



Washington State Office of Civil Legal Aid

CHILDREN'S REPRESENTATION PROGRAM
PO Box 41183
Olympia, WA 98504-1183

Notice of Position Vacancy

Position: Children's Representation Program Counsel
Agency: Office of Civil Legal Aid
Open: June 1, 2023
Close: Open Until Filled; first review of applications received will occur on or before August 1, 2023. OCLA reserves the right to close this recruitment at any time.
Job Type: Regular Full-time; FLSA Exempt
Salary: \$102,000 - \$107,000 Full-Time Annually DOQ
Location: Flexible – Determined on the Location and Needs of the Best Candidate

Agency Overview

The Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) is an independent agency in the judicial branch of state government. Recognizing that “the provision of civil legal aid services to indigent persons is an important component of the state's responsibility to provide for the proper and effective administration of civil and criminal justice,” the Washington State Legislature established OCLA in 2005 to manage the then-small state investment in civil legal aid services to low-income people in Washington State. In the years since, the Legislature has greatly expanded the scope of OCLA's responsibilities.

Consistent with [The Washington State Supreme Court's June 4, 2020 Statement to the Legal Community](#), OCLA acknowledges that it and its contracted civil legal aid providers operate in a law and justice system historically grounded in racism and that time and again has administered justice differentially depending on the racial identities of those involved. OCLA was an initial subscriber to the [Washington Race Equity and Justice Acknowledgments and Commitments](#). As outlined in its own [Race Equity and Justice Statement of Purpose](#), OCLA is committed to being an active partner in carrying out the Washington State judicial branch's commitment to ensuring equity and justice for people and communities throughout our state.

OCLA's Children's Representation Program (CRP) underwrites and oversees the delivery of effective, standards-based, and equity-informed representation for children and youth for whom attorneys are appointed under state law. The CRP is committed to fostering fundamental change in Washington State's child welfare and juvenile court practices, which have historically and

continue to cause disproportionate harm to BIPOC children and youth, as well as children and youth who have a range of learning and related disabilities; who suffer multiple and compounding traumas; who identify and/or present as gender or sex non-conforming; and who lack a legal voice in the process.

Position Vacancy

OCLA's CRP is looking for an exceptional individual with a passion for equity and justice for children and youth involved in the child welfare system. The CRP Program Counsel will help maintain OCLA's existing program for appointed counsel to represent children and youth who remain dependent six months following termination of their parental rights (legally free children and youth), codified at RCW 13.34.212(1), and support the design and implementation of a new statewide program for appointed counsel for dependent children and youth ages 8-17 in dependencies and dependent children and youth ages 0-7 where a petition to terminate parental rights has been filed. This program is codified at RCW 13.34.212(3).

The CRP Program Counsel will work with the CRP Program Manager and the CRP team to develop and implement effective strategies for attorney recruitment, training, support, oversight, and accountability.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

- Work with the CRP Program Manager and CRP team to develop and implement strategies to recruit, train, support, and retain a diverse community of CRP contract attorneys.
- Work with the CRP Program Manager and CRP team to monitor the performance of contract attorneys and their adherence to statewide standards for children's representation. Contract attorney monitoring functions include biennial attorney reviews; court observations; document review; ensuring compliance with mandatory training requirements; conducting monthly reviews of contract attorney case management time and activity entries. Some travel within Washington State will be required to fulfill these oversight duties.
- Provide technical support to contract attorneys.
- Support and facilitate the development of regional communities of practice.
- Work with the CRP Program Manager and CRP team to monitor, update, and maintain OCLA's CRP web pages.
- Identify and monitor trends within child welfare practice and needs of practitioners and their clients to support the CRP's child welfare and juvenile court system improvement efforts consistent with OCLA's focus on reducing disparate adverse outcomes for BIPOC children and youth and those who identify as LGBTQ2S, are immigrants, or who are negatively impacted by social, cultural, racial, ability-based practices and biases.
- Work with child welfare and justice system partners to reduce the adverse experience and improve outcomes for children and youth in care, especially those at risk of disproportionately negative harm.
- Regularly participate in continuing legal education opportunities and other trainings related child welfare law.
- Embrace and actively participate in OCLA's internal equity and anti-racism-related efforts.
- Other duties as assigned.

Background and Qualifications

- Juris Doctor and in good standing with the Washington State Bar Association (required)
- At least three (3) years of experience providing standards-based legal representation to children and youth in dependencies and termination of parental rights proceedings; or other substantially relevant experience (required)
- Substantial knowledge and understanding of courts, the court system, child welfare law, and standards-based legal representation of children and youth in child welfare cases (required)
- Demonstrated understanding of the impact of race, bias, discrimination, and differential treatment of communities disproportionately composed of Black, Indigenous, and people of color; individuals who identify as LGBTQ2S or other sexual minorities; individuals with disabilities; immigrants; limited English-speaking persons; and others who are disproportionately overrepresented in child welfare and in the law and justice systems (required)
- Demonstrated commitment to equity and justice for those disproportionately harmed by the law and justice system, especially the child welfare system (required)
- Lived experience as or working with children or youth involved in the child welfare system (preferred)
- Experience with oversight, data tracking, and reporting (preferred)
- Excellent written, oral, and communication skills (required)
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite applications, especially Word, Excel, and PowerPoint (required)
- Ability to quickly learn and master new software applications (required)

Reporting

The Children's Representation Program Counsel will report to the CRP Program Manager.

Compensation and Benefits

Salary: \$102,000 - \$107,000 Full-Time Annually DOQ
Benefits: Paid contributions to medical/dental, life insurance, and long-term disability insurance programs
Leave: Paid vacation and sick leave benefits
Retirement: Paid contributions to state retirement benefits

[Click here for more benefit information](#)

Application Procedure

Applications should be filed electronically with jobs@ocla.wa.gov and should include the subject heading **Statement of Interest Children's Representation Program Counsel**.

Submissions must include:

- A cover letter and resume outlining the applicant's credentials and professional/lived experience that is responsive to the skills and background outlined in this Notice
- A list of at least three (3) peer professional references, one of whom is a judicial officer
- A self-edited legal writing sample, preferably one that relates to the child welfare system
- Application for State Jobs ([Word file](#))

CLOSING DATE: The announcement will remain open, and applications will be taken until the position is filled. OCLA reserves the right to close the recruitment at any time.

Additional Information

The Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) is committed to equity and inclusion in hiring and employment practices and full compliance with federal and state equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination laws. OCLA strongly encourages members of diverse and historically disfavored demographic communities to apply.

OCLA will not discriminate against any person based on race, creed, color, national origin, citizenship, or immigration status; families with children; gender (including gender identify or gender expression); marital status; sexual orientation; age; veteran or military status; the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability (actual or perceived); or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. Individuals needing a reasonable accommodation for the application or interview process should contact OCLA's support team at support@ocla.wa.gov.

OCLA believes in providing substantial professional flexibility consistent with necessary accountability considerations. We also support Washington State's greenhouse gas reduction efforts. We, therefore, take a generous approach to telecommunication and remote work activity.