

## **New Haven Legal Assistance Association. Inc.**

### **Housing Attorneys New Right to Counsel Program in Connecticut**

#### **About New Haven Legal Assistance**

New Haven Legal Assistance Association (NHLAA) is a legal aid organization, founded in 1964 in the midst of the Civil Rights movement. We were established on the principle that everyone, regardless of race or income, should have equal access to the justice system. We work side by side and in relationship with the community in order to lift up our clients' voices and achieve racial, economic, and social justice. NHLAA serves clients living in 22 cities and towns in the Greater New Haven and Lower Naugatuck Valley communities. Our client base are primarily people of color impacted by the legacy of structural racialization, systemic racism, and implicit bias. They are children, low-wage workers, domestic violence survivors, individuals with disabilities, seniors, and immigrants.

#### **About the Position**

As Connecticut joins other U.S. cities in passing new Right to Counsel legislation, NHLAA is presented with the opportunity to transform the representation of people, primarily from low-income communities of color, facing eviction in housing court. As part of this transformation, we strive to ensure the protection of summary process and fair housing rights, maintain housing stability, and minimize the harm from eviction records.

NHLAA is seeking to hire attorneys to join its busy housing unit. Candidates should demonstrate a passion for public interest law and social justice and want to work closely with communities burdened by systemic socioeconomic barriers to prevent eviction and homelessness.

The attorneys will be expected to thoughtfully work with our NHLAA team, clients, and community groups to resolve individual issues, as well as systemic issues related to the eviction process. The attorneys will represent clients in summary process eviction cases, as well as represent clients in court hearings, engage in negotiated settlements, and work with local social service providers that may support the client.

In addition to representing tenants in eviction proceedings in court, the work presents opportunities to work closely with community organizations, to change the culture of the courts as part of a growing cohort that will transform landlord-tenant relations over the coming years.

#### **Job Duties**

- Providing full legal representation in housing court proceedings to New Haven area tenants as part of the right to counsel system of representation;
- Providing legal advice and counseling to tenants as needed;
- Litigating cases in housing court, administrative forums, appellate courts, and other state and federal courts on behalf of people facing eviction;
- Identifying trends and recurring issues for potential impact litigation;
- Representing tenants in affirmative litigation where required;
- Providing trainings to other advocates, tenant associations, community members, and community groups;

- Conducting neighborhood-based legal clinics and know-your-rights workshops.

### **Required Qualifications**

- Active bar membership with either (1) confirmed eligibility to waive into membership in the Connecticut bar, or (2) willingness to sit for the February or July 2022 Connecticut bar
- Demonstrated commitment to grassroots efforts for economic, racial and social justice.
- Demonstrated ability to work with diverse populations.
- Excellent organizational skills.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, and ability to present to diverse audiences, specifically racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse communities.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively.
- Strong time management and organization skills including the ability to handle a diverse, fast paced caseload generated by a "right to counsel" intake where all clients have a legal entitlement to representation.

### **Preferred Qualifications**

- Experience with direct client services
- Experience with housing law and courtroom experience are preferred but not required; training will be provided for this position

### **Location**

- NHLAA's primary office is located in New Haven. Occasional travel to court and to our satellite office in Derby, Connecticut will also be required.

### **Application Deadline**

- We are accepting applications on a rolling basis and encourage candidates to apply as soon as possible.

### **Compensation**

- Salaries will be based on experience and in accordance with our salary scale. We offer generous benefits, including a 403(b) retirement plan; health, dental, vision, and short term disability insurance; sick leave; vacation; most observed state and federal holidays; and loan repayment assistance.

### **Application Instructions**

- Please send a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and list of at least three references to Carolyn Gontarski at [cgontarski@nhlegal.org](mailto:cgontarski@nhlegal.org). NHLAA invites all applicants to include in their cover letter a statement about how your unique background and/or experiences might contribute to the diversity, cultural vitality, and perspective of our staff and legal services practice.

It is the policy of New Haven Legal Assistance to provide equal employment opportunity (EEO) to all persons regardless of age, color, national origin, citizenship status, physical or mental disability, race, religion, creed, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, genetic information, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law.