



**American Civil Liberties Union Fund of Michigan
Position Description: Senior Staff Attorney**

Position Overview

The ACLU of Michigan seeks to hire a Senior Staff Attorney with significant experience litigating federal civil rights and civil liberties cases. The attorney will work to defend and protect the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and enforce our civil rights laws. Responsibilities include developing and litigating cutting-edge, impact cases on a wide range of issues at the trial and appellate levels in both federal and state courts, often in partnership with cooperating counsel and/or National ACLU lawyers. The Senior Staff Attorney will also represent the ACLU publicly through speaking engagements and media interviews, and collaborate with staff in other departments to set goals and implement strategies that advance ACLU of Michigan priorities. A significant goal of this position is to enable the ACLU of Michigan to respond quickly when significant civil rights and liberties issues present themselves in our communities. The attorney will be based at the Michigan ACLU headquarters in Detroit.

Specific Responsibilities

(1) Legal

- Identify, investigate, develop and litigate impact civil liberties and civil rights cases in federal and state court; identify and recruit plaintiffs, conduct factual and legal research, prepare memorandums, write demand letters, draft pleadings and briefs, conduct discovery, argue motions, try cases, write appellate briefs and amicus briefs.
- Supervise, lead, or participate in a team that could include other staff attorneys, cooperating counsel and/or attorneys from other public interest organizations or the National ACLU. Review, comment on and edit letters and briefs of co-counsel and other ACLU staff.
- Work with local lawyers committees to screen and develop promising cases and facilitate and support the effective functioning of those committees.

(2) Leadership, Public Advocacy and Teamwork

- Serve as a spokesperson for the ACLU with the press and as a public speaker, write editorials, blogs and other external communications materials.
- Work with ACLU staff to implement integrated advocacy campaigns and high-impact strategies utilizing the ACLU's communication, legislative, field organizing and legal programs.
- Engage with coalition partners, legislators, legislative staff, and community representatives working on similar issues.

- Demonstrate leadership by initiating cases, projects and programs that are sensitive to community needs, are inclusive, and expand the ACLU's network of supporters.

(3) Administration, Supervision and Support

- Recruit and supervise volunteer attorneys, law students and interns.
- Proactively communicate with all staff so they are well-informed of upcoming hearings, judicial decisions, and important developments in the legal department.
- Ensure that the Legal and Executive Directors are adequately informed of work and solicit direction and input appropriately and consistent with professional standards.
- Prepare administrative and grant reports, provide administrative and organizational support as needed, and adhere to internal systems for attorney recordkeeping and information sharing.

Supervision: The Senior Staff Attorney will report directly to the Legal Director, who is responsible for implementation of the statewide legal program.

Qualifications

- J.D. with significant litigation experience, preferably at least six years of experience litigating federal civil rights and civil liberties cases.
- A strong understanding of, and demonstrated commitment to, civil liberties, civil rights and the mission of the ACLU. Experience in non-profit advocacy or with other community-based groups is a plus.
- Exceptional writing, research, communication and analytical skills are required. Judicial clerkship is a plus.
- Must be a member of the State Bar of Michigan or pass the next bar examination.
- Substantive knowledge and understanding of constitutional law and civil liberties issues.
- Demonstrated skills in litigating independently, jointly and under pressure.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with both legal and non-legal audiences.
- Demonstrated ability to work cooperatively on a variety of projects with lawyers, other staff members, and with community organizations and coalitions.
- A commitment to diversity; a personal approach that values the individual and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability and socio-economic circumstance.
- Creative, result-oriented, self-starting, willing to learn, and able to manage an aggressive schedule, working beyond 9-5 as needed.
- Willingness to travel across the state for litigation, local lawyers committee meetings and speaking engagements.
- Proficiency with computers, Windows and Microsoft Office in particular.

Personal Characteristics: Ideally, the successful candidate will be the following:

- Personally committed to advancing the ACLU’s values, mission, goals and programs, with an understanding of and commitment to the entire range of civil liberties issues and their implications. Dedicated to building and promoting the ACLU.
- A flexible, reliable, creative and energetic person who can handle and prioritize multiple activities and responsibilities; a self-starter and finisher.
- A team player, problem-solver and strategic thinker who inspires collaboration and functions decisively; flexible and well organized.
- Emotionally mature and self-confident, with a sense of humor in order to maintain balance and perspective.

Compensation

Salary is commensurate with experience. Excellent benefits including health insurance and a 401(k) plan.

Application Procedure

Please submit in digital form, by email, a detailed letter of interest, resume, writing sample and contact information for three references. Send to SeniorAttorney@ACLUMich.org.

The position will remain open until filled, but the hiring committee will begin to review applications on September 10, 2018.

The American Civil Liberties Union Fund of Michigan is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, disability, veteran status, and record of arrest or conviction.

“ACLU of Michigan,” as used in this job description, refers collectively to two separate corporate entities, the ACLU of Michigan and the ACLU Fund of Michigan. The two entities share the same mission, office space, and employees.