



Holistic Defense Attorney for Youth and Emerging Adults

Job Description

Description of Organization

Lawndale Christian Legal Center (“LCLC”) is the only organization in Chicago where lawyers and social services work together to support justice involved youth right in their own neighborhood. Founded in 2010, LCLC’s unique model of community-based holistic legal services serves youth and emerging adults, ages 24 and younger, in the Lawndale area. LCLC integrates criminal defense legal representation with social services such as intensive case management, outreach, mentoring, detention reduction programming, workforce development, and housing. LCLC is the only community-based legal defense organization that serves youth holistically through the termination of their sentence and after their case is over. To provide the holistic care our youth need, we have built grassroots relationships with residents, service providers, and other stakeholders in the community through a local collaboration we initiated called the North Lawndale Community Restorative Justice Hub. Through community-based holistic care, we envision a North Lawndale community where disconnected, street-involved youth are embraced by their families and community, restored from trauma, empowered to lead, and free from the criminal justice system. More information on LCLC can be found at www.lclc.net.

Job Description

LCLC is expanding its legal team over the next six months and is seeking skilled lawyers who are passionate about working with youth (ages 13-17) and emerging adults (ages 18-24). The attorney’s primary responsibility will be to provide LCLC’s unique model of holistic, community-based, zealous, and competent legal representation for youth and emerging adults from North Lawndale charged with felonies and misdemeanors. In LCLC’s unique model, lawyers partner with case managers and outreach workers to provide holistic, restorative legal defense services in juvenile and adult criminal courts. Each case is staffed with two lawyers (primary and secondary) in addition to a case manager and other social support staff. Depending on experience and preferences, attorneys may concentrate their representation on either youth or emerging adults. Attorneys report to the Litigation Director.

Duties and responsibilities include:

- Zealous representation of indigent defendants at all stages of the proceedings.
- Visiting police stations when a client is in custody
- Appearing in court for all hearings, from bond / detention to probation status checks
- Conducting or directing case investigations, including witness interviews and scene visits
- Researching, writing, and litigating pre-trial motions
- Serving as first or second chair in hearings for motion hearings and trials
- Creating “mitigation packets” of letters of support, grades, work progress, and psychological evaluations to negotiate plea deals with an eye towards avoiding permanent felony convictions and incarceration
- Working closely with LCLC’s social services staff and partners to ensure that needed legal and social services are integrated and coordinated for clients
- Collaborating with North Lawndale Community Restorative Justice Hub partners and Cook County system partners to serve our clients holistically and coordinate referrals
- Collaborating with *pro bono* partners on cases at the direction of the Litigation Director
- Supervising legal interns

- Keeping updated and detailed paper and electronic files and database records
- Continuously seeking professional development through trainings
- Attending meetings with other organizations and agencies

Qualifications and Requirements

- License to practice in the State of Illinois or another state
- One to five years of criminal or juvenile defense trial experience
- Highly resourceful and able to initiate and manage multiple projects and deadlines
- Passion for social justice, particularly as it relates to the criminal justice system
- Cultural sensitivity – ability to work with a diverse staff, clients, and community partners
- Ability to work in a fast-paced, team oriented environment
- Ability to work independently and effectively manage an active caseload
- Familiarity with restorative justice practices a plus
- Individuals from, or with connections to, North Lawndale or adjacent neighborhoods will be given special consideration
- Willingness to live in North Lawndale preferred
- Minorities are encouraged to apply

Application: Please submit a cover letter, resume, writing sample, transcript of court proceedings in which you appeared (if available), and a list of three references to: Cathryn Crawford, Litigation Director at ccrawford@lclc.net. Include position title in email subject.