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JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

October 2024

Debtors' Prison Project Staff Attorney

Who We Are

Public Justice, a nonprofit legal advocacy organization that takes on the biggest systemic threats to justice of our time – abusive corporate power and predatory practices, the assault on civil rights and liberties, and the destruction of the earth's sustainability – is seeking to hire an experienced **Debtors' Prison Project Staff Attorney**.

Public Justice connects high-impact litigation with strategic communications and the strength of our partnerships to fight these abusive and discriminatory systems and win social and economic justice. In particular, we ensure access to the civil justice system, protect students' civil rights, fight to end modern-day debtors' prisons, enforce the nation's most important environmental laws, and much more.

Public Justice's Debtors' Prison Project (DPP) works to shrink the criminal legal system by ending the criminalization of poverty. Working with allies and impacted communities, DPP uses litigation, advocacy, and education to ensure people are not punished simply because they can't pay and to stop governments and for-profit companies from treating people impacted by the system as a revenue source.

What We Are Looking For

The person selected for the **DPP Staff Attorney** role will have at least 5 years of relevant experience. The attorney will be responsible for developing and litigating new DPP cases and projects; serving as lead counsel or co-counsel; and working closely with the DPP team and with other Public Justice attorneys and allies, including public interest lawyers at other organizations, lawyers at private firms, public defenders, legal services lawyers, community activists, investigators, and organizers.

The DPP Staff Attorney reports to DPP Director Leslie Bailey and may be based in Washington, D.C., Oakland, CA, or remotely. Because Public Justice handles litigation and advocacy nationally, the position will require travel. This is a full-time, exempt position.

Key Responsibilities

1. Case Development:

- Investigate and develop new DPP cases from inception through appeal, including factual investigation, drafting and submitting public records requests, identifying clients, conducting legal research and analysis, community outreach, and helping build a narrative campaign.

2. Litigation and Issue Monitoring:

- Serve as lead counsel or co-counsel in the full range of litigation tasks involved in DPP cases, including legal research and analysis, discovery, briefing, oral arguments, client communications, settlement negotiations; and drafting or coordinating the drafting of amicus briefs.
- Monitor developments in cases and in the news in order to identify trends related to DPP's work.
- Review and respond to case intakes and inquiries about DPP's work.

3. Supervision:

- Supervise attorneys, fellows, law clerks, investigators, and legal assistants.
- Assist with hiring as needed.

4. Strategic Planning:

- Participate in and contribute to thought leadership on issues related to DPP's work, including helping prioritize initiatives and assisting with long-term strategic planning.

5. Non-Litigation Advocacy:

- Engage in a broad range of advocacy outside the courtroom, such as drafting letters to local governments, courts, and agencies and coordinating with legislative advocates.

6. Storytelling and Public Speaking

- Work in partnership with Public Justice's Communications Department to develop and implement storytelling campaigns to educate the public, policymakers, lawyers, community organizers, and reporters about the unjust systems and policies we challenge.
- Speak at conferences, webinars, and other events about issues relevant to DPP's work.

7. Fundraising:

- Assist with promoting and reporting on DPP's work to current and prospective funders.

8. Networking:

- Build networks and collaborate with allies, including among Public Justice's Board of Directors and members.

Experience, Skills & Qualifications

- Law school graduate with at least 5 years of relevant legal and advocacy experience.
- Admission to a state bar and willingness to gain admission to DC bar if not based in CA or DC.
- Strong commitment to racial justice and to ending mass incarceration and wealth-based punishment;
- Excellent analytical, legal research, and writing skills;
- Excellent communication and public speaking skills;
- Self motivation and proven ability to work as part of a team;
- Creativity, initiative, strong work ethic, and sound judgment;
- Willingness to travel;
- Ability to effectively work with people from diverse cultures, backgrounds, and orientations;
- Comfort with meeting with potential clients and witnesses in jail and prison settings; and
- Ability and willingness to contribute to the creation of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive work community that thrives on collaboration.

Preference will be given to applicants with experience in civil rights class actions, public defense, or other litigation challenging injustices in the criminal legal system.

Salary and benefits

We offer a mission-focused work environment, a teamwork and community-oriented work culture, and a competitive compensation package. We implement healthy work-life balance policies, including operating on a four-day workweek all year round. We also offer a generous benefits package, including at least three weeks of paid vacation, two weeks of sick leave, and two personal days each year, all federal and some local holidays, employer-paid health, dental, and vision insurance premiums, and a 401(k) plan. Our attorneys are paid on a salary scale based on years out of law school. The current annual salary for an attorney who graduated law school in 2019 is \$109,350.

How to Apply

Please email the following materials to staffattorney@publicjustice.net with the subject line: "DPP Staff Attorney":

- A cover letter that conveys why you are drawn to DPP and how your particular experience makes you a strong candidate for this position;

- Your resume;
- Contact information for three references; and
- Two writing samples, including at least one legal brief. Writing samples should be unedited or only lightly edited by someone other than you; if you submit an edited sample, please include an explanation of the extent of editing.

Applicants are encouraged to submit their materials by December 15, 2024, at which point applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Access

Public Justice is an equal-opportunity employer and values a diverse workplace. We are committed to providing an environment of mutual respect where equitable employment opportunities are available to all applicants. We encourage applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, age, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, disability, veteran status, record of arrest or conviction, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. People of color, lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender and gender-diverse people, women, people with abilities in multiple languages, immigrants, people living with disabilities, veterans, and formerly incarcerated individuals are strongly encouraged to apply. Please visit this link to read our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access policy statement: [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Access](#).

Public Justice is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities. If you require reasonable accommodations during any part of the hiring process, please email lhughes@publicjustice.net.