

- ⇒ **Fighting Poverty**
- ⇒ **Achieving Justice**
- ⇒ **Improving Lives**



MONTANA LEGAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY

Montana Legal Services Association (MLSA) seeks a Director of Advocacy to lead and support our advocacy staff in our work to represent individual low-income people and improve their lives. The Director of Advocacy will work with a Co-Director and will be part of MLSA's Leadership Team to support and empower MLSA's advocates to achieve the best results possible for our clients and help MLSA develop and maintain its broad-based advocacy strategies on behalf of low-income clients.

The Director will support MLSA's attorneys who represent

- survivors of domestic violence and other crimes;
- clients with housing, consumer, and agricultural employment issues.

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced litigator and supervisor to work with a growing, motivated advocacy staff.

Montana is a beautiful place all year round, and a great place to live.

About Montana Legal Services Association

MLSA is a vibrant and growing non-profit legal services provider, and a powerful force for justice in Montana. MLSA's staff of 53 address a wide range of civil legal issues impacting low-income residents, and use a full array of strategies to assist clients. MLSA is the only general civil legal aid provider in Montana, and advocates with MLSA assist clients throughout this large mostly-rural state. MLSA is supported by a range of federal, state, and private funds, and its budget has grown over the past few years. Despite that growth, there remain many more people in need of legal assistance than MLSA can serve.

MLSA's advocacy staff includes experienced lawyers, newer lawyers, paraprofessionals and AmeriCorps positions. They are skilled, passionate, and motivated advocates, who express a desire for support, mentoring and leadership.

Location of position

Helena, Missoula or Billings. Travel within and without Montana is required as needed.

Position overview

The Director of Advocacy will work collaboratively to develop and support MLSA's advocacy efforts. Along with a Co-Director, the Director of Advocacy will build training opportunities for staff, co-counsel with staff in some cases, and carry out ongoing oversight and support of the advocacy staff. Working with an advocacy team, the Director will develop innovative projects and approaches to continually improve access to justice for low-income people living in Montana. The Director of Advocacy will also collaborate with MLSA's Executive Director and management team to ensure the continued strong operations of MLSA.

Responsibilities

As an advocacy team leader:

- Supervise and support 8-10 attorneys.
- Assist with complex and interesting cases and problems, both through direct involvement in supervisees' work and engaging other experienced lawyers to support MLSA's work.
- Encourage and coordinate program-wide collaboration on legal issues and leadership of broad-based advocacy initiatives.
- Coordinate and provide professional development support and training.
- Ensure that the delivery of services aligns with MLSA's grant requirements and mission.
- Conduct regular informal check-ins and periodic formal reviews with supervisees, along with communication and enforcement of MLSA's policies.
- Participate in team recruitment, hiring and retention efforts.
- Support MLSA's pro bono program, including mentoring pro bono attorneys.

As a member of MLSA's management:

- Collaborate in the leadership of MLSA along with the other Director of Advocacy, the Director of Finance & Administration, and the Executive Director.
- Assist in the development and implementation of policies and procedures for MLSA.
- Assist in the development and oversight of MLSA's annual operating budget.
- Participate in fund development for MLSA, as may be related to the advocacy team or the needs of the program.
- In conjunction with the Executive Director, plan for how technology is used to support the provision of services to clients.

Requirements and preferences

- At least ten years of experience in the civil practice of law, including complex litigation at the state and federal levels.
- Substantial experience in poverty law issues, preferred.
- Substantial experience and success as a supportive supervisor preferred.

- Excellent communications and motivation skills; and proven ability to work with a diverse group of people with varying lived experience, perspectives, and expertise.
- An understanding of the experiences and needs of low-income people.
- Demonstrated commitment to zealous and comprehensive advocacy on behalf of access to justice issues for low-income people.
- Strong ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with clients, the public, judges, court personnel and the bar.
- Ability and willingness to work cooperatively and collegially within a statewide law firm.
- Ability to learn and use MLSA's technology systems (including our case management system, Lexis, Microsoft Suite and other supportive applications).
- Ability to travel within and without the state of Montana, occasionally overnight.
- Already licensed, or eligible to become licensed to practice law in Montana (minimum 5 years recent bar admission in another state).

Salary and Benefits

Salary based on experience. MLSA offers an attractive benefits package, including health, dental, vision, and life insurance, retirement and educational loan repayment assistance.

To Apply

Send a letter of interest, writing sample, and resume to hring@mtlsa.org.

Submission Deadline

Screening of applicants will begin immediately and the position will remain open until filled.

The people who work for Montana Legal Services Association are our greatest strength. We seek to hire people from diverse backgrounds who work hard and effectively, who can be both leaders and team players, and who have a passion for our mission of justice.