

LEGAL ACTION OF WISCONSIN
Equal Justice Works Fellow- Crime Victims' Rights Project
Milwaukee or Madison Office
May 22, 2023

Summary

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. ("Legal Action") seeks a staff attorney for a 24-month, full time position as an Equal Justice Works Fellow in their Crime Victims Advocacy Program. Legal Action has been competitively selected by Equal Justice Works as an implementing partner of Equal Justice Works' Crime Victims Advocacy Program (CVAP), funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). The fellow will provide culturally responsive legal services to Black women in Milwaukee County who are victims of crime. This position will begin in Fall, 2023.

Legal Action is a law firm funded by the federal Legal Services Corporation, the Wisconsin Trust Account Foundation (WisTAF), and many other sources and supporters. Our mission is to ensure equal justice under law for low-income people by providing high-quality civil legal aid. Legal Action maintains offices in Milwaukee, Madison, Racine, Oshkosh, Green Bay, and La Crosse. Legal Action attorneys have expertise in a range of substantive areas, but most direct representation is in the areas of housing, public benefits, removing barriers to employment, consumer law, and family law.

The fellow will join Legal Action's Crime Victims' Rights Project's (CVRP) existing team of attorneys (three full time and one part time). CVRP provides free legal advice and direct representation to victims of crime in asserting their constitutional and statutory rights under Marsy's Law and Wis. Stat. § 950. CVRP's work is focused on: 1) representing and advocating for victims (both adults and children) of sexual assault and domestic violence; and 2) actively protecting the privacy rights of those victims in criminal cases where the confidential and privileged medical and mental health records of the victim are being requested to be admitted to court. This includes actively filing and arguing motions, pursuing appeals, and participating in administrative proceedings. CVRP also provides representation in state and federal victim rights, under the federal Crime Victim Rights Act. In addition, we represent clients in matters related to sex-based discrimination, harassment, or other illegal behavior in violation of key federal laws such as Title IX. When able, we may also provide ancillary civil legal services that contribute to the safety and security of crime victims (e.g., assisting with a restraining order, name change, or injunction).

Despite the significant expansion of victim assistance services and resources in recent years, access to high-quality civil legal services and victims' rights enforcement remains limited, especially for Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) and other individuals from communities with high levels of disinvestment. CVRP seeks to address this service gap by tailoring our services for BIPOC victims within Milwaukee County.

Legal Action believes that equal justice under law can only be achieved through the collaboration of a diverse staff. We strongly encourage applications from people of color, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, women, and people with life experiences or educational backgrounds that add to the firm's diversity and our capacity to provide high-quality legal aid.

Equal Justice Works Fellowship

An Equal Justice Works fellowship is an opportunity to transform your passion for justice into a career. As a Fellow, you will be part of a prestigious cohort of attorneys hosted by legal services organizations across the United States. You will also develop experience and skills to be a social justice leader while contributing to a broader community of practice.

Fellowship responsibilities include:

- Primarily providing civil legal assistance and legal assistance with rights enforcement for victims in BIPOC communities and communities with high levels of disinvestment in the Milwaukee area. Fellows will provide direct legal services, and when appropriate, conduct outreach, education, and partnership-building activities.
- Protecting and enforcing victims' rights on behalf of clients. This may include accompanying clients to meetings with law enforcement, communicating with the District Attorney's Office, providing support and information during the criminal proceeding, asserting standing in court, filing and arguing appropriate motions, and pursuing relief and recourse for rights violations.
- Building key stakeholder relationships in furtherance of the fellowship objectives with particular focus on the Milwaukee service area.
- Engaging in peer-to-peer learning as part of the Equal Justice Works Crime Victims Advocacy Program Fellow cohort.
- Actively contributing to and participating in Crime Victims Advocacy Program cohort activities (resource exchanges; interactive webinars and conference call with other Cohort and EJW Fellows and Alumni; and in-person trainings including Equal Justice Works Leadership Development Training in Washington DC in Oct 2023 and 2024.
- Contributing to required programmatic reporting.
- Keep up with developments in the law and work on new issues where precedent is not fully established in this developing area of law; working as part of a collaborative group.
- Provide training and other assistance to members of Legal Action's Volunteer Lawyer Project, when appropriate.
- Actively participate in at least one firmwide Priority Committee.
- Contribute to a collegial, supportive, and interactive work environment.
- Other duties may be assigned from time to time as the needs of our clients vary.

Travel and Schedule Requirements

- The position involves regular travel to meet with clients and go to court in the southern counties of Wisconsin.
- The project attorney must be able to set and maintain their schedule as to court hearings and client meetings. Scheduling must be documented through Outlook

calendar. Scheduling with clients should reflect crime victims' rights to dignity and an understanding of the traumatic situations many project clients are in.

Training

Training will be provided at the start of the fellowship on topics including the criminal justice system, Wisconsin Chapter 950, Marsy's Law, privacy and confidential records, family law, employment discrimination, and sexual harassment. CVRP attorneys participate in weekly meetings with local, statewide, and national advocates to discuss cases, substantive law, intake issues, and other matters, and these meetings will serve to train the new attorney as well.

Qualifications

Required:

- Admission to the Wisconsin Bar or the ability to become admitted within the first 6 months of employment. New graduates are encouraged to apply.
- A demonstrated commitment to social justice and legal aid, with a desire to increase access to justice for underserved and BIPOC communities and achieve results.
- Desire to build relationships within the BIPOC community.
- Interest in work that combines direct client representation with a focus on law development and systemic change.
- Desire for an active courtroom representation of clients is required. Actual experience arguing motions and advocating for clients in court is preferred.
- A valid driver's license.
- Knowledge in state and federal law and procedure.
- Able to meet high standards of written and courtroom advocacy.
- Ability to communicate both orally and in writing in a clear and concise manner and work harmoniously with others.
- Cultural competence and respect for differences in race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socio-economic circumstances.
- Ability to work independently, maintain own calendar, keep case notes updated and regularly document daily work in case management software. An ability to handle and prioritize many pressing matters in various locations is needed.

Desired:

- Experience with the criminal justice system.
- Experience working with crime victims, including victims of sexual assault and sexual or gender violence.
- Experience with trauma-informed advocacy.
- Experience or familiarity with clients with a history of mental illness or other health issues.
- Familiarity reading and evaluating medical or mental health records.

Please note Fellows must commit to fulfilling the twenty-four-month fellowship and will sign a Fellowship Agreement with Equal Justice Works.

Office Location

We will consider candidates for this position who wish to be based in either Legal Action's Madison or Milwaukee office. Though, the Milwaukee office is strongly preferred.

Flex Work

Legal Action supports flexible work arrangements that meet the goals of the organization and the employee. All employees are eligible to request flexible work, including flextime, compressed work week, and remote work.

COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

At Legal Action of Wisconsin, health and safety is a top priority. We require all new, unrepresented employees and interns, law clerks, volunteers, and contractors from employment agencies or consulting firms to have completed their COVID-19 vaccinations and bivalent booster and to provide medical proof from Wisconsin's Immunization Registry or from a medical provider of their fully vaccinated status as a condition of employment with Legal Action of Wisconsin within 28 days of their first day of employment. Individuals may request a medical or religious exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement. Exemption requests must be completed and approved on or before the first day of employment.

Physical Demands and Work Environment

The position involves sedentary work, working in a stationary position for an extended period, operating a computer, and using a telephone. Specific vision abilities required for this job include close vision of a computer screen. The position may require driving a motor vehicle while seated for short trips and/or extensive travel. The position requires occasional reaching, bending, kneeling, and stooping to retrieve assorted items and materials and the need to exert up to 10 pounds of force to lift, carry, push, or otherwise move objects.

Spanish or Hmong Language Fluency Premium

Legal Action's Salary Administration Plan includes additional pay of up to \$4,800 annually for those employees who are fluent in Spanish or Hmong and utilize their language skills in performing their work.

Salary

The salary for this and all positions are determined by Legal Action's attorney salary ladder as set forth in the firm's salary administration plan. The attorney salary scale and the salary administration plan are determined by Legal Action's Board of Directors and is not negotiable. Generally, staff attorneys advance a step on the salary ladder on their anniversary date. For example, under Legal Action's attorney salary plan, an attorney with 0-1 years of experience practicing law would earn a salary of \$55,000; 1-2 years, \$57,500; 2-3 years \$60,000.

Fringe Benefits

Legal Action provides a generous fringe benefits package, including employer-paid health and dental insurance for employees and eligible dependents. Some employees are required to contribute to the health insurance premium for their spouse, if the spouse has group health

insurance provided by their employer. Legal Action also provides life and long-term disability insurance, a profit-sharing retirement plan, salary deferral options for retirement planning, low-cost employee paid vision coverage, four weeks of vacation per year, four days of personal leave per year, a sick leave accrual rate and four weeks of paid parental leave for eligible employees.

The position is subject to a probationary period of up to one year. As with any Legal Action position, there is no guaranteed period of employment and employment is “at will,” subject to termination at any time.

Governance

If the position is based in Milwaukee, it is governed by Legal Action’s personnel policies, which are subject to unilateral change by the Legal Action Board of Directors. If the position is based in Madison, the position is governed by the terms and conditions of the collective bargaining agreement between Legal Action and the United Legal Workers. Legal Action’s personnel policies will govern where no provision is covered by the collective bargaining agreement. ,

Supervision

This position will report to the Director of the Crime Victims’ Rights Project.

How to Apply

All applications should be submitted online at <https://www.equaljusticeworks.org/crime-victims-advocacy-program-fellowship-application/>.

Interested applicants must submit the following application materials:

- Cover letter, including office preference
- Resume
- Recent legal writing sample
- Name and contact information for three professional references
- Law school transcript (only required for applicants who graduated 2021 or later)

Hiring Manager

Monica Cail, Director of Racial Justice Litigation and Advocacy, is the hiring manager for this position.

Deadline for Applications

The position will be open until filled but we will review applicants on a continuous basis as application materials are received. We have a 10-day minimum positing period. Application materials must be received no later than July 1, 2023.

Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, or veteran status.