

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT
Staff Attorney – Employment / Civil Rights

Job Type: Permanent, Full Time (40 hours/week)

Rate: \$55,000 - 70,000

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

Application Instructions: Submit resume and cover letter (preferred but not required), detailing your qualifications and experience as they relate to the minimum and preferred qualifications.

For priority consideration apply online at www.disabilityrightswi.org/careers

Application Deadline: May 18, 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 Staff Attorney for Employment/Civil Rights provides legal advice and advocacy to end the disability employment gap in Wisconsin (the disparity in employment opportunity between people with disabilities and their non-disabled peers) and to advance the civil rights of individuals with disabilities.

The attorney will primarily provide legal advice and advocacy to individual clients who are making reasonable accommodation requests, responding to discriminatory employment decisions, or attempting to access vocational rehabilitation services from the state. Additional responsibilities will include conducting outreach to the community and trainings on employment and civil rights laws. The team covers a broad scope of civil rights laws. As need arises, the attorney may also conduct advocacy on issues of disability-based discrimination in housing, access to places of public accommodation, and access to state and local government services

Key Responsibilities

1. Direct Legal Services to Individuals (70%)

- Provide effective, empathetic, and timely legal advice, self-advocacy guidance, and/or legal representation to individual clients with disabilities on reasonable accommodations, employment discrimination, access to vocational rehabilitation services, and other employment or civil rights laws.
- Refer clients to other legal and community resources on issues that are not eligible for self-advocacy guidance or direct representation.
- Maintain current, professional, empathetic, and informed legal practices.

2. Outreach, Training, and Systems Advocacy (20%)

- Educate the public, service providers, and community groups about the services provided by Disability Rights Wisconsin and the process for seeking assistance on employment and civil rights issues.
- Train public and private groups on reasonable accommodation law, employment anti-discrimination protections, access to vocational rehabilitation services, and other employment or civil rights laws.
- Identify and advocate for systemic changes related to barriers that have frequently surfaced during individual direct legal services.

3. Programmatic and Administrative (10%)

- Collaborate with colleagues across issue areas by providing individual consultation within your areas of expertise, weekly team consultation, contribution to internal committees or workgroups, and legal guidance for non-attorney advocates.

- Assist in preparation of annual program reporting required under federal grants
- Adhere to all organizational policies, such as policies on confidentiality, records maintenance and retention, and case opening and closing.
- Perform other duties as needed to achieve the administrative and programmatic objectives of the team.
- Some travel will be required when the organization returns to in-person operations, such as for trainings, meetings, or advocacy activities.

Qualifications

Required:

- Law degree and license to practice law in Wisconsin or ability to become licensed within six months of start date.
- Ability to provide accurate, timely, and empathetic legal advice and representation to clients experiencing stressful circumstances.
- Demonstrated commitment to racial justice, economic justice, social justice, and/or disability justice.
- Familiarity with laws governing reasonable accommodation, employment discrimination, or other disability-based civil rights protections, and ability to quickly develop working knowledge necessary to provide legal advice and/or representation.
- Experience / direct contact with persons of culturally diverse background.
- Ability to fulfill administrative and programmatic requirements, such as recordkeeping using basic computer skills.
- Ability to pass federal background investigation required by grant terms within six months of start date.

Preferred:

- Experience providing legal advice and/or representation.
- Personal or professional experience assisting people with disabilities in requests for reasonable accommodation.
- Personal or professional experience assisting people to access vocational rehabilitation services, career development services, assistive technology, and/or other support systems or services.
- Experience/familiarity with federal or state laws pertaining to reasonable accommodation, employment discrimination, and/or vocational rehabilitation.

- Experience/familiarity with other civil rights laws, such as laws pertaining to fair housing, special education, access to places of public accommodation, and/or access to state and local government services.
- Experience conducting trainings, community outreach, or policy advocacy, especially on issues related to civil rights, disability, or employment.
- Affinity with or connections to underserved communities that experience barriers to equal opportunity.

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, flex spending plan, health reimbursement account as well as optional commuter choice plan, pet insurance, critical illness insurance, and identity theft insurance. Paid time off includes generous holiday, vacation, personal, medical, and bereavement leave, as well as time for volunteering, voting, and jury duty.

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.