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Client Services Director

The Office of the Appellate Defender (OAD) is one of New York City's oldest provider of appellate representation to poor people convicted of felonies, the City's second oldest institutional indigent defense offices and a national model of effective, innovative and holistic defense representation. OAD strives to ensure that poor people convicted of felonies receive full and equal access to justice by providing exceptional appellate representation, improving the quality of indigent representation through education and training, and advocating for systemic reform of New York City's criminal justice system.

OAD handles post-conviction cases from the Bronx and Manhattan, including direct appeals before the Appellate Division, First Department, and the New York Court of Appeals. OAD also litigates sex offender registration level hearings, drug law resentencings, and motions to overturn wrongful convictions (including claims based on new or undisclosed evidence, prosecutorial misconduct and ineffective assistance of counsel). OAD additionally advocates for improved prison and parole conditions, and provides reentry assistance.

OAD seeks a Client Services Director (CSD) to join its talented team. This position is designed to ensure that OAD's attorneys and staff are able to effectively and compassionately respond to the unique circumstances confronting OAD's clients, including, but not limited to, the effects of trauma; the mental, physical, social, economic and familial challenges arising from incarceration and solitary confinement; and the difficulties of post-incarceration community re-integration. Thus, the CSD is an interdisciplinary position rooted in the intersecting fields of criminal law, social work, policy, administration and counseling. Working hand-in-hand with the OAD attorneys, the CSD will support and advocate for clients while in prison, in parole proceedings, during re-entry, and in appellate and post-conviction litigation.

Responsibilities

- Lead an early transition re-entry program, including a referral network of partnerships and memoranda of understanding with NYC social services, governmental and non-profit agencies;
- Assist clients who are nearing the end of a term of incarceration, through the early days of re-entry, to address housing, government benefits, employment, mental health services and education needs;
- Organize and lead client group meetings;
- Foster relationships with, and conduct site-visits of, organizations/agencies who are, or will be, frequent service providers to OAD clients;

- Coordinate with the Social Workers/Client Advocates/Mitigation Specialists at New York City's other institutional public defender providers to stay abreast of the issues, resources and policies affecting people involved in the criminal justice system, and ensure that OAD clients have access to all necessary services;
- Work closely with all OAD attorneys, especially those handling cases involving serious mental illness, sex offender registration, youth/adolescence, and other vulnerable populations;
- As needed and when appropriate for the CSD responsibilities, assist OAD's paralegals with the collection and analysis of medical, psychiatric, educational and institutional records;
- Contribute to written submissions, including sentencing mitigation reports and parole advocacy petitions;
- Participate in meetings with clients and their family members;
- Assist attorneys with expert witnesses;
- Appear in court when appropriate;
- Lead trainings for attorneys and other social workers; and
- Travel to New York State prisons to meet with clients and corrections agencies' regional and central staff.

Qualifications

- M.S.W. required, L.C.S.W. preferred;
- Experience working with at-risk client populations (preferably with criminal justice involvement);
- Advanced writing skills;
- Knowledge of criminal procedure, government administration, social service, and forensic approaches is desired; and
- Fluency in Spanish is a plus.

Salary:

Competitive salary with excellent benefits.

To Apply:

Please send substantive cover letter and resume by email to jobs@appellatedefender.org, with "Client Services Director" in the subject line.

OAD is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We provide equal employment opportunities without regard to race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, age, veteran status, disability or genetic information.