



Holistic Defense Attorney for Youth and Emerging Adults Job Description

Description of Organization

Lawndale Christian Legal Center (LCLC) specializes in providing a unique form of community-based holistic legal defense representation grounded in restorative justice principles to minors and emerging adults (24 and under) from North Lawndale. This highly relational and innovative model of holistic defense is performed by an interdisciplinary team of attorneys, case managers, outreach workers, and strategic community partners that provide developmentally-appropriate supports for our young people. The legal and social service staff work together as one holistic team in the community to support, serve, and advocate for justice-involved youth. The holistic team identifies and meets the various needs of our youth at every phase of the criminal justice system: from diversion, arrest, through trial, and the completion of any period of probation, supervision, or parole, and beyond. By serving justice-involved minors and emerging adults holistically in their community, LCLC is leading the transformation of the traditional criminal justice system and establishing new best practices in community-based holistic interventions grounded in restorative justice that are more effective, cost less, and result in greater public safety for all. More information on LCLC can be found at www.lclc.net.

Job Description

LCLC 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. 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 currently report to the Litigation Director, but will eventually serve under the direction of one of two litigation supervisors, who will be hired this upcoming summer.

Duties and responsibilities include:

- Zealous representation of indigent minors and emerging adults at all stages of juvenile and criminal 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" to create a powerful and genuine narrative about a client to use in plea negotiations, 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
- Utilizing current social science research about adolescents and emerging adults in approach to clients, court advocacy, and negotiations

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

Qualifications and Requirements

- License to practice in the State of Illinois or another state
- One to ten years of criminal or juvenile defense trial experience
- Highly resourceful and able to initiate and manage multiple projects and deadlines
- Excellent research and writing skills
- 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
- Ability to collaborate with an interdisciplinary team
- Familiarity with restorative justice practices a plus
- Willingness to work evenings and weekends as necessary
- Individuals from, or with connections to, North Lawndale or adjacent neighborhoods will be given special consideration
- Valid driver's license, car, and proof of insurance required
- 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. The position, which is available immediately, will remain open until filled.

Lawndale Christian Legal Center is an equal opportunity employer.

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, marital status, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, pregnancy, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other status protected under federal, state, or local law. All aspects of employment including the decision to hire, promote, discipline, or discharge, will be based on merit, competence, performance, and organizational needs. Our goal is to be a diverse workforce that is representative of those we serve. We especially encourage applications from residents of the Greater Lawndale community.