



ACLU OF MICHIGAN SEEKS A WEST MICHIGAN ADVOCACY STRATEGIST

Overview

For nearly 100 years, the ACLU has been at the forefront of every major civil liberties fight in our country's history. The ACLU of Michigan, founded in 1959, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, public interest organization dedicated to the defense and expansion of civil liberties and civil rights in Michigan. Whether it's reducing the prison and jail population, achieving full equality for the LGBTQ community, reducing immigration detention, or ending unjust laws that strip people of their fundamental right to vote, we take up the toughest civil liberties issues to defend all individuals from government abuse and overreach. We are a passionate, highly motivated group of 35 lawyers, public policy experts, lobbyists, community organizers, communicators, and fundraisers, and we're looking for exceptional talent to join our team.

The ACLU is deeply committed to racial equity and social justice and is driven to act on these core values. This is an incredibly exciting time to join the ACLU. We are building a more expansive advocacy infrastructure to increase our effectiveness to eradicate racial and social inequities in Michigan by building power from within the communities most impacted. Applicants must be able to recognize ways our identities intersect and play out in the work, especially with communities we serve, and must demonstrate the cultural competency to work with a diverse team as well as with historically marginalized communities. The ideal candidate possesses the necessary judgement to recognize ways the ACLU of Michigan can listen, understand, engage, and use its resources to create equitable change in West Michigan and around the state alongside historically marginalized communities.

Position Description

The ACLU of Michigan seeks an advocacy strategist to expand our outreach, while building and nurturing community-led policy initiatives in West Michigan. Working closely with the senior staff attorney in Grand Rapids, the strategist will coordinate with our political, legal, and communications teams to advance the ACLU of Michigan's proactive policy agenda and to defend against policies that undermine civil rights and civil liberties in the region.

The West Michigan Advocacy Strategist will utilize the levers of local and state government and work closely with community stakeholders to help galvanize support for ACLU of Michigan policy objectives advancing civil rights and civil liberties in the region. The role is highly collaborative, requiring work within strategic coalitions, diverse communities, and across all ACLU of Michigan departments to develop advocacy plans that resonate in West Michigan, while also integrating and ensuring coordination of organizational priorities across the state. The successful candidate is someone with strong community connections, keen political acumen, strategic vision, natural collaboration and organizing skills, and believes every individual's rights must be protected equally under the law. This is a full-time, grant-funded position based in Grand Rapids.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, it is understood that face-to-face meetings with colleagues will be replaced by phone contact and video meetings, facilitated with ACLU of Michigan operations support. The ACLU will provide equipment for remote work.

Responsibilities

- Collaboratively develop mission-aligned strategies and execute plans to achieve departmental and organizational objectives in priority policy areas, while maintaining knowledge of key influencers and organizations that shape the issues at the local/regional level.
- Establish and deepen strategic partnerships with stakeholders, including those impacted by our work, community-based organizations, coalitions, issue experts, elected and other government officials, and other community members and leaders working in diverse communities across the region.
- Help build and participate in coalitions by fostering, strengthening, and nurturing alliances with potential partner organizations and targeted community members and groups.
- Work collaboratively to educate and develop leaders in affected communities to advocate for change.
- Engage in public education activities that increase public and impacted community awareness of, and opportunities to engage on, organizational objectives.
- Develop advocacy materials and produce written products for internal and external audiences, based on original research and analysis.
- Plan and manage engagement opportunities to raise visibility and support for campaigns and organize ACLU members, volunteers, and community members to advance policy goals, broadening and strengthening our supporter base throughout the region.
- Work collaboratively across departments on strategy development and implementation, including identifying best practices around advancing policies and programs.
- Act as a spokesperson with the media and at public events, including providing testimony during government hearings.

Qualifications

- Three years of experience in public policy, research or advocacy, organizing, or political campaigning.
- Experience leading teams; ability to listen, guide, and support people to achieve common goals.
- Ability to build and maintain effective relationships with a broad range of constituencies, including local officials, communities of color, low-income people, youth, LGBTQ people, homeless people, immigrants, women, formerly incarcerated people, people with disabilities, and those directly impacted by civil liberties issues.
- Able to analyze policy and articulate legal concepts and issues.
- Strong writing and communication skills.
- Demonstrated commitment to civil rights and liberties.
- Ability to keep organized in a fast-paced environment, to manage several projects simultaneously, and to adjust to changing demands.
- A commitment to diversity; a personal approach that values the individual and respects differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, socio-economic circumstance, and lived experience.
- Willingness to work beyond traditional 9-5 hours as necessary and travel as needed.
- Proficiency with computers, project management tactics, and adapting to changing technologies.

Supervision: This position is supervised by the Political Director.

Compensation: The salary range for this position is \$72,000 - \$77,000, depending on experience. Excellent benefits, including health insurance and a 401(k)-retirement plan with matching, are provided.

Application Procedure

To apply, please submit a detailed letter of interest outlining your qualifications, any other information helpful for our review of your candidacy, and the contact information for three references. We prefer your application in digital form emailed to openpositions@aclumich.org; please specify **West Michigan Strategist** in the subject line. If necessary, you can mail the application to:

ACLU of Michigan
2966 Woodward Ave.
Detroit, MI 48201
ATTN: Shelli Weisberg – West MI Strategist

The position will remain open until filled, but the hiring committee will begin to review applications on June 1, 2021. Interviews will be conducted by phone and videoconference until such time that the State of Michigan determines that regular business may resume and/or the ACLU returns from remote work. Accommodations will happily be made to adjust to restricted internet, computer, or technology access. Likewise, interview logistics can be adjusted to suit candidates' time constraints during the pandemic.

The ACLU of Michigan is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities. If you are a qualified individual with a disability and need assistance applying online, please e-mail openpositions@aclumich.org and include "Accommodation" in the subject line. If you are selected for an interview, you will receive additional information regarding how to request an accommodation for the interview process.

The ACLU of Michigan is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, disability, veteran status, record of arrest or conviction and any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

"ACLU of Michigan," as used in this job description, refers collectively to two separate corporate entities, the ACLU of Michigan and the ACLU Fund of Michigan. The two entities share the same mission, office space, and employees.