UnCommon Law Executive Legal Assistant

About UnCommon Law

UnCommon Law believes all people incarcerated for violent crime deserve access to healing, justice and effective legal representation. This group makes up 76% of the population in California’s prisons.

Through our unique, trauma-informed model of advocacy, we provide the space currently missing in the system for healing, accountability, and safe pathways home from prison. In developing new self-narratives, the people we serve are able to more effectively disrupt violence inside and outside prison, and they become leaders who can change negative societal narratives about those incarcerated for violent crime. Our groundbreaking approach is changing policy and outcomes, driven by the voices and experiences of system-impacted communities.

About the Role

The Executive Legal Assistant position provides case support to our founder and Executive Director, Keith Wattley, to ensure timely and effective case management, including support with visits, client communications, and writing assignments (drafting, reviewing and editing) (~80%). Additionally, the Executive Legal Assistant will lead schedule coordination for Mr. Wattley, covering legal, policy, fundraising, internal team, and other areas (~20%). The Executive Legal Assistant will have the opportunity to learn about the discretionary parole process, California prisons, and about the life cycle of individual journeys through incarceration and release. This is a full-time position. Compensation is commensurate with experience and includes a generous benefits package.

Responsibilities

Client communications and support

- Travel to prisons with attorneys or alone to meet with clients
- Draft follow-up correspondence to further guide clients
- Draft and respond to client correspondence
- Review and provide feedback on client writings
- Communicate with client family members, prison/parole officials, and service providers in the community to develop and document post-release plans

Research and document review

- Review case histories and prison central files
- Assist in reviewing hearing transcripts, drafting consultation letters, and drafting informal appeals
Legal administration and logistics

- Obtain access to prison files and assist in preparation of court filings
- Compile packets to be submitted in support of client parole applications
- Maintain client record management system (Clio)

Scheduling and coordination

- Manage the Executive Director’s calendar and coordinate across major organizational areas (legal, policy, development) to balance priorities and ensure Executive Director’s presence and participation in important events
- Communicate proactively with the Executive Director and other key stakeholders and organizational partners to prioritize and streamline calendar items
- Schedule prison visits, non-prison legal activities, and other events, meetings or activities as needed

Qualifications

- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to work independently, take initiative, and be self-motivated
- High attention to detail with exceptional organization skills
- Ability to directly manage logistical hurdles with tenacity and creativity. Able to learn quickly and intuitively prioritize incoming information
- A willingness to approach client work with kindness, non-judgment, and sensitivity to confidential matters
- Compassion for incarcerated persons and their family members, and a demonstrated interest in criminal justice reform
- A valid form of identification and the ability to pass a background check that would permit entry into California prisons
- Proficiency in MS Word and Excel, Google Suite, and CRM software (strongly preferred)

Application Instructions

Please submit a resume and a cover letter describing your interest and relevant experience for the role, along with contact information for two professional references, to our hiring portal (https://uncommonlaw.bamboohr.com/jobs/)

UCL is committed to providing an inclusive, welcoming, and culturally responsive environment for all members of our staff, volunteers, contractors, vendors, and clients. UCL does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, military status, or prior contact with the criminal justice system. We strongly encourage applications from people impacted by incarceration as well as from traditionally underrepresented communities.