Position Description:

Legal-Policy Director (Policy Advocacy)

ACLU of Northern California

February 2020
About the ACLU of Northern California and the Legal-Policy Department

The ACLU of Northern California (ACLU NorCal) is an affiliate of a nationwide, non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to the defense and expansion of civil liberties and civil rights. For most of the last century, it has been at the heart of many of the most major – and sometimes controversial – struggles for civil liberties and civil rights in our state. Our mission is to ensure that Constitutional rights don’t just exist on paper but are protected in practice. As we move into a new era and face dangerous policies that threaten our civil rights and civil liberties, we remain dedicated to confronting these issues and defending the progress we have made. We must use our decades of experience in impact litigation, legislative advocacy, and fearless organizing to fight these un-American policies and protect our most cherished rights and freedoms.

The ACLU NorCal’s Legal and Policy Department pursues cutting edge impact litigation and promotes policy change in order to defend and expand the civil liberties and civil rights guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. The Department currently includes approximately 50 staff members between its Fresno, Sacramento, and San Francisco offices and collaborates closely with other ACLU NorCal departments.
The Opportunity

The ACLU NorCal is hiring two directors to co-lead the Legal-Policy Department. This is a unique opportunity to model shared responsibility and authority in a large, diverse, high-performing group of lawyers and policy advocates working across six broad program areas: Criminal Justice; Democracy & Civic Engagement; Gender, Sexuality & Reproductive Justice; Immigrants’ Rights; Racial & Economic Justice; and Technology and Civil Liberties. The two directors will, between them, supervise and support the six Program Directors as well as the Legal-Policy Operations Managers and a Regional Manager (of two satellite offices in Fresno and Sacramento). The two directors will help advance the mission of ACLU NorCal while holding the vision and modeling the values of the organization, including that of shared leadership. Both director positions are open at this time and can be based in our office in San Francisco, Sacramento or Fresno.

The Legal-Policy Department Directors will be hired through a joint process to find leaders with demonstrated experience in either policy advocacy or litigation, as well as the demonstrated ability to work well in partnership.

The Position

The Legal-Policy Directors will co-lead the Legal-Policy Department, a fifty-person group of lawyers, policy associates, and legal professional (support) staff, who work in or across six program teams, in our three offices. The Legal-Policy Directors report to the Chief Program Officer, who supports and supervises the leads in the Legal-Policy, Communications, and Organizing Departments. This search is for two directors – one with a policy background and one with a litigation background – to work together to co-lead the department. Following is the description for the director with a policy advocacy background; to see the more about the director with litigation background please see: Legal-Policy Director (Litigation)
Policy Advocacy Experience

ACLU NorCal regularly engages in campaigns and projects to advance civil rights and liberties through non-litigation advocacy. These efforts include community-informed identification of priority issues, legislative and administrative advocacy at the state and local levels, and development and execution of policy implementation campaigns. The Legal-Policy Department often works with impacted-community member-led organizations and regularly works in coalition with grassroots and community-based organizations on public education and community engagement strategies. The Legal-Policy Department works closely with the affiliate’s Communications and Organizing Departments, as well as the legislative advocacy office (California Advocacy Project), to advance civil rights and liberties. Therefore, one of the Legal-Policy Director positions will need to be filled by a person with significant policy advocacy and campaign experience. While sharing the Legal-Policy Department’s strategic planning and leadership responsibilities, this Director will work with Program Directors and other staff to help define policy priorities for the department and manage and facilitate the approval of policy campaigns.

Duties and Responsibilities

Both Legal-Policy Directors are expected to support and model a culture of shared purpose, mentorship, and mutual respect in the department, across the organization and with our partners. Both directors will help plan monthly department meetings, annual retreats, and relevant trainings. Both Legal-Policy Directors will provide content for monthly program reports to the staff and boards. Both Legal-Policy Directors will participate in personnel decisions, including recruiting, hiring, promotions, terminations, work-space allocation, and flex working arrangements. With the Legal-Policy Operations Manager, both Directors will assist in the onboarding of Legal-Policy Department staff and provide ongoing guidance on cross-program integrated advocacy strategies. With the Legal-Policy Operations Manager, both Directors will assist in the onboarding of Legal-Policy Department staff and provide ongoing guidance on cross-program integrated advocacy strategies.
Both Legal-Policy Directors will meet regularly with each other and with the core Legal-Policy Department Management Team (Operations Manager Regional Directors and Regional Directors) to determine broad priorities, challenges, and opportunities of the department. This includes:

- Strategic guidance on cases and campaigns
- Personnel
- Professional, departmental and organizational health
- Systems, structures and strategies
- Departmental and organizational culture and climate
- Communication and community engagement

Legal-Policy Department Leadership and Management

Each Legal-Policy Director will meet regularly with three of the six Program Directors, hold regular check-ins, and provide formative and summative assessments as part of the organization's performance evaluation process. While each Legal-Policy Director will directly supervise half of the Program Directors, the goal is for the two Legal-Policy Directors to work together to set the vision and lead the overarching strategies for the department together, each bringing valuable expertise and experience to the shared roles.

Both Legal-Policy Directors – in partnership with the Program Directors - will serve as the principal strategist with National ACLU, CA affiliates, and ACLU NorCal staff to coordinate our legal and policy programs for nationwide impact. Both Directors are expected to support and model a culture of shared purpose, mentorship, and mutual respect in the department, across the organization and with our partners.

Functional Leadership – Legal and Policy

Policy Advocacy Support and Supervision

The Director will provide leadership and expertise on policy advocacy, in addition to overall department co-leadership. This Legal-Policy Director will provide guidance to the department's staff in the development and implementation of policy and integrated advocacy projects across the department's six program areas, including providing
oversight on the rigor and quality of advocacy plans. This Legal-Policy Director will provide consistent support to Program Directors to help these experienced leaders define priorities, develop strategy, solve policy advocacy challenges, and coordinate policy work with litigation in integrated advocacy campaigns. This Legal-Policy Director will serve as a sounding board and approver of significant policy campaigns.

Organization-wide Leadership

Both Legal-Policy Directors will be part of the 11-person Senior Management Team, along with the Executive Director, Chief Program Officer, Chief Financial & Administrative Officer, Senior Advisor for Organizational Development, General Counsel, HR Director, and the Directors of Communications, Development, and Organizing Departments. They will participate in biweekly Senior Management Team meetings to set organization-wide policies, practices and priorities. Both Legal-Policy Directors will work with other program department leads (Communications, Organizing, and Legislative Advocacy) to maximize the impact of inter-disciplinary strategies.

The Approach

ACLU NorCal takes an integrated advocacy approach to the work of advancing civil rights and civil liberties in our region and across the state, meaning we deploy multi-pronged strategies that include impact litigation, policy advocacy, legislative advocacy, organizing, and communications. You are an experienced advocate and leader who thrives in a busy, mission-driven environment.

You have led impact work on a regional, statewide, or national level, and can effectively support high-achieving individuals and teams to advance their work strategically and effectively.

You are a leader who trusts and inspires trust in supervisees, and also can share responsibility and authority with others. You are a strategic thinker with enough
experience in substantive areas in which ACLU NorCal works to be a thought partner to Program Directors and thought leaders in the affiliate.

You have worked collegially on management teams and understand the value of inclusive, equitable leadership approaches. You work well under pressure, are professional and personable, and committed to racial and social justice in the work and interpersonal work relationships.

**Professional Qualifications, Skills and Competencies**

- Demonstrated ability to provide support, supervision, and strategic guidance to experienced colleagues across a range of issue areas.
- Demonstrated ability to share authority and responsibility in high stakes, complex and fast-moving work environment.
- Extremely strong project and time management skills, including a high level of organization, attention to detail, and follow-through, while balancing and prioritizing multiple activities and responsibilities.
- Excellent relationship-building skills and ability to inspire collaboration, including success leading teams, projects, and people towards action through persuasion.
- Experience managing complex coalitions with a variety of viewpoints and goals.
- Experience as legal advocates and/or working directly with lawyers on impact cases.
- Demonstrated commitment to cultural diversity and demonstrated ability to hold and foster difficult and necessary conversations about race, class, sexual orientation and expression, religion, ability, and other identity-based issues.
- Demonstrated experience engaging in creative problem solving and taking initiative, while utilizing a solutions-oriented approach and exhibiting flexibility and good judgement in a complex organizational ecosystem.
- Excellent verbal and written communications skills.
- Willingness to travel within Northern and Central California, and occasionally to Southern California and other parts of the country for speaking events, meetings, and conferences.
- People with direct personal or professional experience with impacted communities are encouraged to apply for this position.
Education / Experience:

- Significant experience in policy advocacy, multi-faceted, integrated advocacy campaigns, and coalition work required, with a preference for 15 or more years of experience.
- Supervision experience required.
- J.D. or graduate degree in a field such as public policy or political science preferred.
- Experience coordinating policy advocacy with litigation preferred.

Compensation

Competitive salary is commensurate with experience. Excellent benefits include four weeks paid vacation in addition to 14 office holidays; medical, vision and dental insurance for staff members, their dependents and spouse or domestic partner; life and long-term disability insurance; and, 401(k) plan with employer match. The anticipated annual salary range for this position is: $129,000.00 - $216,000.00 (placement in range determined primarily by years of related experience).

ACLU NorCal’s Commitment to Fairness in Employment

The ACLU of Northern California advances equity and inclusion in the workplace by providing equal employment opportunity to support a work environment free from discrimination on the basis of race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age (over 40), sexual orientation, military and veteran status, arrest or conviction record, and any other basis prohibited by law. The organization also provides reasonable accommodations for qualified applicants and employees with disabilities. This equal employment opportunity policy applies to all aspects of
employment, including recruitment, selection, advancement, training, problem resolution, and separation from employment. Through this policy, the ACLU NorCal strives to establish and maintain an equitable and accessible work environment that is supportive and free from discrimination.
Application Process

Interested, qualified applicants are encouraged to apply by sending an electronic copy of the following: (1) a cover letter explaining why you are interested in this position and the ways in which you satisfy the qualifications specified above, (2) resume, (3) a written sample of your work – campaign plan, legal brief, etc.. If your candidacy advances to the final round, you will be asked to provide a list of four references, including a direct supervisor, and a direct supervisee (please indicate your relationship to each reference). Applicants concurrently applying to any other position with the ACLU should state what other position they are applying for in the cover letter.

Application materials should be sent in PDF form to search consultants Steve John and Jason Snyder at the following email addresses: steve@sjanda.com and jason@sjanda.com. Alternatively, application materials may be sent directly to the ACLU NorCal by following this link to the organization’s career site.

On behalf of the ACLU NorCal, we thank you for your interest in the Legal-Policy Director (Policy Advocacy) opportunity.

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