



## **Internal/External Posting**

### **Advocate – Employment Team**

Disability Rights Michigan (DRM) has an immediate, full-time position for an Advocate on the Employment Team. This position Provides advocacy services to applicants and clients of the state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) system who face barriers to obtaining appropriate VR services designed to promote informed client choice leading to employment and independence for people with disabilities in Michigan. Assists individuals to overcome barriers to employment in areas such as post-secondary, career opportunities, housing, transportation, and Social Security's work incentives. Aims to increase awareness of the role of the Client Assistance Program (CAP) and Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) programs among people with disabilities statewide, the public, and service providers.

**Qualifications:** Bachelor's degree in social service or human services field or equivalent education and/or experience is required. Two to four years of related human services experience, including experience with disability rights. Protection and Advocacy Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) Program certification (provided after hiring) and ability to obtain a Tier 2 suitability determination from the Social Security Administration. Candidates must demonstrate effective communication, problem-solving and advocacy skills.

Annual salary range: \$51,000-\$55,500, depending on experience.

DRM is the agency designated by the Governor of the State of Michigan to protect and advocate for the legal rights of individuals with disabilities.

DRM values the civil rights of all people and believes a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce is necessary to accomplish our mission. DRM is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, sexual orientation, political belief, creed, national origin, marital status, military status or disability.

**Interested applicants please forward a cover letter and resume to:**

Camilia Limas  
Disability Rights Michigan  
4095 Legacy Parkway  
Lansing, MI 48911  
517-487-0827 (FAX)  
[climas@drmich.org](mailto:climas@drmich.org)

**Deadline for application: February 9, 2024**

**JOB TITLE:** Advocate – Employment Team

**REPORTS TO:** Director of Employment Advocacy



#### **JOB SUMMARY:**

Provides advocacy services to applicants and clients of the state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) system who face barriers to obtaining appropriate VR services designed to promote informed client choice leading to employment and independence for people with disabilities in Michigan. Assists individuals to overcome barriers to employment in areas such as post-secondary, career opportunities, housing, transportation, and Social Security's work incentives. Aim to increase awareness of the role of the Client Assistance Program (CAP) and Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) programs among people with disabilities statewide, the public, and service providers.

#### **PRIMARY DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Provides direct advocacy and representation to clients seeking or receiving services from Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP), Centers for Independent Living (CILs), and other employment network agencies. Collaborates with these agencies to ensure the legal rights of the individual are upheld, appropriate employment services are provided, and employment barriers are removed.
2. Provides direct advocacy and representation to students with disabilities to improve access to transition services, including Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) from Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) and the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP).
3. Provides direct advocacy and representation to beneficiaries of Social Security in their efforts to obtain and maintain employment.
4. Provides information and assistance to clients including explanation of disability laws, client rights and options, means of achieving desired outcomes, and removing barriers to employment. Refers individuals to other agencies or community resources as appropriate.
5. Monitors Community Rehabilitation Organizations throughout Michigan, providing information to individuals who may be interested in working competitively in their community.
6. Collaborates with the Manager and the Team Attorney to develop appropriate legal and advocacy strategies or address systemic employment issues.
7. Participates in various outreach activities including public presentations, training, and development of written materials to educate others about DRM, the employment rights of individuals with disabilities, and pertinent disability laws and issues.
8. Develops and maintains working relationships with service providers, government agencies, and other stakeholders to exchange information and advocate appropriate services for clients.
9. Attends seminars, conferences, and training sessions as appropriate.



10. Completes required documentation in a timely manner.
11. Regularly attends team and agency staff meetings, trainings, and in-service programs in office, virtually or off-site as required.
12. Maintains current knowledge of legal mandates, court rulings, government systems and Agency policies related to the employment rights of individuals with disabilities.

**JOB QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. Bachelor's degree in social service or human service-related field or equivalent education and/or experience.
2. Two to four years of related human services experience, including experience with disability rights.
3. Protection and Advocacy Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) Program certification (provided after hiring).
4. Demonstrated commitment to the civil rights of all people and the ability to work with individuals with a variety of disability characteristics and cultural backgrounds.
5. Ability to maintain confidentiality.
6. Interpersonal skills necessary to communicate effectively with clients, service providers, consumer groups, government agencies and other stakeholders, exchange information and solve problems in a tactful, courteous and respectful manner. The incumbent is also required to have effective verbal and written communication skills.
7. Demonstrated ability to respond in a professional, non-judgmental manner to emotionally charged issues. The incumbent is also required to be able to respond appropriately to individuals with speech impairments, limited cognitive abilities and/or limited ability to speak English.
8. Analytical ability and problem-solving skills to identify client issue(s) and determine appropriate interventions.
9. Demonstrated ability to handle multiple cases. The incumbent is also required to organize and prioritize complex tasks.
10. Ability to work independently and show initiative in completion of assigned tasks.
11. Written and computer skills necessary to prepare required documentation.



12. Demonstrated ability to utilize a database and work with various computer software packages including Microsoft Office, GroupWise E-mail, and Internet Browsing is required.
13. Ability to adapt and respond to multiple priorities and demands.
14. Ability to deal with the concerns and emotional needs of clients and their families in a timely manner.
15. Physical ability to work at a desk for extended periods of time, properly operate required office equipment, and travel with or without reasonable accommodation.
16. Training in diversity, equity and inclusion or willingness to engage with staff in additional further training in these areas is preferred.
17. Ability to obtain a Tier 2 suitability determination from the Social Security Administration.
18. COVID-19 vaccination is preferred.

**WORKING ENVIRONMENT:**

1. Normal office environment with little discomfort or exposure due to unfavorable working conditions.
2. Work involves travel to various locations throughout the State, along with some travel outside of the State, with some exposure to adverse weather, traffic hazards, etc.
3. Evening and weekend hours may occasionally be required.
4. Work may also include telework according to agency policy and supervisor approval.

Visit <https://www.drmich.org/jobs/> for further information.