

**Neighborhood Legal Services seeks to hire a Client Advocate  
for the Family Defense Project!  
Pittsburgh Office  
Posting # 317**



Job Title: Client Advocate  
Department: Legal Services  
Reports to: Managing Attorney

**JOB SUMMARY:**

The Family Defense Project provides the highest quality of legal representation and handles all functions in representing parents in dependency cases. This includes prioritizing client relationships and communications, a commitment to case preparation and strong advocacy inside and outside of court. This also includes working in tandem with the multidisciplinary team to ensure that parents receive support and services that are well-tailored to expedite safe, lasting reunification of the family.

The Client Advocate will work with attorneys, paralegals, and parental peer advocates in an interdisciplinary model of legal representation. The CA will collaborate and coordinate all activities under the supervision of the staff attorney assigned to the case in order to determine that the needs of the parent are explored and pursued.

The Client Advocate will respond to the needs of clients and help them navigate the juvenile justice system and stabilize their lives with a goal of providing holistic services. They will represent NLS in the community through contact and collaboration with court personnel, ACCYF caseworkers, service providers and others. They shall further work with attorneys, paralegals, students, and others on cases or projects; engage in/encourage community education; participate in fundraising efforts; and work to ensure compliance with all regulations and funding requirements of the program.

**DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Collaboration and case planning under the supervision of the attorneys and other staff to further the goals of legal representation;
- Attend, actively participate, and advocate for clients during ACCYF Family Conferencing and team meetings (case planning meetings), service provider meetings, and other meetings related to client case with approval of assigned attorney.;
- Provide comprehensive assessments of client needs including recommended actions;
- Coordinate and provide a variety of social service referrals to help clients resolve critical issues in order to enhance the effectiveness of legal representation;
- Maintain the NLS referral database of advocacy agencies;
- Conduct interventions with clients as appropriate;

- Conduct eligibility and assessment interviews along with substantive interviews in person and by telephone which may take place outside of the regular office setting as approved by the managing attorney.;
- Advocate for clients with other agencies and various entities in the securing of needed services and benefits;
- Participate in community advocacy groups and effectively represent NLS in those groups;
- Assist legal staff with all non-legal aspects of legal cases including social services support;
- Monitor needs of the client community and recommend areas of advocacy development, including community education and self-help advocacy development;
- Function as a community advocate for NLS and its clients where appropriate;
- Participate as a professional in an interdisciplinary environment that can include attorneys, court personnel, judges, social workers, other agency or government employees and representatives;
- Perform such other duties related to the above as assigned by appropriate personnel;

#### **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

- Work with various community groups and accept speaking engagements as assigned;
- Participate, as requested or assigned, in program efforts to advance the organization and any fundraising initiatives (or efforts)
- Perform other duties as assigned within the scope of the essential functions of the position;

#### **REQUIRED SKILLS/ABILITIES:**

- Strong computer knowledge and skills particularly Microsoft Office Suite
- Strong organizational skills and attention to details.
- Excellent interpersonal, customer service skills
- Experience working collaboratively with staff and other organizations to achieve goals.
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing
- Sensitivity and commitment towards the NLS community and client base
- Must have efficient transportation to NLS offices and other locations as needed for work;

#### **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:**

- Bachelor degree in Counseling, Psychology, Human Services or a relevant degree is preferred. Extensive experience may be considered as substitute for formal education. Bachelor degree in Counseling, Psychology, Human Services or a relevant degree is preferred. Extensive experience may be considered as substitute for formal education.

- Experience working collaboratively in a team environment and community partnerships to achieve goals.
- Current drivers' license and ability to travel as required.

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- Prolonged periods of sitting at a desk and working on a computer.
- Must be able to lift up to 15 pounds at times.

**NEIGHBORHOOD LEGAL SERVICES BENEFITS INCLUDE:**

- *NLS 100% paid healthcare through Highmark that includes prescription and dental coverage*
- *NLS 100% paid Life/ADD, Long-term Disability, Short-term Disability Insurance*
- *NLS paid Health Reimbursement Account (HRA)*
- *Contributions to a 403b and/or Roth 403b after one-year of service (optional)*
- *Options that you may choose to purchase or contribute to include:*
  - *Vision Insurance*
  - *FSA – Medical Account*
  - *FSA - Dependent Care Account*
  - *Qualified Transportation Election*
- *Paid Time Off: (pro-rated first year)*
  - *15 vacation days*
  - *14 sick days*
  - *3 Personal Days*
  - *15 Holidays*

NLS is an Equal Opportunity Employer.