

Civil Rights & Racial Justice Attorney

About the Legal Aid Justice Center

The Legal Aid Justice Center is a nationally recognized, non-profit organization that partners with communities and clients to achieve justice by dismantling the systems that create and perpetuate poverty. Justice means racial justice, economic justice, and social justice.

Founded in 1967, LAJC provides services in four program areas: Civil Rights & Racial Justice, Economic Justice, JustChildren, and Immigrant Advocacy. LAJC boldly tackles issues of systemic injustice and aims to raise public and policymaker awareness of some of the most pressing challenges facing low-income Virginia residents. For more information, visit www.justice4all.org.

From offices in Charlottesville, Richmond, Petersburg, and Falls Church, LAJC fiercely advocates for low-income clients and communities in Central and Northern Virginia, and its work broadly impacts the entire state. Just in the past year, our team of advocates won a class-wide injunction ordering healthcare reforms in a women's prison, secured a national settlement providing new avenues for relief to over 400 traumatized asylum-seekers whose children were taken from them at the border, worked successfully in partnership with community leaders to demand police accountability, and won major legislative reforms regulating school policing.

About the Civil Rights & Racial Justice Program

Working at the intersection of race and poverty, the Civil Rights and Racial Justice Program (CRRJ) challenges the practices and exposes the enmeshed penalties within Virginia's criminal legal system that create or exacerbate poverty in the lives of low-income people and people of color.

About the Position

LAJC is seeking an attorney to join our CRRJ team in Richmond. The attorney will initially spend significant time on our continued challenge to the state's imposition of burdensome criminal-legal debt. Since 2014, our Drive Down the Debt campaign has focused on driver's license suspension for unpaid court debt as one particularly harmful "fines & fees" practice. The attorney will help us secure a permanent end to Virginia's license suspension scheme, which harms nearly 1 million Virginians; in doing so, they will be instrumental to our efforts to push back against the state's use of criminal-legal debt - inequitably imposed on and collected from poor people and people of color - to fund government services. We have used multiple tools to challenge Virginia's license suspension law, including policy advocacy, federal civil rights litigation, individual representation, and strategic communications, and the attorney will be expected to engage with all the tools. The attorney will also support CRRJ's other campaigns. Our local police accountability work employs a community lawyering and organizing model to help build power to effect policing change in Richmond and Charlottesville and our statewide pretrial justice and expungement initiatives will offer

the attorney the opportunity to engage in a mix of individual representation, administrative and legislative advocacy, and coalition building.

Required Qualifications

- Minimum 3 years' membership in any state bar; must sit for Virginia bar examination within 1 year of hire if not eligible for admission without examination
- Mission-aligned experience (work or lived) partnering with and advocating in low-wealth communities and communities of color
- Ability to work and communicate effectively across lines of identity
- Ability to work effectively both independently and collaboratively
- Strong oral advocacy, research and writing skills
- Willingness to work a flexible schedule that may include evening and weekend events, as well as occasional travel

Preferred Qualifications

- Admitted to or eligible to waive into Virginia bar via state's admission without examination rules
- Mission-aligned experience (work or lived) advocating for criminal legal reform
- Federal civil rights litigation experience (trial work as well as settlement implementation)
- Policy advocacy at the agency and legislative level
- Comfort with technology and data review

Location

Richmond, Virginia but some statewide travel may be necessary

Salary

Salary range is \$54,000 to \$82,000 based on years of relevant experience and LAJC's formal salary scale.

Benefits

- Generous leave
- Excellent family health, dental and vision insurance
- 403(b) retirement plan & loan repayment assistance
- Personal professional development budget & paid bar dues

Application Instructions

Email a cover letter, resume, three references, and a writing sample to Adeola Ogunkeyede, Legal Director, at hire@justice4all.org. The cover letter should highlight any experience (lived or worked) advocating for justice for people who experience marginalization because of their race or economic status and/or specialized skills, such as data analysis, technology skills, or language fluency.

Applications will start being reviewed immediately and on a rolling basis with an expectation that an offer will be made no later than April 1, 2020. Questions? Contact Adeola Ogunkeyede, Legal Director, at adeola@justice4all.org or 804-643-1086.

The Legal Aid Justice Center is an equal opportunity employer, committed to inclusive hiring and dedicated to diversity in our work and staff. We strongly encourage candidates of all identities, experiences, and communities to apply. The Legal Aid Justice Center is committed to strengthening the voices of our low-income clients, working in collaboration with community partners, and rooting out the inequities that keep people in poverty. We strive to take on the issues that have broad impact on our client communities and to be responsive to client input. Recognizing the particular impact of racism on our clients and staff, we devote special attention to dismantling racial injustice. All applicants must be dedicated to working in and sustaining an environment that enables staff and clients to feel empowered, valued, respected, and safe. In reviewing applications, we look for evidence that applicants have experience and/or thoughtfulness in working with traditionally marginalized populations.

