FAIR HOUSING PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

Job Summary

Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights, a not-for-profit organization with a long and successful history of civil rights enforcement and advocacy, seeks applicants for a Fair Housing Program Associate position. The Program Associate will engage in community outreach, investigation of individual and systemic fair housing cases, support policy advocacy, and oversee a testing program to identify housing discrimination in and around Chicago as a member of the Equitable Community Development and Housing team. Fair housing testing is a method of measuring and documenting the different treatment people experience when searching for housing.

Our Equitable Community Development and Housing (ECDH) team provides legal and policy support to community-based organizations and coalitions in communities of color advocating for healthy, thriving communities and fighting gentrification and displacement. We engage in impact litigation, policy advocacy, and community education to combat housing discrimination and barriers to opportunity. The Program Associate will work with ECDH staff to document and address housing discrimination based on race, source of income, criminal legal system records, and other protected classes.

Our Organization

Founded in 1969, we are Chicago’s leading nonprofit civil rights legal organization. Our mission is to secure racial equity and economic opportunity for all. We provide legal support through partnerships with the private bar and collaborate with grassroots organizations and other advocacy groups to implement community-based reforms. Our core practice areas include Education Equity, Equitable Community Development and Housing, Transactional Legal Support for Small Businesses and Nonprofits, and the Midwest Voting Rights Program.

Our robust pro bono program – Pro Bono Works – features one of the largest and most diverse offerings of volunteer opportunities in the city. We have a diverse staff of 23 and a 23-member board of directors that includes leaders from law firms, corporations, government, and philanthropy. Through our law firm membership model, over 40 member firms make annual financial contributions and provide pro bono legal support.

Key Responsibilities

- Work with the ECDH team to research and design systemic investigations, assess cases for litigation, and advance systemic advocacy to address housing discrimination based on race, source of income, criminal legal system records, and other protected classes:
Build and maintain a working knowledge of federal, state, and local fair housing laws, affordable housing programs, and other intersecting programs and policies;
Investigate discriminatory patterns and practices through outreach to and interviews with impacted individuals and organizations;
Research property owners, tax records, corporate ownership, and other related information;
Identify and analyze relevant demographic data, statistics, and maps;
Prepare and review Freedom of Information Act requests; and
Build and maintain a working knowledge of other investigatory tools.

Coordinate complaint-based and systemic fair housing testing to uncover discrimination in rental housing practices:
Recruit, train, and maintain a diverse pool of testers;
Build a working knowledge of fair housing testing methodology and tools;
Design appropriate testing methodologies and assignments for complaint-based and systemic test-based background investigations;
Prepare written test assignments, assign testers, coordinate multiple remote and in-person tests at a time, and debrief timely with testers;
Analyze testing for follow up action and coordinate timely responses; and
Maintain detailed, accurate, and timely records to ensure integrity of investigations for grant-reporting and litigation purposes.

Create and update tester training and reporting materials, as necessary.
Conduct policy analysis in support of grassroots community partners and other fair housing organizations in support of fair housing priorities.
Plan and conduct know-your-rights trainings and intake clinics in collaboration with Intake Paralegal and Fair Housing Program Counsel.
Collaborate with other fair housing organizations by regularly attending local and national partner meetings and events.

Required Skills and Abilities
• A demonstrated commitment to racial justice
• Excellent verbal and written communications skills
• Written and spoken Spanish language fluency desired and preferred
• Project management experience, and a high level of organization and detail orientation
• Ability to work non-traditional work hours when needed to coordinate testing and conduct outreach.

Education and Experience
• Bachelor’s degree, or equivalent years of experience in fair housing or civil rights
• Experience with community organizing, investigations, or research strongly desired
• Knowledge of fair housing law desirable but not necessary

Salary and Benefits:
The salary range for this position is $47,000 to $57,000 depending on experience. Generous benefits package includes PTO and paid leave; health, dental, and vision plans; employer-provided life and disability insurance; participation in a retirement savings plan; and 1-month sabbatical after 6 years of full-time employment. We have a hybrid work policy including two
in-person days and three remote days each week.

**To Apply:** Please e-mail a cover letter, resume, and 3 references to: Elesha Jackson, Director of Administration, ejackson@clccrul.org. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. In order to receive full and timely consideration, candidates are strongly encouraged to submit their applications by June 5, 2023. Please, no telephone inquiries.

Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We prioritize equity and inclusion in our organizational culture and hiring, and value candidates with lived experience in the communities we serve. We welcome all applicants regardless of race, color, ancestry, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, service in the military or other identify factor.