Job Description

Title: Legal Fellow

Organization: Community Water Center

Location: Based in Sacramento, CA. All candidates for this position must be able to report in-person to a CWC office at least two days per week. Staff are expected to report in-person for work more than two days a week as needed based on job responsibilities.

The Community Water Center (CWC) acts as a catalyst for community-driven water solutions through organizing, education, and advocacy in California. CWC has offices in Visalia, Watsonville and Sacramento, CA. The Center employs four primary strategies in order to accomplish our goals:

- Educate, organize, and build the capacity of low-income communities and communities of color to address local drinking water challenges.
- Support low-income communities and communities of color in the development of drinking water solutions through technical assistance projects.
- Advocate for systemic change to address the root causes of unsafe drinking water in California.
- Serve as a resource for information and center of expertise on community water challenges.

CWC’s team is passionate, dynamic, and believes in the cause of water justice and making real change that is driven directly by impacted communities themselves. Our organizing and advocacy work, community collaborations, and organizational culture all reflect a concern for equity, mutual respect, appreciation for diversity, and environmental and social justice.

The Legal Fellow is a temporary (one-year), full-time position and will report to the Policy & Legal Director. This position may be expanded into a regular, full-time position after one year, subject to the discretion of CWC. All employees at CWC are “at will.” This position will work closely with the Director for Community Advocacy, Policy Manager & Attorney, as well as other CWC staff, community members, ally organizations and agencies, and various interns.

Ideal Candidate
The ideal candidate will have a demonstrated passion for environmental justice during their law school career, with a focus on drinking water issues. Candidates will excel at this position if they are excited to work collaboratively alongside other CWC staff, impacted community
residents, and government and NGO partners to remove barriers to safe and affordable drinking water. The ideal candidate will also excel at simplifying complex concepts in easy-to-understand language and be comfortable advocating for policy and systems change.

Major Responsibilities
- Lead the update of the Community Guide to Drinking Water Advocacy, including contamination fact sheets, documenting legal remedies and strategies for common drinking water and governance issues.
- Support policy and community advocacy teams with legal research and strategy development, as needed.
- Support impacted residents with legal support, as needed.
- Provide legal research, document review and drafting to remove barriers to drinking water project implementation.
- Support the Policy & Legal Director and Community Advocacy Director in any litigation or administrative proceedings.
- Assist in client intake, communication, and filing of documents as needed under the direction of Policy & Legal Director and Director of Community Advocacy.

General Duties
- Foster an environment that promotes trust and cooperation amongst CWC staff, community members, and affiliate organizations.
- Attend and actively participate in staff, management, planning, and program meetings; reporting processes; and staff retreats.
- Actively participate in program strategy and staff meetings.
- Other duties as assigned by the Executive Director, your Supervisor and other Directors.

Note: Nothing in this job description restricts management’s right to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this job at any time.

Required Qualifications
- Strong writing skills
- Strong legal research skills
- Clear and persuasive oral communication skills
- Ability to synthesize complex information into easy-to-understand, brief language
- Strong interpersonal communication skills with sensitivity to audience
- Strong passion for, and commitment to, social and environmental justice
- Awareness of how differences in class, race, privilege and lived experience shape how individuals and institutions think and act
- Ability to work in a collaborative, fast-paced office environment and meet deadlines
- Ability to accept and provide critical feedback – the ideal candidate would value accountability across the organization
- Awareness of and adherence to all legal ethics rules

Preferred Qualifications
- Experience working in the San Joaquin Valley and/or Central Coast or familiarity with key environmental justice issues facing these regions
- Strong oral and written skills in Spanish

Starting date: September 1, 2023

Compensation: $65,000 plus benefits (outlined below)

To apply: Email your resume and cover letter to careers@communitywatercenter.org and note Legal Fellow position - [your name] in the subject line.

Benefits: We offer a comprehensive compensation and benefits package which includes: medical, dental, vision, and life insurance; retirement contributions; generous vacation, family and sick leave and holiday policies; hybrid (remote and in-person) work location policy; work from home reimbursements; flex time; professional development opportunities and more.

Community Water Center is a 501(c)(3) organization. As such employees may be able to participate in the Federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program.

Vaccination Policy: To ensure the health and safety of staff, community partners, and other stakeholders we interact with, CWC requires employees to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition of employment, unless a medical or religious accommodation is approved before the first day of employment. As such, newly hired employees will be required to provide proof of their COVID-19 vaccination. Fully vaccinated against COVID-19 means that an individual is at least two weeks past their final dose of an authorized COVID-19 vaccine regimen.

Community Water Center is committed to providing equal opportunity to qualified job applicants and employees and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability (including pregnancy), mental disability, medical condition, marital status, sex, age, gender, sexual orientation, citizenship, military service status or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local law.

To learn more about the Community Water Center, visit our website at www.communitywatercenter.org