



Executive Director Position Announcement

October 2018

Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW) is seeking an Executive Director to lead this 41-year-old non-profit organization responsible for providing legally-based protection and advocacy services for people with disabilities. DRW's next Executive Director will continue to advance the rights of people with disabilities through high-quality advocacy, legal representation, and cooperation with the disability rights and social justice communities in the state. The position is based in Wisconsin's state capital, Madison.

Mission

DRW challenges systems and society to achieve positive changes in the lives of people with disabilities and their families.

Vision

All persons with disabilities and their families shall be empowered to exercise and enjoy the full extent of their rights and to pursue the greatest possible quality of life.

Organization

Since 1977, DRW has been an independent, statewide, non-profit corporation protecting and advancing the legal rights of people with disabilities. DRW provides legal representation, information and referrals, systems advocacy, outreach and training, monitoring, and abuse and neglect investigations.

Individual Advocacy

DRW helps individuals protect and exercise their rights under state and federal law.

Information and Referral

DRW provides written and oral information to help people advocate on their own behalf. DRW also makes referrals to other local, state and federal resources designed to assist people with disabilities.

Systems Advocacy

DRW works to promote and effectuate changes in the policies, practices, rules, and laws that impact people with disabilities, and to remove the barriers that prevent or impede them from leading full, productive lives in the community.

Outreach and Training

DRW provides a variety of training and other learning opportunities for consumers, family members, attorneys and others who support people in the disability community.

Monitoring

DRW monitors conditions and services in treatment facilities to ensure that the people who use both facilities and community services are free of abuse and neglect and experience the highest possible quality of life.

Investigations

When there is reason to believe abuse and/or neglect is occurring in a facility or treatment location, DRW may investigate and recommend necessary changes.

DRW receives nine federal grants from the US Department of Health and Human Services, the US Department of Education; the Social Security Administration; and the US Department of Justice. DRW also receives funding from the State of Wisconsin, from several local foundations, and from private donors.

With a budget of over \$6 million, DRW employs 70 FTE employees and maintains four offices in Madison, Milwaukee, Rice Lake and Menasha.

The Executive Director is the Chief Executive Officer of DRW, and as such, directs the overall delivery of protection and advocacy services on a state-wide basis to individuals with disabilities. The Executive Director serves at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

This position is classified as salaried and exempt from overtime pay under federal Department of Labor regulations.

Essential Characteristics

The Executive Director will exhibit leadership skills:

- Work with the Board to set strategic direction for the organization;
- Lead the organization's public policy activities to ensure that the interests of people with disabilities in Wisconsin are well represented at the executive, legislative, and administrative branches of local, state and federal government;
- Work with the media and advocacy groups to ensure that the rights of people with disabilities are part of every civil rights discussion;
- Ensure that the mission of DRW drives all decisions and actions the organization takes on behalf of people with disabilities;
- Ensure that staff and the Board receive initial and ongoing information and training about the mission and values of DRW and that the mission and values of the organization are central to its actions, practices, and public policy positions.
- Ensure that DRW embraces diversity by its actions in its selection of Board members, hiring of staff and delivery of services.

The Executive Director will exhibit management skills:

- Review policies for alignment with DRW's mission statement;
- Establish, monitor, and manage performance metrics for strategic policy adherence;
- Develop organizational capability to address constituent needs;
- Ensure that a robust succession plan is in place to address employee development;
- Ensure that the finances of the organization are efficiently managed and the Board and staff are regularly and timely updated on the financial status of the overall organization and of its individual programs.

The Executive Director will exhibit fundraising skills:

- Ensure the sustainability of the organization through activities designed to increase the organization's revenue base;
- Expand and maintain relationships with constituency groups and individuals to ensure they are fully aware of the quality services and resources offered by DRW;
- Work collaboratively with the Board of Directors and volunteers on fund-development activities.

The Executive Director will exhibit excellent interpersonal and communication skills:

- Communicate clearly and regularly with the Board, staff, constituent groups, the media, and policy makers about the work and of DRW and issues important to individuals with disabilities;
- Seek meaningful input from all stakeholders before making decisions;
- Make clear decisions which are communicated effectively;
- Ensure that once decisions are made, they are implemented in a timely and effective manner;
- Promote teamwork by all staff and Board members to protect and promote the best interests of individuals with disabilities.

Specific Duties

- Execute DRW's goals and objectives as adopted by the Board to advance the Mission and Vision of the organization;
- Implement organization-wide policies, procedures, and guidelines promulgated by the Board of Directors and/or mandated by federal, state, or local laws, and rules and regulations governing administrative and program operations;
- Ensure that all facets of DRW's operation exhibit a commitment to diversity in regard to disability, ethnicity, race, gender; sexual orientation; and religious belief;
- Serve as liaison between the organization and the Office of the Governor, State Legislature, other elected officials, the media, agencies providing services to persons with disabilities, and the public at large;
- Identify and set appropriate funding levels for operations and direct resource development activities to ensure budgeted funding levels are achieved;
- Develop, maintain, and strengthen cooperative working relationships with appropriate advocacy groups, service providers, and organizations to promote DRW's mission;
- Recommend legislative and program changes to state and federal agencies, legislative bodies, and other appropriate groups and individuals;
- Promote the mission of the organization through presentations before public and private groups and attendance at meetings, conferences, and seminars;
- Direct the development of proposals for funding of specific projects, new programs and ongoing organizational priorities;
- Attend all Board meetings and provide updates on relevant issues between meetings;

- Directly supervise key leadership staff;
- Regularly meet with the Board, leadership team and agency staff to assess progress toward goals and objectives, identify needs, set priorities, and develop strategies;
- With the Board, develop and implement a fund-raising plan for the organization;
- Participate on various agency committees;
- Perform other duties as directed by the Board.

Minimum Qualifications

- Commitment to the mission of DRW and to the rights of people with disabilities;
- Deep knowledge about the issues and policies that affect the lives of people with disabilities;
- A minimum of eight years of leadership experience in a complex organization that includes engaging in strategic planning, management, development and supervision of personnel, financial planning, monitoring internal controls for a multi-funded budget, and fund-raising;
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills including the ability to motivate staff, volunteers and supporters;
- Relevant educational experience;
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively with diverse groups and individuals in a professional manner.

Desired Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Demonstrated experience and knowledge of the principles and practices of nonprofit management;
- Advanced knowledge of public policy issues including federal and state laws and regulations applicable to persons with disabilities;
- Demonstrated experience and understanding of litigation and other legal activities, which are inherent components of P&A functions;
- Demonstrated ability to delegate responsibility and achieve results through subordinates;
- Proven ability to advocate effectively including influencing policymakers at local, state and federal level;
- Understanding/experience working in a nonprofit organization and with a board of directors;
- Integrity and fairness in working in a complex environment;
- Flexibility in dealing with staff issues, balancing the needs of the individual with the needs of the organization;
- Ability to travel state wide, as required.

Application Process

Electronic submissions are preferred. Candidates should send a current resume and cover letter detailing the candidate's interest in the position, describing any experience with people with disabilities, and noting relevant leadership experience to:

searchcommittee@drwi.org

Or you may apply on our website:

<http://www.disabilityrightswi.org/about/careers/>

or Mail to:

DRW Search Committee
Disability Rights Wisconsin
131 W. Wilson St. Ste. 700
Madison, Wisconsin 53703-3263

Applications will be accepted until COB Monday, October 22, 2018

DRW reserves the right to conduct interviews with some or all applicants before making a final decision or to reopen the search. Notification/request for an interview will be via email. Salary for this position will depend on qualifications and experience. Excellent benefits.

The DRW's Executive Director Search Committee members thank you for taking the time to review and respond to our posting. If you have a question that you would like answered before submitting an application for employment, you may address it to: Chair, Search Committee at searchcommittee@drwi.org

Disability Rights Wisconsin is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer committed to having a diverse work force. Members of racial/ethnic minority groups and persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply.