of the legal profession and our diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging values
- Broaden and deepen relationships among ACLU attorneys, cooperating and pro bono counsel, and other lawyers to elevate the visibility of the ACLU in the legal community and to help build capacity in our legal docket by engaging lawyers in pre-litigation investigations, amicus briefs, active litigation, and other ACLU activities
- Ability to create and develop litigation or legal strategies where a objective may be to uplift community, pressure decision-makers or have other political impact
- Work closely with development team to engage donors and funders and support efforts to secure litigation funding
- Assist with administrative matters including but not limited to developing budgets, providing regular reports on legal department activities, assisting with file retention policy implementation, managing intake and correspondence, and coordinating and supporting other activities as needed

Qualifications:

- JD from an accredited law school and licensed to practice law in Colorado or licensed in another state and qualified to apply for bar admission in Colorado within one year
- While, less experience would be considered, 10+ years of increasingly responsible legal experience, which should include substantial state and federal constitutional law experience and an understanding of modern applications of civil liberties principles is strongly preferred.
- Dedication to social justice work, cultural competency to work with a diverse team and an awareness of, and willingness to engage in, the difficult and transformative work of challenging systems of oppression, institutional and structural racism, and implicit bias
- Ability to plan effective strategies, establish realistic objectives, and evaluate progress
- Experience designing and executing complex and sequenced litigation strategies. An ability to manage multi-year or multi-jurisdictional projects.
- Excellent organizational and time management skills to manage one's own work as well as others, and to assure completion of assignments and projects
- A track record of leadership through strong communication, collaboration, and relationship-building
- Proven management ability, including experience in creating and overseeing department budgets, supervising attorneys, and support staff, and in managing and encouraging volunteers, both students and professionals
- Commitment to working with community groups and marginalized communities in the planning, and development of litigation. Ability and flexibility to work in both service and leadership roles with many diverse players and constituencies
- Excellent problem-solving skills and demonstrated skills in participatory and equitable decision-making
- Exceptional analytical, writing, and speaking skills. A demonstrated ability to write clearly and precisely. The ability to communicate effectively with plaintiffs, opposing counsel, staff, volunteers, and the public. A demonstrated ability to convey difficult civil liberties issues to the public and media
- A commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging, and a personal approach that values the individual and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socio-economic circumstance
- A strong passion for the ACLU's mission; personally committed to advancing the ACLU's values, mission, goals, and programs, with an understanding of the range of civil liberties issues and their implications

Work Accommodations during the COVID-19 Pandemic

To ensure the safety of our employees, the ACLU of Colorado implemented a mandatory work-from-home policy. While the policy stays in effect, we acknowledge that there are special circumstances when working at the office is necessary. For these situations, we ask staff to send

notification of their time in the office and to follow CDC precautionary measures to ensure staff safety. We are preparing a hybrid work accommodation in June 2022. To return to the office, it is mandatory to send a vaccination record or request a medical or religious exemption.

Compensation and Benefits

This position is full-time; the approximate salary range \$140,000 - \$180,000 and within pay scale parameters of ACLU of Colorado. Benefits include medical and dental insurance, life and long-term disability insurance, 401k contribution, paid vacation, and holidays.

To Apply

All inquiries, nominations, referrals, and applications (resumes and letters of interest) should be sent electronically and in confidence to:

Marcus Ollig
The Advocates
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