



**DC JAIL AND PRISON ADVOCACY PROJECT**  
**REENTRY ADVOCATE JOB ANNOUNCEMENT**

Disability Rights DC at University Legal Services (DRDC), a nonprofit protection and advocacy agency that advances the rights of DC residents with disabilities, seeks a Reentry Advocate for its Jail and Prison Advocacy Project (JPAP). The Reentry Advocate is responsible for providing reentry services to incarcerated DC residents diagnosed with mental illness and intellectual disabilities by reaching into the DC Jail and (by phone and letter) the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) and halfway houses. Our goal is to promote the successful integration of DC residents diagnosed with mental illness and intellectual disabilities into the community.

As a member of the JPAP team, the Reentry Advocate will provide non-clinical assessments (e.g., Self-Sufficiency Matrix), primary and secondary case management, crisis counseling, and advocacy support to incarcerated DC residents with mental illness and intellectual disabilities as they prepare for their reentry and for a defined period after they transition back into the community. The Reentry Advocate's objective is to ensure our clients' needs are at the center of reentry planning and to advocate for individualized community services that meet those needs. Responsibilities include:

- ❑ Develop and coordinate client-centered reentry plans for adults with mental illness and/or intellectual disabilities at the DC Jail, BOP, and halfway houses 4-6 months prior to release and provide hands-on assistance applying for benefits and connecting people with mental health agencies, identification, housing, and other reentry resources.
- ❑ Negotiate and facilitate relationships between our clients and their behavioral health providers, probation and parole, employment and job readiness programs, and other community-based services. Model interpersonal communication skills and promote empowerment, independence, and self-advocacy.
- ❑ Maintain regular contact with individuals and use assertive engagement strategies such as street outreach, transportation assistance, and family or peer involvement, when appropriate and permitted by the persons we serve.
- ❑ Supervise and coordinate with the Peer Navigator, an individual with lived experience in the criminal legal and/or public behavioral health system.
- ❑ Learn and maintain current knowledge of local and national mental health standards of care, best practices, and the availability of local resources, including, for e.g., evidence-based practices such as motivational interviewing, trauma-informed care and trauma-specific services, and SOAR.

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- ❑ Maintain case data in multiple data management systems as directed to track every intervention as well as specified outcomes.
- ❑ Perform outreach and education activities to identify potential clients and disseminate information to justice-involved individuals, providers, and decision makers regarding evidence-based practices, systemic issues, community resources and service gaps and other topics.

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

## QUALIFICATIONS

- ❑ Required: Experience in case management, knowledge of programs and resources for people who are formerly incarcerated, diagnosed with mental illness or intellectual disabilities, crime victims and trauma survivors, unhoused or in unstable housing situations, and who have no or very low income. A degree in social work, counseling, or related field, with a current license if required for this position by your field's licensing body, is helpful, but not required.
- ❑ Required: Ability to communicate and build rapport with individuals who have extensive trauma histories, serious and persistent mental illness or intellectual disabilities, and criminal legal involvement, and who are predominantly low-income Black residents of DC.
- ❑ Required: Ability to communicate and work effectively as a proactive member of an interdisciplinary team and to supervise staff and volunteers. 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: Ability to pass criminal background check required by DOC to obtain a badge to access the DC Jail.
- ❑ Preferred: Experience working within a social service organization, victim services organization, or mental health agency, particularly one that serves unhoused, incarcerated, or formerly incarcerated individuals.

## 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 for people with disabilities in the criminal legal system that could benefit from more advocacy reform?
- 3) What kind of reforms in the behavioral health system or other community services could prevent people diagnosed with mental illness or intellectual disabilities from ending up in the criminal legal system?

Please send your responses together with a resume and list of references electronically **no later than December 6, 2023** to:

Tammy Seltzer  
DC Jail & Prison Advocacy Project  
University Legal Services  
[tseltzer@uls-dc.org](mailto: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 justice system and/or behavioral health system are welcome and encouraged to apply.*