

Position Title: *Staff Attorney, Community & Family Justice*

Reports to: Vice President, Advocacy

Supervises: N/A

Location of Job: Chicago, IL

Organizational Description:

The Shriver Center on Poverty Law fights for economic and racial justice. Over the past 50 years, we have secured hundreds of law and policy victories with and for people experiencing economic instability in Illinois and across the country. Everything we do is powered by communities most affected by poverty. We litigate, shape policy, and train and convene multistate networks of lawyers, community leaders, and activists to advance opportunity for all—not just the few. Our country is rife with laws and policies that systematically disadvantage certain groups while advantaging others based on their race, gender, and other facets of their identities. We believe laws and policies—and the institutions that apply them—should be designed to support people. Together, we’re turning this ideal into reality. We are building a future where all people, families, and future generations have equal dignity, respect, and power under the law. Through our advocacy initiatives, we work to win positive change and provide a range of professional development resources that build and support the national network of advocates engaged in those efforts.

The Shriver Center is an equal opportunity employer and encourages applications from qualified candidates of all backgrounds.

Position Summary: The Staff Attorney helps the Shriver Center accomplish its mission by advancing the Shriver Center’s advocacy efforts nationally and in Illinois. The position will concentrate on reforming the child welfare systems and reforming the criminal legal systems. The Staff Attorney will work on a range of issues in the Shriver Center’s Community and Family Justice portfolio, including child welfare reform, criminal records, community re-entry, diversion from the juvenile justice system, collateral consequences of convictions, and the “school-to-prison pipeline,” and will collaborate when necessary with attorneys working on other issues in the Shriver Center’s comprehensive anti-poverty agenda. The Staff Attorney engages in advocacy of all kinds (legislative, administrative, litigation, public education, coalition-building, etc.).

Essential Job Functions:

- Collaborate and build relationships with community-based advocates.
- Advocate for laws and policies that promote access to employment, education, housing, and income for people previously involved in the criminal legal system and decrease the accumulation of debt arising from contact with the criminal legal system.
- Advocate for laws and policies that decrease the likelihood of people of color encountering the child welfare system.
- Advocate for laws and policies that center the rights of parents involved in the child welfare system and in the education system.
- Advocate for laws and policies that reform and improve the child welfare system.
- Advocate for laws and policies that divert people from the criminal legal system and child welfare system, and strategies involving school policies, racial justice, changes in policing, and changes to mandatory release, among others.
- Participate in the staffing and coordination of the Shriver Center's efforts to coordinate community justice work across multiple states through the Shriver Center's Legal Impact Network and Racial Justice Institute network.
- Develop material to inform and educate others regarding the advocacy work and the Shriver Center's anti-poverty work.
- Participate as assigned in other advocacy work at the Shriver Center.
- Contribute to raising funds for advocacy activities, including assisting with grant proposals, attending site visits, and identifying new funding sources.
- Continue to learn about issues and potential or systemic solutions through contact with clients, direct service providers, and community organizations, and to develop strategies for accomplishing positive changes for our clients.
- Contribute to the strategic thinking of all the Shriver Center's anti-poverty efforts and produce articles for the Shriver Center's publications.
- Supervise support staff, volunteers, and law student interns on projects as needed.
- Participate as needed in various administrative tasks and committees of the Shriver Center.
- Travel to Springfield, Illinois, and national conferences and meetings as needed.

Qualifications:

- J.D., licensed to practice law in Illinois, and three or more years of experience practicing law.
- Experience preferred in advocacy involving the criminal justice and child welfare issues described above.
- Excellent research, analysis, and writing skills.
- Excellent public speaking and training skills.
- Experience in or demonstrated commitment to public interest law and advocacy on behalf of individuals and families living in poverty.
- Ability to complete work successfully both independently and as part of a team.
- Ability to develop and lead new and existing projects.
- Ability to participate in evening and weekend community and client meetings.
- Ability to travel for work-related meeting and conferences.

Salary/Benefits: This full-time position offers a competitive public interest salary ranging from \$75,470 to \$94,337 and a comprehensive benefits package that includes health, dental, vision, life, and disability insurance, generous paid leave, flexible work schedules, pre-tax flexible spending accounts, pre-tax commuter benefits, and a 401(k) plan. To maintain internal and external pay equity, the annual salary offered to the candidate of our choosing is nonnegotiable and commensurate with experience.

Opening/Closing Date: Open immediately; we will accept applications until the position is filled, at which time the job announcement will be removed from our website. We hope that one of those applications is yours.

Applications: Send a cover letter, résumé, writing sample, and three references via email to latanyawilson@povertylaw.org and hr@povertylaw.org with the subject line “Community & Family Justice Staff Attorney Application.” Please note that the hiring committee will review the cover letter to evaluate each candidate’s relevant background and experience related to the responsibilities and qualifications listed in the job description.

At the Shriver Center, we know that a richly diverse mix of professionals makes organizations more effective. As such, we make demographic and experiential diversity a hallmark and priority of all our work. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions