



## **American Civil Liberties Union Fund of Michigan Position Description: Staff Attorney**

### **Position Overview**

The Staff Attorney will litigate cases and engage in non-litigation advocacy to advance civil liberties and civil rights throughout Michigan. Responsibilities include developing and litigating cutting-edge, impact cases on a wide range of issues at the trial and appellate levels in both state and federal courts, often in partnership with cooperating counsel and/or National ACLU lawyers. The Staff Attorney will represent the ACLU publicly through speaking engagements and media interviews, and collaborate with staff in other departments to set goals and implement strategies that advance ACLU of Michigan priorities.

### **Specific Responsibilities**

#### **(1) Legal**

- Investigate, develop and litigate impact civil liberties and civil rights cases in federal and state court; identify and recruit plaintiffs, conduct factual and legal research, prepare memorandums, write demand letters, draft pleadings and briefs, conduct discovery, argue motions, try cases, write appellate briefs and amicus briefs.
- Supervise, lead, or participate in a team of associated attorneys; co-counsel cases with other public interest groups and the national staff.
- Recruit and work successfully with ACLU volunteer attorneys.
- Review, comment on and edit letters and briefs of co-counsel and other ACLU staff.
- Contribute to legal analysis and legal strategy with senior ACLU staff.
- Work with local lawyers committees to screen and develop promising cases and facilitate and support the effective functioning of those committees.

#### **(2) Leadership, Public Advocacy and Teamwork**

- Serve as a spokesperson for the ACLU with the press and as a public speaker.
- Work with ACLU staff to implement integrated advocacy campaigns and high-impact strategies utilizing the ACLU's communication, legislative, field organizing and legal programs.
- Engage with coalition partners, legislators, legislative staff, and community representatives working on similar issues, building issue networks across the state as appropriate.
- Demonstrate leadership by initiating cases, projects and programs that are sensitive to community needs and inclusive, and build the ACLU's network of supporters.

- Support the Communications Department’s efforts to educate the public by writing editorials, blogs and other materials.

**(3) Administration, Supervision and Support**

- Recruit and supervise law students and interns.
- Pro-actively communicate with all staff so they are well-informed of upcoming hearings, judicial decisions, and important developments in the legal arena.
- Ensure that the Legal and Executive Directors are adequately informed of work and solicit direction and input appropriately and consistent with professional standards.
- Prepare administrative and grant reports, provide administrative and organizational support as needed, and adhere to internal systems for attorney recordkeeping and information sharing.

**Supervision:** The Staff Attorney will report to the Legal Director, who is responsible for implementation of the statewide legal program.

**Qualifications**

- J.D. with at least three years of experience, preferably litigating federal civil rights and civil liberties cases.
- A strong understanding of, and demonstrated commitment to, civil liberties, civil rights and the mission of the ACLU. Experience in non-profit advocacy or with other community-based groups is valuable.
- Exceptional writing, communication and analytical skills are required. Judicial clerkship is a plus.
- Must be a member of the State Bar of Michigan or pass the next bar examination.
- Substantive knowledge and understanding of constitutional law and civil liberties issues.
- Demonstrated skills in litigating independently, jointly and under pressure.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively with both legal and non-legal audiences.
- Demonstrated skills in legal analysis, research, and strategic thinking.
- Demonstrated ability to work cooperatively on a variety of projects with lawyers, other staff members, and with community organizations and coalitions.
- A commitment to diversity; a personal approach that values the individual and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, ability and socio-economic circumstance.
- Creative, result-oriented, self-starting, willing to learn, and able to manage an aggressive schedule, working beyond 9-5 as needed.
- Willingness to travel across the state for litigation, local lawyers committee meetings and speaking engagements.
- Proficiency with computers, Windows and Microsoft Office in particular.

**Personal Characteristics:** Ideally, the successful candidate will be the following:

- Personally committed to advancing the ACLU's values, mission, goals and programs, with an understanding of and commitment to the entire range of civil liberties issues and their implications. Dedicated to building and promoting the ACLU.
- A flexible, reliable, creative and energetic person who can handle and prioritize multiple activities and responsibilities; a self-starter and finisher.
- A team player and problem-solver who inspires collaboration and functions decisively; flexible and well organized.
- Emotionally mature and self-confident, with a sense of humor in order to maintain balance and perspective.

### **Compensation**

Salary is commensurate with experience. Excellent benefits including health insurance and a 401(k) plan.

### **Application Procedure**

Please submit in digital form, by email, a detailed letter of interest, resume, writing sample and contact information for three references. Send to Michael Steinberg at [msteinberg@aclumich.org](mailto:msteinberg@aclumich.org) and copy Brenda Bove at [bbove@aclumich.org](mailto:bbove@aclumich.org).

Michael J. Steinberg, Legal Director  
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The position will remain open until filled.

*The American Civil Liberties Union Fund of Michigan is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Women, people of color, persons with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are encouraged to apply.*