Disability Rights WISCONSIN

Position Announcement

Advocacy Specialist - Investigator

Position Information

Full Time Equivalent: 40 Hours / week

Reports to: Supervising Advocacy Specialist - Investigator

Rate: $52,020 - $64,826 annually

Location: Anywhere in Wisconsin. If the employee lives within 45 miles of a Disability Rights Wisconsin office, they will have the option to work fully in-office or under a hybrid work arrangement. Residency outside the 45-mile range qualifies for fully remote work. **Must be a Wisconsin resident.**

Job Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:30 am – 5:00 pm

How to Apply

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

For priority consideration, apply online at our Careers page: www.disabilityrightswi.org/careers

- 1-800-928-877 Toll Free | 1-833-635-1968 Fax
- info@drwi.org
- disabilityrightswi.org

Serving the state of Wisconsin with offices in Madison and Milwaukee

Application Deadline: **Preferred consideration will be given to applicants who apply by November 30.** Position will remain open until filled.

Note: You can request alternate formats of this position announcement. You may submit your application materials in alternate formats if needed. Contact drwhr@drwi.org for more information.

About Disability Rights Wisconsin

Disability Rights Wisconsin is the state's Protection and Advocacy system, working to uphold disability rights and ensure freedom from abuse and neglect. Through legal advocacy, individual representation, and systems of change, our advocates and attorneys advance dignity, access, and justice across Wisconsin.

We were founded through the disability civil rights movement demanding an end to abuse and self-determination. That legacy continues to drive our work today. We are guided by core values of equal access, dignity, independence, accessibility, community integration, rights and safety, and self-determination.

We are working toward a Wisconsin that is accessible and just. We seek team members who are motivated by that mission and ready to make a meaningful impact. In return, we offer a collaborative, mission-driven workplace, supportive colleagues, excellent benefits, and generous leave to support your well-being and success.

Our programs include:

- **Protection & Advocacy for people with disabilities:** addressing abuse/neglect, discrimination, access to services, education rights, institutional monitoring, and systemic reform.
- **Disability Benefits Specialist:** helping people access Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurance.
- **Family Care & IRIS Ombudsman:** supporting people to remain in community-based settings.
- **Victim Advocacy:** advocacy and representation for crime victims with disabilities.

About This Position

As part of DRW's **Protection & Advocacy** responsibilities, the **Advocacy Specialist - Investigator** plays a critical role in monitoring the quality of services available to individuals with disabilities in Wisconsin. This staff position is responsible for investigating allegations of abuse, neglect, rights violations, and deaths of individuals with disabilities in the state. This role also conducts routine monitoring visits to facilities and programs that serve individuals with disabilities and documents observations and findings during these visits.

As a member of the **Investigations and Monitoring** (I&M) team, you will investigate and monitor services in all types of facilities, including state psychiatric hospitals, prisons, adult family homes, juvenile justice facilities, etc. Your work can involve any program or facility where individuals with disabilities are served. The team collaborates with state agencies, community partners, providers, and other stakeholders to highlight concerns and advocate for systemic change.

Key Responsibilities

1. Conducting Investigations and Monitoring Visits - 90%

- Investigate reports of abuse, neglect, and client rights violations in services, programs, and facilities that serve individuals with disabilities. Make strategic recommendations to prevent such outcomes in the future.
- Review, track, and analyze statements of deficiency, notices of violation, and plans of correction issued against facilities serving people with disabilities and maintain the database.
- Draft letters and open records requests seeking records of investigations. Track records requests. Properly catalog records obtained from these requests.
- Conduct investigatory interviews with individuals with disabilities, family members, direct care workers, and others by phone and in person.
- Prepare and transmit letters to placing agencies, state, or county decisionmakers, and others, alerting them about problematic providers.
- Review and analyze voluminous medical and/or other records.
- Prepare internal written reports and summaries of completed investigations and assist in the preparation of public reports regarding these investigations.

2. Administration - 5%

- Attend weekly Investigation and Monitoring Team meetings. Assist the Investigations and Monitoring Team Lead in preparing agendas, taking minutes, and updating investigation files.
- Create and maintain a tickler system to ensure investigations and monitoring work is appropriately prioritized, tracked, and reported.

- Edit and proofread investigative reports; ensure necessary redaction has occurred; attach all relevant documents; ensure reports are transmitted to proper recipients.
- Maintain both electronic and paper files in compliance with DRW data reporting and confidentiality requirements, compile and organize statistical data.
- Other duties as assigned.

3. Outreach - 5%

- Cultivate and maintain effective working relationships with local, state, and federal agencies and organizations responsible for investigating, preventing, or otherwise responding to incidents of abuse or neglect.
- Attend meetings with state officials. Potentially represent DRW on task forces, coalitions, and committees concerned with issues relevant to Investigations and Monitoring work.

Qualifications

Required:

- Bachelor's degree, R.N., or equivalent experience of at least four years in paid or unpaid work providing advocacy or direct assistance to people with disabilities in an area related to advocacy, case management, or investigations, including law enforcement, medical / mental health or social work services involving review and analysis of medical or regulatory records.
- Effective information management and analytical skills for complex medical and legal issues.
- Demonstrated commitment to social justice issues and people with disabilities.

- Demonstrated ability to communicate orally and in writing effectively.
- Demonstrated ability to collaborate internally with DRW coworkers and externally with community partners, state, and county decision-makers, and administering agency staff.
- Proficiency in computer skills using Microsoft (Edge, Teams, SharePoint, and Outlook), including tools designed to track investigations and monitoring work.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Ability to travel regionally and statewide, with varying amounts of advance notice.

Preferred:

- Experience / direct contact with persons with disabilities.
- Experience / direct contact with people from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Experience completing forensic investigations or analyzing medical records.
- Experience in clinical, health care, or residential settings.
- General knowledge about regulatory frameworks intending to prevent abuse and neglect such as licensing and/or patient rights requirements applicable to residential or medical facilities serving persons with mental illness, intellectual / developmental disabilities, sensory or physical disabilities, and traumatic brain injury.
- In-depth familiarity with Wisconsin's disability-related service, residential, or prevention of abuse and neglect systems including Family Care, IRIS, community-based mental health programs, adult protective services, child protective services, or state regulatory authority.

Work Environment and Physical Demands

- Ability to remain stationary, often standing or sitting, for long periods.
- Ability to traverse, bend, and reach to access files and operate office equipment.
- Perform repetitive motions that may include wrists, hands, or fingers.
- Occasionally lift or move objects up to 20 pounds.
- Independent travel is required (20%).

Travel

Travel up to 20% of the time.

Benefits

Disability Rights Wisconsin places an unparalleled value on the well-being of our staff. The following benefits are offered for permanent employees who work 20 or more hours per week:

- Generous employer contribution for individual and family health insurance plus a Health Reimbursement Account for uncovered health care costs.
- Employer-provided Short-Term and Long-Term Disability Insurance
- 401(k) Retirement Plan with Employer Contribution
- Flex Spending Account
- Access to affordable, quality:
  - Dental, Vision Coverage
  - Additional Life Insurance for employee and spouse and children

- Critical Illness Insurance
- Identity Theft
- Pet Insurance

- **Public Student Loan Forgiveness:**

  Employment at our organization may qualify you for federal student loan forgiveness programs. We do not directly pay for – nor forgive – federal student loans. However, our status as a not-for-profit organization under Section 501(c)(3) makes us an eligible employer. There may be other determining factors for one to qualify.

  For more information, read the Federal Student Aid's Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) page: studentaid.gov/manage-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service

Generous paid time off policies include:

- 10 Fixed and 4 Floating Holidays
- Leave time for:
  - Medical and Caretaking
  - Vacation
  - Personal
- Bereavement Leave

Additional benefits include the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Commuter Choice, and Sabbatical Leave.

Equal Employment Opportunity Act (EEO) and Affirmative Action (AA)

We are 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 status, or disability status following Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Our organization is committed to building a culturally diverse and inclusive environment.

Date of Job Description: November 2026