

Job Description

Staff Attorney

Department:	Legal
Supervisor:	Legal Director
Classification:	Full-Time Exempt
Supervisory Position:	No

This position is covered by a collective bargaining agreement.

Position Overview:

The Staff Attorney works under the direction of the Legal Director to help develop and litigate cases at the trial and appellate level in state and federal courts on a wide variety of civil rights and civil liberties issues. While the staff attorney will be responsible for engaging in pro-active litigation around our strategic priority areas, they also will be expected to work closely with communications staff and policy advocates in support of the ACLU of Kentucky's integrated advocacy model, which unites legal advocacy, policy advocacy, organizing, and base building for maximum impact.

Primary Responsibilities/Essential Duties:

- In concert with the Legal Director, strategically plan, proactively seek out, and creatively implement a strategic impact litigation program to advance key civil rights and civil liberties.
- Work with fellow ACLU of Kentucky staff to integrate litigation with policy advocacy, communications and public education, and philanthropy.
- Serve as co-counsel and work in conjunction with other staff within the ACLU of Kentucky, the national ACLU, other ACLU affiliates, and partner organizations to bring pro-active litigation around civil rights and other strategic priority issues.
- Investigate, develop, and litigate collaboratively and independently—to include factual and legal research, discovery, motion practice, trials, appeals, and amicus briefs—high-impact cases at the trial and appellate levels in federal and state courts; maintain excellent and ethical client representation throughout.
- Supervise and manage intake review and responses; follow-up with individuals who file complaints with the ACLU, including interviewing them, drafting affidavits or testimonies on their behalf, and conducting research to determine whether further action by the ACLU is warranted.
- Engage in legal advocacy short of litigation, including: file Open Records Requests and litigate ORR disputes, where needed; and write demand letters.
- Coordinate with Advocacy Team staff to implement integrated advocacy campaigns and high-impact strategies supporting ACLU priorities; provide legal analysis to advance ACLU-KY policy work; present testimony before legislative bodies and administrative agencies as requested by policy staff.
- Serve as a spokesperson for the ACLU of Kentucky, as assigned.
- Provide technical support and strategic leadership to community groups, advocates, and organizers in Kentucky.

- Conduct community outreach as needed, including public speaking, media interviews, outreach, and “know your rights” presentations, as well as writing op-eds, newsletter articles, and reports.
- Develop and maintain relationships with partner organizations, public interest law firms, legal service agencies, and other members of the Kentucky legal community.

Knowledge/Skills:

- **Critical Thinking:** Ability to make substantial contributions on behalf of the Legal program in matters of complex planning and coordination, including organizational strategic planning and formation of cross-departmental project teams.
- **Decision Making:** Uses organizational vision and mission to set goals, develop and implement tactics; assume ownership and exercise a high degree of discretion.
- **Leadership:** Assist Legal Director to supervise law student interns, and volunteers.
 - **Performance Feedback:** Able to provide critical and effective feedback to both staff and executive team.
 - **Training:** Organizational and staff development expertise including demonstrated success building strong teams and cultures defined by excellence, professionalism, trust and respect.
 - **Organization:** Excellent organization and administrative skills: a strong, consistent attention to detail, an organized work style, and the ability to follow through on work assignments with a minimum of direct supervision.
 - Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
 - Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing, to diverse audiences and in a variety of contexts. Demonstrated ability to simplify complex themes and activities into a short, compelling presentation or written piece.
- Demonstrated skills in legal research and legal analysis.
- Strong self-motivation and ability to manage multiple deadlines.
- The ability and willingness to travel regularly throughout Kentucky and the possession of a valid driver’s license and a reliable vehicle.
- The position of Staff Attorney requires a willingness to work beyond the 9 to 5 hours of the normal workday, including evening and weekend meetings and/or events.

Qualifications:

- J.D. with at least three years of significant litigation experience; complex federal civil litigation experience is a plus.
- Ability to develop and implement litigation strategies.
- Basic understanding of electronic discovery preferred.
- Demonstrated experience preparing for and/or participating in examining or defending witnesses or other oral advocacy.
- Ability to edit the work of oneself and others with a collegial spirit to correct grammar and sharpen prose.
- Substantive knowledge of constitutional law and civil liberties.
- Strong, demonstrated commitment to public interest law and the mission of the ACLU of Kentucky; knowledge of and experience with wide range of civil liberties and civil rights issues.
- Ability to work effectively and professionally with attorneys, clients, and with community organizations and coalitions.
- A commitment to diversity; a personal approach that values individuals and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability,

and socio-economic circumstance, and the ability to work with diverse individuals within the organization and broader community.

- A confident and professional work style and the ability to work independently as well as cooperatively, exhibiting patience, good will, and good judgment.
- Proficiency with personal computers, using Windows and Microsoft Office software.
- Facility for administrative work including coordination with volunteer attorneys and supervision of law students, interns, and office volunteers.
- Licensed to practice law in Kentucky (or admission within one of year).

Compensation

The annual salary for this position is \$95,000.

We understand how vital our work is and at the same time understand the toll engaged activism can take. Our goal is to retain staff, and we believe that having a robust benefit offering is vital in meeting that goal. Our benefits include paid vacation in addition to 20 office holidays, a monthly All-Staff Day of Rest, and four floating holidays scheduled at the employee's discretion; paid sick leave, fully employer-paid medical, vision and dental insurance for staff members, life and long-term disability insurance; 401(k) plan with employer match; and FSA Healthcare savings plan options.

How to Apply:

To apply, please send the following to admin@aclu-ky.org with the subject line of "Staff Attorney Position". (All attachments should be in .doc or .pdf format):

- Letter of interest, which should include:
 - How did you learn about the position?
 - What single civil rights/liberties issue do you feel is most pressing right now and why?
 - What identities, perspectives, and experiences would you bring to the ACLU of Kentucky that are important to you and/or relevant to our work?
- Resume
- Three professional references (relationship, email address, and phone numbers)

The priority deadline for applications is April 25, 2025. Applications will be accepted after this date, but applicants may not be contacted if a successful candidate is identified.

Accommodations

The ACLU of Kentucky is an equal-opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. ACLU-KY encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, veteran status, and record of arrest or conviction. We encourage applicants with disabilities who may need accommodations in the application process to contact: T Gonzales, Deputy Director, tgonzales@aclu-ky.org.