



PRISONERS' LEGAL SERVICES OF MASSACHUSETTS

www.plsma.org

Prisoners' Legal Services of Massachusetts Attorney Position

Prisoners' Legal Services of Massachusetts (PLS) is seeking to hire an attorney committed to protecting the civil and human rights of incarcerated people in Massachusetts.

PLS is an anti-racist organization whose mission is to challenge the carceral system through litigation, advocacy, client counseling, partnership with impacted individuals and communities, and outreach to policymakers and the public in order to promote the human rights of incarcerated people and end harmful confinement. PLS prioritizes work involving health and mental health care, assaults by staff, extreme conditions of confinement, misuse of segregation and isolation, and racial equity.

At PLS, we seek to build a team that reflects our organizational values of justice, race equity, and community. This includes hiring staff with connections to the communities we serve and maintaining a commitment to justice and equity in our hiring practices and staff culture. More information about PLS is available at www.plsma.org.

Position Summary:

PLS attorneys play a central role in protecting and advancing the civil and human rights of incarcerated people. The position includes individual and class action litigation, individual and systemic advocacy, client counseling, policy work, and collaboration with impacted individuals, communities, and other partners.

PLS attorneys are expected to handle complex litigation, and advocacy matters with a significant degree of independence, while working collaboratively with colleagues and other partners.

Essential Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Handle all phases of affirmative litigation involving prison and jail conditions, including individual and class actions seeking injunctive relief and damages.
- Investigate and evaluate potential cases, including fact gathering, review of client records and other documents, legal research and analysis, and assessment of potential legal claims.
- Draft demand letters, complaints, motions, memoranda, briefs, discovery requests and responses, and other legal pleadings and documents.



- Conduct discovery, including document review, depositions, and development of factual and expert evidence.
- Participate in motion practice, settlement negotiations, trials, appeals, and enforcement and compliance monitoring.
- Provide direct legal representation and individual advocacy for incarcerated clients in matters involving prisons, jails, correctional officials, and other state agencies.
- Participate in intake and evaluate requests for legal assistance; identify potential individual and systemic issues; provide legal information and advice when appropriate; and determine appropriate follow-up or referral.
- Maintain regular communication with clients through in-person facility visits, remote meetings, telephone calls, and correspondence, and advise clients regarding their legal rights, options, and the status of their matters.
- Advocate for the rights of incarcerated people on issues including conditions of confinement, medical and mental health care, staff misconduct, disciplinary matters, and other issues affecting their treatment and legal rights.
- Engage in policy and systemic advocacy concerning correctional policies, practices, and conditions.
- Participate in the development of PLS litigation and policy priorities, systemic reform strategies, and case-selection decisions.
- Incorporate racial equity principles into litigation, individual and systemic advocacy, policy work, case selection, and organizational priorities.
- Participate in PLS committees, projects, workgroups, and other organizational initiatives as assigned.
- Collaborate with PLS staff, pro bono attorneys, legal services organizations, community organizations, advocates, and other partners on litigation and advocacy efforts.
- Participate in educational and outreach activities designed to inform incarcerated people and others about legal rights, available resources, and issues affecting people in custody.
- Maintain appropriate case files, records, correspondence, data, and other documentation relating to assigned matters.
- Provide supervision and mentorship to attorneys, interns, or other staff, including regular feedback and formal performance evaluations as required.
- Participate in staff meetings, training, professional development, supervision, and other activities necessary to support the work of PLS.
- Perform other related duties as required.

Qualifications:

- Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree and admission to the Massachusetts Bar, or eligibility for admission through comity or other applicable process.
- A minimum of four years of litigation experience required, including significant experience in activities such as depositions, witness examination, motion practice, and trial or appellate oral argument. A judicial clerkship may count toward one year of the required experience.
- Experience in corrections, prisoners' rights, civil rights, or criminal legal system matters is desirable.
- Strong commitment to social justice and the rights of incarcerated people.
- Strong understanding of racial justice and social equity, racial and cultural differences, systemic and institutional racial bias, and issues affecting communities of color and other diverse communities.
- Excellent analytical, legal research, writing, and oral advocacy skills.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills. Bilingual or multilingual skills in Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Kreyol, American Sign Language, or another language are desirable.
- Ability to problem-solve, exercise sound judgment, take initiative, and manage responsibilities with appropriate independence.
- Strong organizational and time-management skills, including the ability to manage competing priorities and deadlines.
- Ability to work collegially and collaboratively with co-workers, clients, interns, co-counsel, pro bono attorneys, legislators, advocates, and outside organizations.
- Ability to work effectively both independently and as part of a team.

The majority of the attorney's time will be dedicated to litigation, including investigating and developing potential new cases. The position will also include responding to client complaints and requests for assistance, supporting and supervising other staff as appropriate, and contributing to internal PLS initiatives.

Salary and Benefits:

This is a full-time position requiring 35 hours per week. The salary range is \$73,000–\$105,000 with a starting salary of \$73,000 for candidates with four years of relevant experience and higher placement within the range based on additional relevant experience.

PLS' comprehensive benefits package includes:

- Generous paid time off, including 12 paid holidays, 27 vacation days, 17 sick/mental health days, 5 personal days, and 2 floating holidays.
- Health coverage: 100% employer-paid medical, dental, and vision insurance.

- Healthcare reimbursement: Up to \$7,500 per year for a family plan to cover medical copays and deductibles.
- 401(k) retirement plan with employer contribution, loan repayment assistance program, disability insurance, and life insurance.
- PLS operates under a hybrid work model. Employees are expected to live within commuting distance of Boston and be available to work in the office and visit correctional facilities as required.

How to Apply:

Please send a cover letter, resume, and references attached to a single email to lrydzewski@plsma.org with the subject line “Attorney Position.” Applications will be reviewed and interviews conducted on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

No phone calls or mail inquiries, please.

PLS is an equal opportunity employer. BIPOC individuals, LGBTQ+ individuals, formerly incarcerated people, and people with disabilities are encouraged to apply.