



Northwest Justice Project

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César E. Torres
Executive Director

Job Announcement

Screening Unit Managing Attorney

The Northwest Justice Project (NJP) is a not-for-profit statewide law firm that pursues its mission of combating injustice, strengthening communities and protecting human dignity through legal representation, community partnerships, and education to promote the long-term well-being of low-income individuals, families, and communities throughout Washington. NJP seeks applications for our Screening Unit Managing Attorney from qualified attorneys committed to supporting our mission through the work of our Screening Unit. This is a full-time position located in NJP's Seattle office.

Northwest Justice Project's Screening Unit Managing Attorney plays a critical role in the statewide delivery of civil legal assistance to low-income communities across Washington State. The Managing Attorney is responsible for the overall management of Screening Unit and supports carrying out the program's vision, mission, Strategic Plan and other initiatives and goals.

The Screening Unit is a central point of entry to legal services available through NJP and other legal service providers across the state. The Screening Unit consists of a team of 10-12 non-attorney intake screeners who handle calls from people seeking legal services to the CLEAR hotline and conduct intake for multiple other projects within NJP. Intake screeners ascertain eligibility for services and the nature of the legal problem, screen for conflicts of interest, open files and record information in NJP's electronic case management system, make referrals in non-priority matters, and carry out other tasks as assigned by the Screener Unit Managing Attorney. The Screening Unit works closely with the Seattle Front Desk to help people navigate legal services.

The Screening Unit Managing Attorney reports to NJP's Client Access Senior Managing Attorney and works very closely with the CLEAR Managing Attorney and the CLEAR Assistant Managing Attorneys. The Screener Unit Managing Attorney directly supervises the Screening Unit Assistant Managing Attorney, non-attorney intake screeners (including two Lead Screeners and one Lead Trainer) and the Seattle Front Desk Supervisor.

The Managing Attorney makes attorney hiring recommendations, hires non-attorney staff, and provides ongoing coaching and support to their assigned staff; takes corrective action to address any performance issues; and, in consultation with the Client Access Senior Managing Attorney, Director of Human Resources, and Senior Management as appropriate under the



circumstances, recommends and implements disciplinary decisions, including termination of employment. The Managing Attorney has final authority over the work assignments and performance of Screening Unit staff.

Duties include:

- Ensure effective client access to NJP's centralized statewide intake system and work closely with the Client Access Senior Managing Attorney and staff across NJP to identify and reduce barriers to access.
- Work closely with the Assistant Managing Attorney, Lead Screeners, and Lead Trainer, to ensure smooth operation of intake in the Screening Unit.
- Work closely with the Seattle Front Desk Supervisor to ensure support smooth operations
- Develop and implement training for intake screeners both at initial hire and on an ongoing basis.
- Communicates clear performance expectations for all unit staff as well as providing necessary support to enable staff to meet expectations.
- Works collaboratively to provide basic tools required to perform duties, including identification and support of training needs.
- Provides regular, ongoing supervision and informal coaching in addition to participating in NJP's defined performance appraisal process.
- Works collaboratively to identify opportunities for skill development, leadership opportunities, staff recognition and rewarding achievement.
- Takes appropriate steps to improve any deficiencies in performance.
- Review, in coordination with the Assistant Managing Attorney and Lead Screeners, all case notes of new screeners.
- Oversee implementation of NJP eligibility and case priority assessments by the non-lawyer screeners at intake stage.
- Review information on callers who screeners determine to be outside of NJP case acceptance guidelines and follow up as needed to provide referrals, publications and/or brief legal advice.
- Answer questions during intake from Lead Screeners regarding priorities, types of legal issues and other eligibility rules.
- Manage calls where the caller has requested to speak to a supervisor or when a screener requests that a call be handled by a supervisor.
- Handle calls where a caller has a non-priority issue but has an emergency (hearing or deadline within one week) on a case-by-case basis.
- Determine whether a conflict of interest exists in cases identified by the screeners and make arrangements for alternative assistance where a conflict is exists.
- Assure compliance with policies of the Northwest Justice Project, Legal Services Corporation, Office of Civil Legal Aid, Rules of Professional Conduct and other requirements as applicable.
- Provide coverage for the Lead Screeners where and when needed to ensure smooth operation of the Screening Unit.

NJP has an organizational commitment to fight racism and to incorporate equity and inclusion in both the work we do and work environment we create. All staff are expected to uphold this commitment and approach their role with a desire to learn and grow in this area.

Qualifications:

- Washington State Bar Association membership in good standing or active license in another state with the ability to obtain WSBA membership by motion is required
- General knowledge of areas of law most frequently handled by NJP (housing, family, consumer/debt, public benefits), and ability to learn new areas of law.
- Experience in supervision of staff
- Familiarity with Rules of Professional Conduct especially relating to conflicts of interest
- Familiarity with the civil legal aid delivery system in Washington State
- Ability and willingness to provide constructive criticism in a positive way
- Familiarity with office computer applications including Outlook, Word, Excel and Legal Server as well as interest and ability to learn new software such as required by the call center
- Appreciation of the differing strengths, skills and styles of screeners
- Ability and willingness to juggle multiple tasks
- Good judgment, ability to handle stress, initiative, and willingness to work as a team

Compensation: Salary will be based upon years of relevant experience with a salary range of \$69,000 - \$122,000 annually. NJP provides life insurance, long-term disability insurance and pays premiums for medical, dental and vision insurance to all benefited employees as well as making significant contributions toward dependent health benefit premiums. NJP also offers generous time off benefits and law school loan repayment assistance.

TO APPLY: Interested candidates should send a cover letter and current resume to Victoria Hester at attorneyresume@nwjustice.org. Email subject line should clearly reference "Screening Unit Managing Attorney". Cover letter should include description of any past experience, personal or professional, with low income or other marginalized communities.

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis, starting December 27, 2019.

Application deadline: January 10, 2020

NJP is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and fosters an environment free of barriers and discriminatory practices. NJP actively promotes mutual respect, acceptance, teamwork and productivity. NJP is committed to maintaining an organization whose staff, Board and clients are diverse in background, experience, race, color, national origin, gender, age, religious reference, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sensory, mental or physical abilities, veteran status, and other qualities that strengthen the program while reinforcing its commitment to basic fairness. People of color, people who identify as transgender, lesbian, gay, or bisexual, and those with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. Individuals needing a reasonable accommodation for the application or interview process or for more information about the project should contact Victoria Hester at 206-707-0998.