



JOB TITLE: Senior Staff Attorney I

TEAM: Legal

REPORTS TO: Legal Director

FLSA STATUS: Exempt

LOCATION: Richmond, VA

DATE: January 2020

JOB SUMMARY

The Senior Staff Attorney I is responsible for proactively developing and executing litigation and other legal advocacy strategies to achieve the ACLU-VA's strategic priorities and to advance civil liberties and civil rights in Virginia. The Senior Staff Attorney I will lead and/or co-counsel litigation on a variety of issues, will oversee the legal program's intake and case development processes, and will have supervisory authority over paralegals and investigators as assigned. In collaboration with the Legal Director, the Senior Staff Attorney I will help set priorities and develop strategies for the organization's legal work. The Senior Staff Attorney I will also participate in non-litigation advocacy, including supporting legislative work, participating in public speaking engagements, and drafting press or public education materials.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Litigation and Legal Advocacy

- Develop and execute a wide range of federal, state, and administrative litigation, including impact litigation, complex class-action litigation, appeals, and amicus briefs, in conjunction with the national ACLU, with other advocacy organizations, and with cooperating attorneys;
- Participate in case selection and development, including conducting factual and legal research, evaluating legal theory and strategy, identifying and analyzing potential claims, determining possible plaintiffs and defendants, interviewing clients and potential witnesses, working with experts, preparing internal memoranda, and drafting demand letters and litigation-related pleadings and briefs;
- Lead or co-counsel selected litigation, including drafting pleadings, motions, briefs and correspondence; conducting discovery; taking and defending depositions; arguing motions; trying cases; handling appeals; working with experts; negotiating and monitoring settlement agreements; and pursuing attorney's fee awards;
- Appear and argue cases in federal court, state court, and before administrative agencies;
- Seek out and cultivate relationships with cooperating attorneys for potential litigation; and
- Monitor litigation being handled by cooperating attorneys and provide supervision and/or assistance as needed.

Legal Program Leadership and Support

- Supervise designated legal staff, including managing their performance and professional development;
- In collaboration with the Legal Director, set priorities for the legal team and develop litigation and other legal advocacy strategies on specific matters;

- Supervise the development and implementation of legal program policies, procedures, and systems – such as the intake and case selection process; case management process; paper and electronic filing systems; and legal docket;
- Oversee review and consideration of intakes and other requests for assistance received by the ACLU of Virginia; assign and conduct research or factual follow-up as necessary, and propose and/or consider recommendations for additional action;
- Develop and conduct, as appropriate, staff training sessions, workshops, continuing legal education events, and other events on specific issues;
- Develop and maintain relationships with the legal staff at the national ACLU, its projects, and other affiliates and collaborate on litigation and investigations that arise in Virginia;
- Develop and maintain relationships with legal services agencies, law firms, and other public interest attorneys in Virginia; and
- Prepare memoranda and reports as needed.

Legislative, Advocacy, and Communications Support

- Speak at public forums, meetings, and events on various civil liberties and civil rights topics, as requested or as necessary;
- Serve as a spokesperson for the ACLU of Virginia on cases and legal issues for the media, as requested or as necessary;
- Write articles for the ACLU of Virginia website and other media regarding legal issues and cases, as requested or as necessary;
- Act as a resource for communications and advocacy staff, and draft memoranda, reports, public education materials, and legislative advocacy materials, as requested or as necessary;
- Identify and research issues related to legislation, local ordinances, and agency rules and regulations; working in collaboration with the advocacy team, draft memoranda or advocacy letters and testify, provide public comment, or lobby on such matters as necessary; and
- Assist in fundraising efforts by participating in meetings with donors, as requested.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- J.D. from an accredited law school.
- Membership in good standing with the Virginia State Bar or another state bar provided admission to the Virginia State Bar is obtained within a reasonable time.
- Experience litigating cases in federal and/or state courts and ability to lead and independently manage cases and legal projects.
- Experience in delegating effectively to junior attorneys, law fellows, cooperating attorneys, paralegals, interns, or other staff.
- Willingness and ability to work beyond the normal work day, on weekends, and/or more than 40 hours a week as necessary.
- Willingness and ability to travel throughout Virginia, and occasionally to other states for conferences and training.
- A commitment to the mission and values of the ACLU of Virginia, and to racial justice and civil rights issues and an understanding that these issues are central to overall protection of civil liberties;

- A commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, to refrain from unlawful discrimination and to comply fully with all applicable laws; a personal approach that values the individual and respects differences of race, ethnicity and national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ability and socio-economic circumstance, and ability to work with diverse individuals within the organization and broader community.
- Familiarity with office technology and information systems, including databases, case management software, digital legal research sources, online communications, and word processing.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Ability to provide clear direction, set priorities, meet deadlines, and hold staff accountable to deadlines on concurrent projects.
- Ability to provide meaningful and critical feedback on planning and execution of programs.
- Strong self-motivation and capacity to handle numerous deadlines and work in a fast-paced, stressful environment.
- Excellent writing, research, analytical, and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to work competently and effectively under pressure.
- Ability to think critically and solve complex problems.
- Ability to work independently and to take initiative.
- Ability to work effectively and professionally with clients, other counsel, volunteers, community members, and staff, and a commitment to the highest ethical standards and the values of the ACLU of Virginia.

DESIRABLE EXPERIENCE, SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Ability to speak and/or write in Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Arabic or other language spoken by a language minority in Virginia.
- Substantive knowledge and understanding of constitutional law, civil rights and civil liberties issues, and criminal justice reform matters.
- Leadership or supervisory experience in the community, non-profit, or legal field.
- Experience working at an organization with an integrated advocacy model where legal, legislative, education and advocacy tactics are used collaboratively and cohesively to achieve results.
- Valid Virginia Driver’s license.

EQUIPMENT USED

- Computer, telephone, copier, fax, scanner, printer.

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

Accepted by: _____ Date: _____

DISCLAIMER: Nothing in this job description restricts the Executive Director's right to assign other duties or responsibilities to this job at any time.

The ACLU of Virginia is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU of Virginia encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, and veteran status and commits to comply with all applicable equal opportunity and nondiscrimination laws and to refrain from unlawful discrimination.