AmeriCorps Legal Advocates of Massachusetts (ALA-Massachusetts) is seeking 36 AmeriCorps fellows to serve in 2020-2021. This is a full-time position, requiring 1,700 hours over 46 weeks from September 14, 2020 to July 30, 2021.

BACKGROUND

The mission of ALA-Massachusetts is to open doors to justice for clients, invigorate our partner sites, and cultivate the next generation of public leaders. Since its founding in 2005, more than 330 ALA-Massachusetts members have served 40,000 low-income clients in need of legal assistance.

ADVOCATE RESPONSIBILITIES

ALA-Massachusetts advocates serve at organizations throughout Massachusetts which provide legal assistance to low-income individuals and families. While AmeriCorps service is not employment, ALA-Massachusetts advocates engage in critical legal activities including client communications, eligibility determinations, case development, research, legal writing, hearings, education, and community outreach. Placements are made in multiple civil law practice areas, including:

- Housing
- Immigration
- Access to Government Benefits
- Employment
- Mental Health and Health Law
- Legal Problems of Elders
- Sealing of Criminal Records, and
- Family Law.

Advocates are supervised by legal professionals, and receive training on client-centered communications, legal ethics, cultural competency, and trauma-informed advocacy. Under federal law, AmeriCorps members cannot engage in political, union or religious activities during service hours. ALA-Massachusetts has a strong network of alumni who maintain connections long past the service year.

ELIGIBILITY AND PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

In order to be eligible for ALA-Massachusetts, candidates must be:

- 17 years of age or over;
- A U.S. citizen or permanent resident; and
- Have a minimum of a Bachelor’s degree.
ALA-Massachusetts is looking for applicants who have an interest in poverty law, a commitment to service, and strong communications skills. Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian-Creole, and other foreign language speakers preferred.

Because AmeriCorps advocates have recurring access to vulnerable populations, selected candidates will have to pass a criminal background check in order to serve.

**Advocate Benefits**

ALA-Massachusetts members will receive the following benefits 2020-2021:

- Up to a $26,000 taxable living stipend;
- Individual health insurance;
- A $6,195 education award upon completion of service;
- The ability to place eligible student loans in forbearance, with interest paid upon completion of service; and
- Child care assistance, if eligible.

**Application Process**

Applications are accepted online only and must include a cover letter, resume, and transcript. Applications will be accepted starting **February 3, 2020**, and the first round deadline for priority consideration is **March 6, 2020**. After that date, applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until all positions are filled. Go to [https://www.alamass.org/how-to-apply](https://www.alamass.org/how-to-apply) for a link to the application.

ALA-Massachusetts is competitive and cannot place every applicant. Candidates willing to work in any region of Massachusetts will have a higher probability of being interviewed. All placements are contingent on a federal funding award made in June, 2020.

ALA-Massachusetts is an equal opportunity project, available to all, without regard to race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or religion. The program is committed to the inclusion of people with disabilities as members and will provide reasonable accommodations for interviews and service placements upon request.

**Questions?**

Contact ala-mass@justicema.org.

*AmeriCorps Legal Advocates of Massachusetts is a program of South Coastal Counties Legal Services, Inc. (SCCLS), a non-profit law firm providing legal assistance to low-income clients in Southeast Massachusetts. ALA-Massachusetts is funded through the Corporation for National and Community Service, administered by the Massachusetts Service Alliance, and housed at the Justice Center of Southeast Massachusetts, a subsidiary of SCCLS.*