

Legal Services NYC seeks a Director of Litigation for its Housing Practice.

Our Organization:

Legal Services NYC fights poverty and seeks racial, social, and economic justice for low-income New Yorkers. For more than 50 years, we have challenged systemic injustices that keep people in poverty and provided legal services that help our clients meet basic needs for housing, income, economic security, family and immigration stability, education, and health care. LSNYC is the largest civil legal services provider in the country; our staff of almost 700 people in neighborhood-based offices and outreach sites across all five boroughs helps over 100,000 New Yorkers annually. We partner with scores of community-based and client-run organizations, elected officials, law schools, public agencies, pro bono lawyers, and the courts to maximize our effectiveness. Our work fights discrimination and helps to achieve equity for low-income New Yorkers.

The Opportunity:

The Director of Litigation - Housing will provide litigation and advocacy expertise and leadership for LSNYC's housing practice, which currently includes over 200 advocates and staff in neighborhood-based offices across the five boroughs. The Director of Litigation-Housing will work closely with the Citywide Housing Director and Citywide Housing Deputy Director to develop, foster, support, and manage housing-related litigation and advocacy for low-income New Yorkers, in close partnership with tenant and community-based organizations, multi-organizational coalitions, and other relevant stakeholders. The Director of Litigation - Housing will provide legal leadership, vision, and direction for the citywide housing practice. This includes two principle focuses: (1) law reform, affirmative litigation, policy advocacy, and other efforts at creating systemic change for our clients; (2) ensuring high-quality practice throughout this large, high-volume, citywide practice, including working with advocates to develop strategic approaches to complex legal questions, approving appeals and creating and implementing an appellate strategy that maximizes our resources and effect for our clients and client population, and providing legal leadership for our housing supervisors and managers, including, where appropriate, providing legal expertise on individual complex cases.

The Director of Litigation - Housing reports to the Chief of Litigation and Advocacy and will work closely with all of LSNYC's Directors of Litigation and Advocacy (including borough-based Directors and citywide practice Directors), including from time to time, where directed, on citywide impact litigation or advocacy on issues not directly related to housing.

Job Responsibilities:

The Director of Litigation - Housing duties include, inter alia:

- Providing legal expertise and leadership to the citywide housing practice and working with advocates and managers throughout the City to ensure a cohesive and innovative high-quality city-wide practice, including working with advocates to develop and implement strategic approaches to complex legal questions;
- Identifying and implementing opportunities for high-impact work to benefit our client communities, including engaging in and implementing a strategic approach to appellate litigation, impact or law-reform litigation, and policy advocacy;
- Providing vision and leadership around systemic, group, and community lawyering practices and approaches;
- In close collaboration with the Director of Housing, promoting a cohesive, strategic, and innovative citywide practice;
- Actively advancing LSNYC's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging work;
- Working with LSNYC advocates, community-based partners, other housing legal services providers, and government agencies to develop and engage in high-impact housing-related advocacy to benefit our client communities;
- Keeping the citywide housing practice up-to-date and informed by developments in city, state, and federal laws, policies, and practices;
- Working closely with other practice areas throughout LSNYC to identify and address client needs that span multiple practice areas; and
- Working with the other Litigation Directors throughout LSNYC to engage in systemic litigation and advocacy in support of our client base, including from time to time, as directed, supporting litigation and/or advocacy not directly related to housing.
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We seek a candidate with the following:

- A clear and compelling vision of how LSNYC's housing practice can advance housing justice, racial equity, and the rights of low-income communities;
- At least 10 years of litigation experience, with at least 8 years in housing litigation (which may include fair housing litigation) and at least 5 years in a supervisory capacity over other attorneys;
- A thorough understanding of New York City's housing code as well as other laws and regulations affecting low-income New Yorkers, including those relevant to NYCHA housing, Section 8 housing, and other affordable housing subsidies and programs;

- Substantial experience in all areas of civil litigation, including motion practice, discovery, trial practice, and appellate practice;
- Experience engaging in affirmative, impact, and/or law reform litigation, including HP litigation and fair housing litigation;
- Substantial and successful experience engaging in anti-poverty advocacy, including policy advocacy, legislative advocacy, agency advocacy, and coalition advocacy;
- The ability to think strategically and to take both a nitty-gritty and big-picture view of a large direct services legal practice;
- An ability and desire to work with people of all different backgrounds and experience levels and a dedication to helping mentor and build skills for staff and advocates of all levels;
- A deep understanding of the systemic conditions that create and sustain poverty and racial inequality in New York City;
- A deep understanding and appreciation for the role (and the limits of the role) of legal services providers in broader community-driven movements and coalitions for social and racial justice and equity
- A dedication to promoting a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace and providing and modeling leadership around Diversity Equity Inclusion, and Belonging.

The salary range for this position is \$130,000–\$209,000, based on years of relevant experience, among other factors. We expect very few applicants, if any, to be eligible for compensation near the top of the salary range.

To Apply: Email your resume and cover letter to Geraldine Durenay-Prophete at gdurenay@lsnyc.org and include the job title in the subject line.

Inclusion Statement: Studies have shown that women and people of color are more hesitant than others to apply for jobs where they fear they may not fully meet every single qualification listed. While the list of qualifications represents the qualities that we are looking for in applicants, we are looking for the best candidate for the job. If you are interested in this position and have substantial relevant experience, we encourage you to apply even if you do not fully meet every criterion listed above.

All employees are strongly encouraged to continue to receive and maintain up-to-date COVID vaccinations unless they are unable to for medical or religious reasons.

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