

Staff Attorney: Multiple Positions

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM) seeks several civil rights-oriented attorneys to promote and advance the human and legal rights of people with disabilities. Ideal candidates will share DRM's values and commitment to the fundamental rights of people with disabilities to maintain independence and full access to community life with freedom from abuse and discrimination.

DRM attorneys represent clients in judicial and administrative proceedings, engage in systemic advocacy and policy work, monitor the implementation of complex systemic reform efforts, conduct outreach and education, and provide legal advice and technical assistance to people with disabilities, their families, and other stakeholders.

Available Role and Responsibilities Include:

Fair Housing and Eviction Defense: The attorney represents individuals with disabilities facing eviction, pursuant to Maryland's Access to Counsel Statute and DRM priorities. They will also conduct advocacy that advances the full inclusion and integration of persons with disabilities into all aspects of life in their community, including access to affordable and accessible housing. While the attorney's primary responsibility will be representing clients in judicial and administrative proceedings, there will also be opportunities to engage in systemic advocacy and policy work, monitor Settlement Agreements, Consent Decrees, and Voluntary Compliance Agreements, and conduct outreach and education. This position will require regular travel throughout the state and reliable access to a vehicle.

Voting Access: The attorney will implement DRM's Helping America Vote Act (HAVA) program to improve participation in the election process for individuals with disabilities, develop strategies to increase access to the voting process by voters with disabilities statewide; identify and address systemic barriers to accessible voter registration and voting; provide training to voters, poll workers, and advocates; collaborate with state and local boards of elections; investigate complaints alleging inaccessible voting systems and possible representation in litigation; and participate on coalitions, work groups, and committees relevant to DRM's work. The attorney may also assist with developing DRM's Advocacy Services Plan, and may coordinate with DRM's Policy Counsel to track legislative issues that impact the disability community, with the possibility of increased involvement in DRM's lobbying efforts in the future. This position will require regular travel throughout the state and reliable access to a vehicle.

Mental Health Rights: Cases include representing individuals in psychiatric facilities, prisons or community psychiatric settings; investigating allegations of serious abuse or neglect; and monitoring conditions at psychiatric facilities. The attorney may also monitor, analyze and report on data related to incidents of abuse and neglect, and participate in coalitions that address mental health issues. This position requires in-person meetings with clients at

psychiatric and correctional facilities, and regular travel throughout the state. Reliable access to a vehicle is required.

DRM Attorney Responsibilities Include:

- Maintain an active caseload representing individuals with disabilities in administrative and/or judicial proceedings;
- Support public policy and litigation efforts;
- Conduct and supervise outreach to identify clients in need of services;
- Under supervision of DRM's management and leadership teams, develop strategies to advance DRM's advocacy priorities;
- Work collaboratively with community stakeholders, co-counsel, and others;
- Participate in coalitions and task forces with clients, constituents, and community partners on matters relevant to the civil rights for persons with disabilities;
- Engage in administrative and legislative advocacy at the local and state level; and
- Travel throughout the State of Maryland.

Minimum Qualifications:

- J.D. degree from an accredited law school;
- Licensed to practice law in Maryland, or admitted after sitting for next available Bar exam;
- Strong commitment to DRM's core mission of ensuring the civil rights of people with disabilities to self-determination, freedom from harm, due process protections, to develop physically, emotionally and intellectually, and to participate in community life, with meaningful choices and opportunities;
- Strong interest in social justice and equity issues impacting the disability community;
- Excellent organizational and project management skills;
- Excellent interpersonal and cross-cultural communication skills, ability to communicate ideas with enthusiasm to diverse audiences;
- Ability to research and analyze legal issues, develop and execute a variety of advocacy strategies, and conduct legal research;
- Ability to work independently and to establish and maintain effective working relationships and collaborate with colleagues in a team environment;
- Excellent analytical and writing skills;
- Ability to successfully manage multiple work priorities and work under deadlines.

Preferred Qualifications:

- 1-5 years' legal experience;
- Experience with one or more of the following:
 - Maryland landlord-tenant law, the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act; federally subsidized housing programs; or
 - Voter access issues, campaigning, assisting elected officials, litigation, community advocacy or organization, or civil rights law practice; or
 - Adult or children's mental health rights, Olmstead issues, P&A access authority for investigations and monitoring; understanding of MD's public behavioral health system, the state hospital system, and laws and processes around commitment for treatment.
- Experience handling administrative appeals, representing clients in court, or working on systemic public policy issues such as commenting on proposed regulations, advocating for changes with state agencies, and working on coalitions with other legal and non-legal partners;
- Desire to empower clients to grow as advocates;
- Experience working directly with persons with disabilities;
- A demonstrated interest or background in public interest work, particularly related to disability rights issues;
- Experience with public policy advocacy and the legislative process;
- Life experience with a disability; and
- Fluency in American Sign Language or Spanish.

Salary and Benefits:

Competitive, depending on experience. The annual salary range for an Attorney with 1-5 years' experience as a licensed attorney is between \$70,000 to \$74,760.

DRM offers a generous benefits package which includes excellent medical insurance, employer-paid dental, prescription, vision, life, and disability insurance, as well as pre-tax savings plans, a retirement savings opportunity with generous employer contributions, and opportunities for telecommuting policy. DRM offers employee reimbursement for some or all of the cost of spouse or partner-paid health insurance premiums up to an established maximum amount. DRM also offers generous paid time off, including vacation, holidays, sick time, and more.

While DRM can offer some flexibility in hours, days, and location of work, generally work hours are Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm. Remote work must be conducted within the State of

MD. Occasional evenings and weekend work may be required. This announcement can also be found at <https://disabilityrightsmd.org/careers/>.

About Us:

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM), a private, non-profit law firm, is a leader in disability rights and the Congressionally mandated Protection and Advocacy organization for individuals with disabilities in Maryland. We provide free legal services and advocacy to persons with disabilities in Maryland. DRM envisions a world where people with disabilities are fully included in all aspects of community life.

Our staff are collaborative, collegial and committed to the well-being of the communities we serve and one another. Our workplace is flexible and we place a high value on diversity and inclusion, both as an organization and individually.

To Apply:

E-mail resume, cover letter, a writing sample to Jobs@DisabilityRightsMD.org with "Staff Attorney" in the subject line.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Positions remain open until filled with priority given to applications received before **April 17, 2024**.

We are looking for thoughtful, personalized cover letters that demonstrate the applicant's qualifications, work style and interest in being part of a team working to advance the civil rights of persons with disabilities in Maryland.

DRM is an equal opportunity employer and we value diversity. People of color, individuals with disabilities, and LGBTQIA+ individuals are especially encouraged to apply.