



## **Director, Criminal Justice Project**

The Lawyers' Committee is one of the leading national civil rights legal organizations, with the principal mission of fighting racial discrimination faced by African Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities. The Lawyers' Committee was formed in 1963 at the request of President John F. Kennedy to enlist the private bar's leadership and resources in combating racial discrimination and the resulting inequality of opportunity – work that continues to be vital today.

The Lawyers' Committee seeks a proven manager with demonstrated expertise as a criminal justice advocate to lead its Criminal Justice Project (CJP). The Project works to address racial disparities within the criminal justice system, including those that contribute to mass incarceration. Current matters handled by the project address disparities resulting from the criminalization of poverty, the failure to provide counsel to the poor, inequitable policing and more.

The Director will spearhead the organization's national efforts to challenge the unconstitutional jailing of poor defendants solely because they are unable to pay criminal justice debt that results from the levying of fines & fees, court costs and bail. The Director will also lead the organization's national efforts to promote programs and policies that ensure equality and fairness in law enforcement and court operations.

The Director is responsible for operationalizing the Project's mission to challenge the criminalization of poverty and institutional practices that contribute to mass incarceration. The Director will oversee all aspects of our criminal justice litigation and programs, design and implement strategies for advancing criminal justice reform, and develop innovative programs and initiatives to promote racial equity and fairness in the criminal justice system.

The ideal candidate should have a demonstrated commitment to racial justice, cultural competency and experience working with underserved and marginalized communities, and substantial experience working within the criminal justice system as a public defender, prosecutor or civil

litigator. The candidate must have established themselves as a supportive manager who is committed to communication, collaboration, and development of the team and its members. The ideal candidate will also be organized and capable of leading a diverse team of attorneys and support staff, as well as have the ability to cultivate and maintain good relationships with pro-bono counsel and fellow advocacy organizations. The position reports to the Chief Counsel.

### **Specific Duties and Responsibilities:**

Essential responsibilities of the Director include but are not limited to the following:

- Develop, manage and lead all aspects of the Project's litigation docket, public education programs and criminal justice initiatives;
- Identify and effectively communicate the Project's priorities and ensure that the Project's resources are used efficiently and effectively in support of its goals;
- Coordinate with other Projects at the Lawyers' Committee to develop and implement an intersectional approach to our racial justice work;
- Manage and review day-to-day work of Project staff, including investigations and litigation, data collection and research, report writing, advocacy, and program development;
- Supervise all Project staff, including litigating and non-litigating Attorneys, Investigators, Paralegals, and Law Fellows and Legal Interns. This may also include participating in the supervision or support of Pro Bono Attorneys and other Co-Counsel supporting the Project's active docket;
- Collaborate with Development and Communications staff to message the impact of the Project's work;
- Collaborate with Policy staff to develop and advance the organization's criminal justice agenda;
- Monitor nationwide criminal justice litigation and identify opportunities to expand the Project's reach by filing amicus briefs in appropriate cases;
- Communicate the Project's work via public speaking engagements,

media interviews, op-ed and essay writing;

- Develop and execute the Project's budget, in collaboration with the Chief Financial Officer; and
- Lead the development and production of research-based documents for publication.

### **Experience and Qualifications:**

The Lawyers' Committee is seeking an ambitious and dedicated Project Director with experience challenging inequality within the criminal justice system. The successful candidate will have a strong track record of leadership and ability to articulate and drive a vision for the Project within a complex and multi-faceted organization. A strong candidate will have personal experience leading complex litigation, as well as a track record of leadership and supervision that demonstrates an ability and commitment to nurturing the growth and development of young attorneys and professional staff.

Required qualifications of this position include but are not limited to:

- Admission to the bar of at least one state and, if not already admitted to the DC Bar, eligible to waive into the DC Bar;
- A minimum of ten years of professional experience is strongly preferred, although individuals with less experience but the requisite skills and expertise are also encouraged to apply;
- Exceptional legal research and writing and oral advocacy skills. Ability to communicate effectively with diverse audiences, including the general public, media, and policy makers;
- Highest integrity, sound judgment, and superior emotional intelligence;
- Commitment to diversity and inclusiveness and respect for differences in regards to race, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socioeconomic circumstances;
- Ability to work collaboratively and respectfully with Project staff, pro bono partners, civil rights allies, and stakeholder organizations;
- A creative and effective problem-solver with strong interpersonal skills;

- Commitment and demonstrated ability to provide culturally-competent advocacy;
- Ability to work efficiently and effectively under pressure;
- Demonstrated ability to take initiative, think creatively and work independently;
- Ability to travel for litigation, conferences, speaking engagements and client development; and
- Experience as a manager and ability to lead, motivate and inspire a diverse team of attorneys and professional staff.

**To Apply:** Please submit a cover letter, resume, and writing sample to <https://podio.com/webforms/22973720/1632673>. No calls will be accepted. The position will remain open until filled and applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Salary and benefits are competitive for a nonprofit legal organization. Staff Benefits include Employer Sponsored (Medical, Dental and Group Life & AD&D); Voluntary Benefits (Vision Insurance, Short-Term Disability, Long-Term Disability and Supplemental Life) coverage; the opportunity to participate in the 403(b) Retirement Plan; Voluntary Flexible Spending (Medical and/or Dependent Care) and Commuter Benefits; 11 paid Holidays and Vacation/Sick days.

The Lawyers' Committee does not discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, medical condition, marital status, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family responsibility, personal appearance, genetic information, matriculation, political affiliation, or any other status protected under law. We strongly encourage candidates of color and candidates from underrepresented communities to apply.

**Accessibility Assistance:** Although calls will not be accepted regarding questions about the position, if you are an individual with a disability and need assistance completing the online application, please call 202-662-8600 and ask for an applicant accommodation or send an email with the subject line "Applicant Accommodation" to [kcoates@lawyerscommittee.org](mailto:kcoates@lawyerscommittee.org).