TEXAS CIVIL RIGHTS PROJECT
SENIOR STAFF ATTORNEY, CRIMINAL INJUSTICE REFORM PROGRAM
Houston, Austin, or Dallas, Texas

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Texas Civil Rights Project (TCRP) is a community lawyering organization, boldly serving the movement for equality and justice in and out of the courts, and seeking to advance a vision of a Texas in which all communities can thrive with dignity and justice, and without fear. To advance this work, TCRP is seeking two Senior Staff Attorneys to help advance the goals of the Criminal Injustice Reform (CIR) program, which strives to remedy the injustices of Texas’s criminal legal system for people suffering inside and outside of jails and prisons. This position serves as a key litigation lead, and reports directly to the CIR Legal Director.

For more than thirty years, TCRP has been a committed partner to community organizers, families and advocacy groups across the state. Whether through litigation or other means of legal advocacy, the attorneys and advocates at TCRP work to dismantle mass incarceration, discrimination in voting and civic participation, and injustices occurring at the Texas border, all under a race equity lens. As community lawyers, they work with coalitions of community-based organizations to identify injustices facing Texas communities and then develop impactful, system-changing solutions using litigation and other tools.

Reporting to the CIR Legal Director, the Senior Staff Attorneys will lead litigation and advocacy efforts to reduce the harm of Texas’s unjust criminal system and build productive relationships with clients and coalition partners, providing them with sound, reliable legal counsel. They will actively contribute to TCRP and CIR’s programmatic, communications and development goals. The Senior Staff Attorneys will also guide colleagues’ work on litigation and advocacy campaigns and mentor and support other team members.

The ideal candidates will bring a sincere commitment to equity and inclusion, social justice, and criminal injustice reform, and strong skills in complex civil or criminal litigation, public interest, or movement or community lawyering. They will bring a well-developed and substantive understanding of the criminal legal system in Texas, and the ways in which it operates. They will be a critical, creative, innovative thinker with the ability to connect community needs with well-reasoned legal arguments and strategies. They will bring a deep commitment to TCRP’s values, including the ongoing work to build a diverse and inclusive workplace.
This search is assisted by Callie Carroll and Yuniya Khan of the national search firm, NPAG. Application instructions can be found at the end of this document.

**ABOUT TCRP AND THE CRIMINAL INJUSTICE REFORM LEGAL PROGRAM**

Founded by James “Jim” C. Harrington in 1990, TCRP has fought in the courts for the rights of Texans with disabilities, immigrants, workers in need of fair labor conditions, and others. In February 2016, Mimi Marziani, a nationally recognized expert in voting rights, became TCRP’s second President and is leading the organization through its next phase of leadership in high-impact civil rights legal advocacy in Texas. TCRP’s impact in Texas has been powerfully demonstrated across the state in recent years, as highlighted in its [2019 Impact Report](#).

The CIR program strives to remedy the injustices of Texas’s criminal legal system for people suffering inside and outside of jails and prisons and to dismantle the drivers of mass incarceration and mass entanglement with the criminal system. Over the last 25 years, TCRP has established itself as a leader in litigating to achieve criminal justice reform in Texas. With an incarcerated population of approximately 150,000, Texas locks up more people than any other state. TCRP, through the CIR program, spearheads criminal justice reform in Texas via strategies focused on dismantling the underlying causes and effects of mass incarceration. These strategies include strategic litigation targeted at reforming identifiable institutional practices and conditions that perpetuate mass incarceration at both the front and back end of the criminal justice system.

Among other efforts, the CIR program is addressing the issue of solitary confinement in Texas, highlighting the fact that Texas has more people in long-term solitary confinement—longer than six years—than all other states and the Federal Bureau of Prisons combined. TCRP and partners hosted “Torture by Another Name: Solitary Confinement in Texas,” featuring experts, advocates, and individuals with lived experiences discussing the practice in Texas prisons, and releasing an accompanying [report](#).

Learn more about TCRP at [www.texascivilrightsproject.org](http://www.texascivilrightsproject.org).

**OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FACING THE SENIOR STAFF ATTORNEYS**

The CIR Senior Staff Attorneys will work closely with CIR’s Legal Director to shape and execute program priorities and individual goals. This work requires attorneys with strong litigation experience and substantive knowledge of the criminal legal system in order to engage in the following opportunities and challenges:

**Lead litigation and strategic advocacy to reduce the harms of Texas’s unjust criminal system.** The Senior Staff Attorneys will lead litigation and advocacy campaign efforts. They will serve as lead counsel in state and federal cases, including drafting pleadings, managing discovery, conducting depositions, consulting expert witnesses, negotiating settlements, and corresponding with opposing counsel. They will coordinate thorough and efficient investigations into areas often lacking transparency and clarity, assessing all possible legal recourse, and directing litigation panels related to those investigations. The Senior Staff Attorneys will employ strong writing and research skills to produce clear, concise, legally
sound and appropriately framed litigation memoranda and white papers. In addition, they will guide colleagues’ work on litigation and advocacy campaigns.

**Engage with and provide attentive and detailed counseling to clients and coalition partners.** The Senior Staff Attorneys will build productive relationships with clients and coalition partners, and provide them with sound, reliable legal counsel. They will work with clients and partners to analyze all potential options for reform, including mapping courses of action, identifying potential outcomes, and flagging challenges, all while recognizing that clients and partners are experts in their own lives and communities.

**Contribute to TCRP and CIR’s programmatic, communications, and development goals.** The Senior Staff Attorneys will support strategic advocacy campaigns locally and throughout Texas, and serve as spokespeople for TCRP and CIR with a variety of communication and media outlets. The Senior Staff Attorneys will actively contribute to TCRP’s development goals by assisting, on a quarterly basis, with presentations, meetings with donors, drafting sections of grant reports, and other activities as needed.

**QUALIFICATIONS AND COMPENSATION**

The ideal candidates will be effective litigators and community partners with an unrelenting commitment to justice on behalf of all. While no one candidate will have all the qualifications enumerated below, the ideal candidates will be experienced attorneys and have many of the following skills, qualifications, and abilities:

- Sincere commitments to equity and inclusion, social justice, and criminal injustice reform;
- Completed at least seven (7) years of post-J.D. full-time practice of law, measured by graduation date from law school (2014 or earlier);
- Licensed to practice law in Texas, or licensed to practice law elsewhere and willing to be admitted in Texas, including, if applicable, sitting for and passing the bar exam;
- Demonstrated skills in complex civil or criminal litigation, public interest, movement or community lawyering;
- Familiarity with civil and human rights laws, constitutional law, criminal law and procedure, structural racism and inequality, and an understanding of what is unjust about the criminal legal system and the impact of those injustices;
- A solid track record of working collaboratively with diverse groups of individuals;
- Ability to be well-organized, meet deadlines without compromising the quality of work product, multi-task and prioritize, and balance a heavy meetings calendar with substantive work;
- Capacity and willingness to work as many hours as the job necessitates, which may require busy periods of more than 40 hours per week, occasional evening and weekend work, and urgent rapid response;
- Willingness to travel throughout the state of Texas.

**Location**

TCRP is working remotely at least until March 31, 2021. Upon reopening, the new hire will be based in one of TCRP’s offices, ideally in Houston, Austin, or Dallas.
Compensation
The expected salary range is $76,000 - $83,500 per year, commensurate with experience. TCRP also offers excellent benefits, professional development opportunities and a deep commitment to a meaningful work-life balance. Benefits include: employer-paid health, dental, and vision insurance, four weeks paid vacation, eight weeks paid family leave (with opportunities to extend leave to 14 paid weeks in total), medical reimbursement benefit, a robust professional development budget annually, and extensive holidays, including a two-week winter break at the end of December.

TO APPLY
Due to the pace of this search, candidates are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Applications including a cover letter describing your interest and qualifications, your resume (in Word format), and where you learned of the position should be sent to: TCRP-CIRSSA@npag.com. In order to expedite the internal sorting and reviewing process, please type your name (Last, First) as the only contents in the subject line of your e-mail.

TCRP values a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture — people of color, women, individuals with disabilities, immigrants, and people from other underrepresented communities are strongly encouraged to apply for this position.

TCRP does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, age, creed, religion, physical ability, gender, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, sexual orientation, previous incarceration, veteran status, union membership or activism, or any other characteristic protected by local, state or federal law.