

Staff Attorney Children's Law

The Pro Bono Project's mission is to provide free, quality civil legal services to underrepresented people by engaging volunteer lawyers to render pro bono assistance. Founded in 1986, The Project currently serves Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany and Washington parishes. In 2023, The Project helped more than 5,000 people.

The Pro Bono Project recruits, trains and mentors volunteer attorneys on civil legal aid cases. Low-income clients who meet financial and legal eligibility requirements are matched with a staff member or volunteer lawyer who can provide pro bono representation on a variety of issues including successions, simple estate planning, divorce, provisional custody by mandate, child in need of care, intrafamily adoption, immigration, housing, and Chapter 7 bankruptcy. The Project's panel of approximately 2,000 volunteer attorneys represents an extensive and diverse pool of legal expertise, creating the opportunity for The Project to respond to a variety of legal problems. The Project has created programs and clinics for populations in need of free legal advice and currently manages the Self-Help Resource Centers both virtually and at Orleans Parish Civil District Court (CDC), where *pro se* litigants seek assistance with filing petitions in family law matters.

Position Description: This staff attorney position (also referred to as the Children's Law Attorney) is responsible for all child-in-need-of-care (CINC) and special immigrant juvenile status (SIJS) matters at The Pro Bono Project. The attorney directly represents clients in CINC and SIJS proceedings. This position requires regular court appearances at Jefferson Parish Juvenile Court and other venues. The attorney is responsible for generating data on case matters as requested by the Executive Director and Managing Attorney of Legal Services and will keep management informed of case-related trends and any changes to the law.

CINC caseloads may fluctuate throughout the year, so the Children's Law Attorney will have the opportunity to work on different types of civil cases as their CINC court schedule allows. The staff attorney will gain experience in different practice areas, including but not limited to: uncontested Article 103 divorce; drafting and executing wills, powers of attorney, and living wills; non-urgent housing matters; uncontested custody; and intrafamily adoption.

Additionally, the staff attorney assists with the Self-Help Resource Centers at the Orleans Parish Civil District. Duties include, but are not limited to, providing information on court approved forms, coordinating volunteer attendance at the centers, and developing center resources.

The ideal staff attorney is a positive team player possessing intellectual curiosity, strong communication skills, and a passion for public interest work. The staff attorney must be able to prioritize and manage a caseload, maintain case records with up to date and accurate documentation, and interact in a clear and supportive manner with our staff and volunteer attorneys. The staff attorney reports to the Managing Attorney for Legal Services. Occasional evening or weekend obligations on behalf of The Project may be required. The staff attorney must be organized, attentive, and able to meet deadlines; they will receive last minute CINC appointments from the court that require a quick response, and may expect some off-hours contact from child clients, court personnel, counsel for other parties, and/or witnesses.

Duties for this position include:

- Handling a direct representation caseload;
- Grant reporting, including maintaining appropriate documentation related to given caseload and grants, tracking case outcomes, and performing statistical grant reports;
- Commitment to learning and staying up-to-date in CINC and related fields;
- Assist in organizing CLE seminars, volunteer trainings, and preparing case referral packets;
- Assisting at the Self-Help Resource Centers;
- Submitting potential publication stories highlighting novel or affecting cases that may be of interest to volunteers and/or funders; and
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications:

- Juris doctor from an ABA-accredited law school, and license to practice law in Louisiana.
- Must be qualified by the Louisiana Supreme Court to represent children or be willing to obtain qualification within three (3) months of hiring.
- Must be a notary or willing to become a notary.
- Basic knowledge of children's law and immigration law is preferred, but not required.
- Excellent organization, communication and writing skills required.
- Computer proficiency (Word, Acrobat, Excel, etc.) and knowledge of and/or commitment to learn Legal Server case management software.
- Valid, unexpired Louisiana driver's license and personal transportation.

Additional Desired Qualifications

- Fluency in Spanish, Vietnamese, or American Sign Language.

Salary

This is a salaried, full-time position. The Pro Bono Project is an equal opportunity employer. The salary for this position is commensurate with similarly-situated non-profit legal service organizations, based on experience and qualifications. Benefits include health insurance, parking, a defined contribution retirement plan, and generous vacation, holiday, and medical leave policies. The Pro Bono Project is a 501(c)3 organization and a qualified employer for the purposes of the federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program.

Application Details

The deadline to submit an application for this position is June 15, 2024. Please send a resume, cover letter, and list of references to: C.C. Kahr, Executive Director at cckahr@probono-no.org. If you require reasonable accommodations to participate in the hiring process, please communicate your request to Jena Weinstock at jweinstock@probono-no.org as soon as possible. No phone calls please.