



Racial Equity & Justice Staff Attorney / Director of MLRI Racial Equity & Justice Project

Posted: June 22, 2020

Deadline for Submission: Application materials will be reviewed and interviews will be scheduled on a rolling basis; interested and qualified candidates are strongly encouraged to submit their application materials promptly.

The Position: The Massachusetts Law Reform Institute (MLRI) seeks a dynamic, creative, experienced attorney to take a lead role in policy advocacy, impact litigation and coalition-building to advance a statewide race equity and justice agenda that will address structural racism in laws, policies and practices that lead to and keep communities of color in conditions of poverty. MLRI's Racial Equity & Justice Attorney will work collaboratively with MLRI's advocates, other legal aid programs, and community partners to develop and advance a race equity agenda in the context of civil legal services and poverty law advocacy. The position reports to the Executive Director.

About MLRI: MLRI is a nonprofit poverty law and policy center that provides statewide advocacy and leadership in advancing laws, policies, and practices that secure economic, racial, and social justice for low-income people and communities. We pursue systems change through litigation, legislative and administrative advocacy, coalition building, community lawyering, and other strategies that address systemic harm to low-income people. MLRI is also the statewide multi-issue poverty law support center for the Massachusetts civil legal aid delivery system; our advocates provide substantive expertise and technical assistance to frontline legal aid field program advocates and to many other advocates and providers who serve low-income people and communities in Massachusetts. Visit www.mlri.org.

About the Opportunity: MLRI's Racial Equity & Justice Project was launched approximately 15 years ago to identify and address racial disparities and implicit biases in laws, policies, and practices that perpetuate poverty and diminish economic opportunity in communities of color. The Race Equity & Justice Attorney will work collaboratively with MLRI advocates, with the statewide legal services Race Equity Coalition, and with our legal aid and community partners to identify, devise, and advance strategies and reforms to diminish systemic barriers, racial disparities, and implicit biases in programs and policies affecting low income people.

Desired Qualifications:

- Law degree and admission to a state bar;
- Strong advocacy skills and at least 7 years of experience in a legal aid, civil rights, or other relevant social justice organization;
- Demonstrated commitment to racial justice and knowledge of the body of law that provides potential handles to challenge racial injustice and disparities in the poverty law context;
- General background in poverty law or professional experience working with low income people;
- Outstanding writing, legal research, and oral advocacy skills;
- Community organizing/coalition-building background and/or demonstrated experience working effectively with community groups and diverse, broad-based coalitions;
- Ability to assume significant leadership in impact litigation and advocacy campaigns;
- Strong interpersonal and project management skills, and a demonstrated ability to both lead and work collaboratively with others;
- Lived personal experience of racism and racial injustice;

- Ability to facilitate and participate in challenging and uncomfortable conversations around race and systemic racism;
- Creativity, determination, and a passion for MLRI's anti-poverty mission.

General Responsibilities:

- Identify, develop, and implement legislative and administrative advocacy and litigation strategies to advance a poverty law-focused race equity and justice agenda in Massachusetts;
- Lead, reactivate, and broaden the membership of the statewide legal services Race Equity Coalition;
- Provide legal and technical support to legislators, policymakers, local legal services programs, other advocacy and community organizations on racial justice issues in the context of poverty law;
- Provide technical assistance to MLRI advocates to incorporate a racial justice lens and anti-racism strategies in their areas of substantive advocacy;
- Help build and support coalitions of community and grassroots groups engaged in race equity and anti-racism advocacy;
- Respond to and work with media on racial justice issues and on the intersection of systemic racism and poverty;
- Write amicus briefs, reports, policy briefs and advocacy manuals as well as shorter advocacy and educational materials and practical information for advocates, policymakers and other key stakeholders;
- Represent MLRI race equity and justice policy interests in public forums, including legislative and rulemaking hearings and serve on relevant statewide and national task forces.

Salary and Benefits:

- MLRI's Staff Attorney salary scale is based on years of relevant professional experience. For example, starting annual salary at 5 years of experience is \$70,000; 10 years is \$77,750; 15 years is \$84,500.
- MLRI provides generous benefits including health, dental, vision, life and disability insurance, 403(b) plan, as well as vacation, paid holidays, and family leave.

HOW TO APPLY:

- To apply, please email a cover letter outlining experience and qualifications, a resume, and a legal writing sample to humanresources@mlri.org. No phone calls please.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

MLRI is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. We believe that having a staff, board, and volunteers with diverse personal and professional backgrounds and lived experience enhances our ability to meet our mission and creates an environment where all members of our community can thrive. We strongly encourage applications from people of color, immigrants, women, persons with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ community, people with lived experience of poverty and/or racism, and people from underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.

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