



DC JAIL AND PRISON ADVOCACY PROJECT
MEN'S REENTRY HOUSING PILOT

STAFF ATTORNEY JOB ANNOUNCEMENT – ACCOMMODATIONS IN COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

Disability Rights DC is a nonprofit legal services agency that protects and advances the rights of people with disabilities through direct advocacy and systemic change. Part of our work includes preventing and redressing the abuse and neglect of incarcerated individuals with mental illness through the DC Jail and Prison Advocacy Project (JPAP). Our goal is to reduce unnecessary periods of incarceration for DC residents with psychiatric and intellectual disabilities and remove barriers to their self-directed, successful integration into the community.

The Staff Attorney for Accommodations in Community Supervision will join our interdisciplinary team to advocate for disability accommodations in community supervision from both the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) and the US Probation Office for the District of Columbia (USPO). The position will include both proactive individual advocacy for participants in the Housing Pilot and the opportunity for systemic advocacy to improve the frequency and appropriateness of disability accommodations in community supervision. The Staff Attorney's responsibilities will be performed under the supervision of the Housing Pilot Program Manager. Responsibilities include:

- ❑ Work with JPAP Reentry Advocates to review available records and establish relationship with program participants prior to release to determine their interest in possible accommodations that have helped in the past or that the individual believes may have been helpful in successfully meeting terms of supervision.
- ❑ Attend initial and subsequent participant meetings with Community Supervision Officers (CSOs) or equivalent at USPO to initiate consideration of accommodations and to update as new, relevant information about community living emerges.
- ❑ Investigate DC practices for identifying individuals who may need accommodations as well as promising practices in other jurisdictions with goal of improving practices, such as supervisory agencies developing a system of identifying supervisees with psychiatric and intellectual disabilities who could benefit from accommodations and an accommodations "bank" of ideas.
- ❑ Stay updated on disability accommodations for people with psychiatric and intellectual disabilities in the criminal legal system and other areas, such as employment, that could be adapted to community supervision.
- ❑ Contribute to policy reform efforts through research, investigations, drafting policy recommendations, publishing articles, working within National Disability Rights Network and other bodies, and engaging legislators and other government officials.

- ❑ Prepare and update advocacy training materials with particular focus on accommodations for individuals with co-occurring mental health, intellectual disabilities, and substance use disorders. Present at workshops for community supervision agencies, incarcerated individuals who will be on supervision after release, and formerly incarcerated individuals on supervision, and defense counsel, particularly parole attorneys.
- ❑ Work with local and national legal organizations and law firms to determine feasibility of litigation if individuals are charged with violating conditions of supervision that could have been prevented had accommodations been provided or implemented appropriately and consistently.

Compensation: The Staff Attorney will work full-time for a competitive non-profit salary, based on experience, plus benefits, which include full medical insurance, vacation, sick leave and other benefits.

Qualifications:

- ❑ Required: Member of the DC Bar or member of another state bar eligible to waive into DC.
- ❑ Required: Ability to communicate and work effectively as a proactive member of interdisciplinary team. Demonstrated competence in verbal, written, organizational and prioritization skills. Strong problem-solving skills and ability to troubleshoot challenging situations and creatively advance civil rights protections.
- ❑ Preferred: Experience working with people with psychiatric or intellectual disabilities and experience working within the community supervision/parole system.
- ❑ Preferred: Experience working within a social justice or civil rights organization, or for a criminal defense law office, particularly one that serves homeless or incarcerated individuals.
- ❑ Preferred: Experience with disability accommodations in any setting.

HOW TO APPLY

All applicants must *briefly* respond to the following three questions within a cover letter or in a separate essay (maximum 2 pages total):

- 1) What are your personal or professional motivations behind working in the criminal legal/disability rights field?
- 2) What do you believe is one problem in the criminal legal system that could benefit from more advocacy reform?
- 3) What do you believe is one problem in the behavioral health system which could benefit from more advocacy reform?

Please send your responses together with a resume and list of references electronically **no later than January 18, 2021** to:

Tammy Seltzer, Director
DC Jail & Prison Advocacy Project

University Legal Services

tseltzer@uls-dc.org

No calls please

Applications will be considered as soon as they are received.

ULS values diversity of culture, disability, and other life experiences, and is an equal opportunity employer by choice. People with personal experience in the criminal legal system and/or behavioral health system are welcome and encouraged to apply.