

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT
Advocacy Specialist – Civil Rights – Client Assistance Project

Job Type: Permanent Full Time

Full Time Equivalent: 1.0 (40 hours/week)

Reports to: Supervising Attorney

Rate: \$45,000 – 55,000 DOE

Location: Anywhere in Wisconsin. If the employee lives within 45 miles of DRW's Madison, Milwaukee, or Green Bay offices, they will have the option to work fully in-office or under a hybrid work arrangement. If the employee lives more than 45 miles, they will work fully remotely. Must be a Wisconsin resident.

Application Instructions: Submit resume and cover letter detailing your qualifications and experience as they relate to the minimum and preferred qualifications.

For priority consideration apply online at <http://www.disabilityrightswi.org/careers>

Application Deadline: February 17, 2023. Position will remain open until filled

Alternate formats of this Position Announcement are available upon request. Materials may be submitted in alternate formats if necessary.

What is DRW?

Disability Rights Wisconsin is the state's Protection and Advocacy system, charged with protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and keeping them free from abuse and neglect. Employing a variety of means, our advocates and attorneys use individual casework and systems advocacy to achieve positive changes in the lives of people with disabilities and their families. We are seeking employees who value this work. In turn we treat our employees well, offering a supportive environment, talented colleagues, excellent benefits, and generous leave.

DRW arose out of a disability civil rights movement demanding that the abuse of people with disabilities end and that people with disabilities be included in life, school, workplaces, and communities. Our core values include Diversity, Dignity, Independence, Accessibility, Inclusion, Human Rights, and Liberation.

A diversity-based approach to disability rights recognizes the intersectional nature of oppression experienced by people with disabilities from underprivileged and underserved communities. We strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment at DRW. We work to specifically address disability-related injustices at the intersections of disability and race, disability and gender, disability, and gender-based violence, and more.

Job Summary

The Client Assistance Program (CAP) of DRW assists people with disabilities who are having questions or concerns about services through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) or who have concerns about services received through an Independent Living Center (ILC).

The Advocacy Specialist primarily provides direct advocacy assistance to individuals with disabilities who contact DRW with concerns or questions about the services they received from DVR or an ILC. The position may also provide direct advocacy assistance to individuals with other civil rights concerns, such as disability-based discrimination in employment, housing, or public accommodations. Other duties include administrative tasks related to case maintenance and reporting, information and referral, systems advocacy, outreach, and training.

Key Responsibilities

1. Advocacy (90%)

- Participate in intake, referral, case acceptance and quality assurance functions on the Civil Rights team. Collect client information in preparation for group case acceptance meetings or meetings with supervisor, participate in group case acceptance meetings, inform person requesting assistance of decision to accept or deny case, and make appropriate referrals.
- Extensive direct client contact providing advocacy or representation to individuals with disabilities statewide, including meeting with individuals personally at DRW offices, in client homes, and/or in community settings; this includes making some independent judgments about advocacy strategy in the field.
- Maintain a caseload of individuals needing advocacy assistance including:
 - Giving information, advice, and self-advocacy assistance in person or over the phone;
 - Representing clients by attempting resolution through negotiation, informal advocacy, and formal advocacy, including administrative hearings.
- Participate in interdisciplinary teams as a representative of the Civil Rights Team.
- Consult and collaborate with other DRW advocates on individual cases and advocacy issues.
- Attend Outreach and Community events on behalf of DRW.

2. Administration (10%)

- Complete required intake and case recording forms and maintain accurate records of client interactions and case progress.
- Develop and maintain resource files on topics including access to DVR and ILC services, disability-related civil rights, and other advocacy resources, and disability related organizations.
- Maintain client and project files both electronically and in paper files. Comply with DRW client data reporting requirements, compile and organize statistical data.
- As assigned, participate on internal DRW work groups or teams to develop appropriate advocacy strategies and programming for working on behalf of people with disabilities.

Qualifications

Minimum Qualifications:

- At least 6 months of paid or unpaid work providing advocacy and/or support to persons with disability or marginalized communities.
- At least 2 years of paid or unpaid experience doing the following:
 - Interviewing people;
 - Identifying a problem and creating a plan to solve the problem; and
 - Negotiating or assisting someone in negotiating to achieve a solution to a problem.
- Experience/direct contact with persons of culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Excellent listening, verbal, and written communication skills.
- Basic computer skills including email, word processing, and use of the internet.
- Ability to travel statewide as needed.

Preferred:

- Fluency or strong proficiency in American Sign Language, Hmong, or Spanish.
- Direct paid or unpaid experience with people with mental illness and other disabilities.
- Bachelor's Degree in a field relevant to providing advocacy and support to people with disabilities.
- Familiarity with state and federal laws pertaining to DVR.
- Demonstrated commitment to social justice issues.

Benefits

Disability Rights Wisconsin places a high value on the well-being of our staff. We offer the following benefits for permanent employees working at least 20 hours per week: health, vision, dental, and life insurance; short- and long-term disability; 401(k) retirement savings plan with employer contribution, and flex spending plan. Paid time off includes generous holiday, vacation, personal and medical leave, as well as time for volunteering and voting.

A COVID-19 vaccine mandate is in place for all employees. A copy of the policy can be requested by emailing hr@drwi.org.

EEO/AA | We're an equal opportunity employer. All applicants will be considered for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, veteran, or disability status.