



PROGRAM COUNSEL – VOTING RIGHTS

Job Summary

Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights seeks an experienced attorney to serve in the role of Voting Rights Program Counsel. This attorney will join an integrated and collaborative advocacy team that is focused on three core practice areas: Education Equity, Equitable Community Development and Housing, and Voting Rights and Civic Empowerment. This Program Counsel position will focus on Voting Rights and will report to the Senior Counsel in the Voting Rights team.

The Program Counsel position is an exciting opportunity for a community-driven attorney who can bring vision, talent, and enthusiasm to the role at a time when aggressive civil rights advocacy is needed. Candidates are required to have 2 to 8 years of combined relevant experience as an attorney, policy advocate, and/or community advocate. Candidates should have familiarity with voting rights issues, including an understanding of how civil rights laws can be used to address systemic barriers. The Program Counsel must demonstrate a passion for racial equity and community empowerment.

Our Organization

Founded in 1969, Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights works to secure racial equity and economic opportunity for all. We provide legal support through partnerships with the private bar and collaborate with grassroots organizations and other advocacy groups to implement community-based reforms. We have a diverse staff of 20 and a 23-member board that includes leaders from law firms, corporations, government, and philanthropy. Racial equity is central to our external advocacy, along with our internal operations. Chicago Lawyers' Committee has achieved significant litigation and policy reform victories throughout our history with support from over 40-member law firms. Pro bono partnerships are central to our business model and delivery of legal assistance.

Chicago Lawyers' Committee works to eliminate barriers to voting and civic participation, especially in communities of color and low-income communities, to ensure that all voters are able to cast a ballot and make their voices heard. Our work includes:

- **Comprehensive Election Protection:** We lead Election Protection efforts for 866-OUR-VOTE in Illinois and Indiana. Leveraging the strength of pro bono attorneys and a strong relationship with the national Lawyers' Committee and local organizations, we work to ensure that every eligible voter can exercise their fundamental right to vote.
- **Advocacy for Stronger Laws and Policies:** Developing our advocacy initiatives in close coordination with community organizations, we work to dismantle barriers that disproportionately burden people of color, new citizens, limited English proficient voters, low-income voters, and individuals in the criminal legal system. We collaborate with community groups to improve voter access laws, policies, and procedures. For example, we helped write and pass Illinois laws such as Election Day Registration, Automatic



Voter Registration, and Civics in Prison, as well as the Cook County Voting Opportunity and Translation Equity (VOTE) Ordinance.

- **Litigation to Enforce and Defend Voter Protection Laws:** Working with pro bono attorneys from partner law firms, we fight for enforcement of election laws in Illinois and Indiana and defend these laws when they are challenged. Our organization has represented Black community organizations in redistricting litigation when district lines have unfairly diluted voters' ability to elect the candidates of their choice.
- **Know-Your-Rights Training:** We lead training efforts in Chicago and surrounding communities to ensure that voters know their rights, election officials comply with and enforce voter protection laws, and community members know how to access legal assistance when problems arise.

Key Responsibilities of Position

Litigation and individual representation

- Provide representation or referrals to voters and communities facing disenfranchisement, applying an explicit racial justice lens
- Support litigation challenging systemic barriers to voting and representation that disproportionately impact communities of color, such as litigation regarding voter registration barriers, as well as redistricting and districting litigation

Policy

- Provide policy and advocacy support to coalitions and community partners seeking to address systemic barriers to voting, including advocacy during the upcoming redistricting cycle
- Produce publications, know-your-rights materials, fact sheets, and blog posts

Election Protection

- Assist voting rights team in recruiting, training, and deploying pro bono attorneys to assist voters in person and over the phone in federal, state, and local elections
- Work together with partner organizations to address barriers to voters of color and community members in the criminal legal system
- Collaborate with election officials to resolve problems, while escalating advocacy when needed
- Assist with jail voter protection efforts

Community advocacy & outreach

- Conduct community outreach, training, and education events
- Attend coalition and think tank meetings, assist with ongoing advocacy efforts, and collaborate with community partners on campaigns and initiatives for structural change

Required Skills and Abilities



- High degree of flexibility and willingness to work on a broad range of legal issues, ability to multi-task, significant initiative as a self-starter, and attention to details and accuracy
- Ability to prioritize tasks and work effectively in a fast-paced environment
- Excellent people skills, especially the ability to communicate effectively with a diversity of groups and individuals
- Cross cultural competencies and self-awareness around issues of power and privilege
- Excellent writing and communications skills
- Skills languages other than English are valued but not required

Education and Experience

- Law degree
- Admitted to Illinois bar or willing to gain admission
- 2 to 8 years of combined relevant experience as an attorney, policy advocate, and/or community advocate
- Experience working with communities of color and/or working on racial equity issues

Please note that our office is currently fully remote, with a flexible hybrid work arrangement scheduled to begin in 2022, depending on the evolving public health situation. Successful applicants for this position must provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination upon hiring.

Salary and Benefits: Salary range is \$60,000 -\$75,000 per year depending on experience. Generous benefits include PTO and paid leave; health, dental, and vision plans; employer-provided life and disability insurance; and a retirement savings plan.

To Apply: Please e-mail a cover letter, resume, writing sample, and 3 references to: Elesha Jackson, Director of Administration, ejackson@clccrul.org. Please, no telephone inquiries. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. However, in order to receive full and timely consideration, candidates are strongly encouraged to submit their applications by February 18, 2022.

Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We prioritize equity and inclusion in our organizational culture and hiring, and we value candidates with lived experience in the communities we serve. We welcome all applicants regardless of race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, service in the military, or other identity factor.