



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

Montana



Civil Rights Staff Attorney

JOB POSTING AND POSITION OVERVIEW

The ACLU of Montana Foundation (“ACLU of Montana”) is seeking a passionate, energetic and committed staff attorney to conduct litigation advancing civil rights and liberties in the state. The position is full-time and will pay an annual salary of between \$55k and \$68k depending on experience.

As Civil Rights Staff Attorney with the ACLU of Montana, the Staff Attorney will join a legal team and staff committed to fighting civil liberties and civil rights cases to defend all people from government abuse and overreach. Our priorities include Indigenous Justice and ending the criminalization of poverty. The ACLU of Montana works on a variety of issues that impact Indigenous people – including tribal sovereignty, voting rights, education equity and school discipline, criminal legal reform, religious freedom, and the decriminalization of poverty. Over the past two years we have worked to build Indigenous Justice into nearly every aspect of our organization by fostering relationships with Indigenous leaders, organizations, and community members and prioritizing issues identified by Indigenous communities.

In addition to litigating cases focusing on Indigenous Justice and decriminalization of poverty, this position may also address voting rights, reproductive rights, LGBTQ rights, the rights of immigrants, racial justice issues, and general civil liberties issues.

This is currently a two-year position with the possibility of renewal in subsequent years. This position is based in Montana with the specific location open to discussion. This position will be remote until the office re-opens after the Covid-19 pandemic, at least through December 31, 2020.

BACKGROUND

The ACLU of Montana (founded in 1972) is an affiliate of the national ACLU (founded in 1920) and operates as a private, non-profit organization. We are the state’s largest and most influential civil rights organization, combining litigation, policy advocacy, communications, and organizing tactics to promote a broad range of individual rights and liberties. Our current top priorities are Indigenous justice, criminal justice reform, LGBTQ equality, and voting rights. We work on a range of additional issues including reproductive justice, immigrants’ rights, freedom of speech and religion, and informational and digital privacy. The ACLU of Montana envisions a fair, equitable, and free Montana that welcomes and celebrates diversity of all kinds. In our Montana, everybody is treated with dignity and respect, and has equal access to rights and freedoms. We work to hold the government accountable to all who live in Montana, with a particular focus on those who have been historically (or continue to be) disenfranchised, including Indigenous people and people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ and two-spirit individuals and families,

economically disadvantaged individuals, and those with disabilities.

The ACLU of Montana has a current staff of 15 and an office located in Missoula. To learn more about our staff and the work of the ACLU of Montana, please visit <http://aclumontana.org>.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

ACLU of Montana is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. 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 members of our community can thrive. We strongly encourage applications from people of color, Indigenous people, immigrants, women, people with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ and two-spirit community, those who have been formerly incarcerated or are currently under supervision, and other underrepresented and historically marginalized groups. We seek to build a team that reflects that diversity. All qualified applicants who share this vision and who have a desire to contribute to our mission are encouraged to apply.

The ACLU of Montana does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, faith, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, tribal affiliation, disability, veteran status, or record of arrest or conviction. We will provide accommodations in all aspects of the hiring process. If you require an accommodation, we will work with you to meet your needs. We are committed to providing a work environment free from discrimination and harassment and one that honors and promotes a culture of equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging. We are engaging in ongoing internal equity work, including racial caucusing.

Our work environment is friendly with flexibility and consideration of personal needs and circumstances.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Actively manage legal cases, including:
 - evaluate and investigate potential claims;
 - identify potential plaintiffs and defendants;
 - devise legal theory and strategy;
 - perform all aspects of legal research;
 - draft filings;
 - conduct depositions and engage in written discovery;
 - participate in and present oral arguments;
- Evaluate and respond to intake complaints and requests for legal representation; ● Engage in non-litigation advocacy like public speaking, education and know-your-rights trainings;
- Travel to communities (Indigenous communities in particular) across the state to meet with community members, potential clients and other stakeholders;
- Visit correctional institutions on occasion to meet with and interview incarcerated individuals;
- Collaborate with and provide legal support for other ACLU of Montana staff and programs in the promotion of integrated advocacy;
- Collaborate with national ACLU partners;

- Collaborate with communications staff in drafting press releases, op-eds and articles for newsletter, website, social media and other outlets;
- Engage with the ACLU of Montana team as a cooperative, positive team player;
- Engage in continuing internal equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging work, including all-staff internal equity meetings, activities and retreats.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Juris Doctor degree;
- Admission to, or willingness to apply for admission to, the Montana State Bar and Ninth Circuit;
- Excellent research, writing and oral communication skills, including basic familiarity with legal research tools;
- Demonstrated ability to work cooperatively with stakeholders, including lawyers, other staff members, volunteers and community organizations;
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and keep organized;
- Experience managing, prioritizing and meeting numerous deadlines and diverse responsibilities in a timely and professional manner;
- Deep commitment to and passion for the advancement of civil rights and liberties; • Commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and fighting racism and a personal approach that values the individual and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, national origin, faith, ability and socio-economic circumstance and class;
- Ability to communicate across differences in people's experiences and ability to flex communication style to multiple cultural environments;
- Demonstrated experience engaging and working with and/or on behalf of underrepresented and marginalized communities. Commitment/willingness to learn about building trust with marginalized communities and understanding of trauma-informed representation and story-telling;
- Ability to travel and attend hearings/trials/depositions/meetings as needed.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Litigation experience, including experience taking depositions, propounding and responding to written discovery, presenting oral argument, and questioning witnesses during trial;
- Appellate experience;
- Ability to communicate complex legal issues in the courtroom and to the public;
- Experience working in organizations and places where diversity and equity initiatives were forefront;
- Commitment/willingness to learn about building trust with marginalized communities and understanding of trauma-informed representation and story-telling;
- History of working with or living in Indigenous and other diverse communities and working directly with people from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds;
- Experience or knowledge in working with Montana tribes;
- An understanding of and interest in engaging in the concepts of institutional and structural racism and bias and their impact on underserved and underrepresented communities;
- Knowledge and familiarity with the criminal legal system.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The position is full-time, exempt, and will pay an annual salary of between \$55k and \$68k depending on experience. Excellent benefits offered, including health and dental insurance, short and long-term disability and life insurance, 401(k) retirement plan, and generous vacation, holiday, and family/medical leave policies. Relocation reimbursements available up to \$XXX, contingent on 2 years' employment.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All applications are treated confidentially. Please submit (in pdf format if possible):

1. A letter describing your interest in the position;
2. Resume; and
3. Two relevant professional writing samples of no more than 15 pages in total, demonstrating research, writing, and legal analytical skills (e.g., memoranda of law or demand letters) substantially authored by the applicant.

Email your application to jobs@aclumontana.org or mail it to: ACLU of Montana, Attn: Hiring, P.O. Box 1968, Missoula, MT 59806.

Please put “Civil Rights Staff Attorney” in the subject line of your email or on your envelope. Also, please indicate in your letter of interest where you saw this job posting.

DEADLINE

Application review will start October 19, 2020. Applications after this date are encouraged and will be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled. We are aiming for a start date in November, 2020.

To learn more about the work of the ACLU-MT, please visit www.aclumontana.org.