



Benefits Attorney – WNC Economic Recovery Program

Job Description

Pisgah Legal Services is a community-based non-profit corporation governed by a local Board of Directors. PLS has an annual budget of \$8 million from a multitude of funding sources. Located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Western North Carolina, Pisgah Legal Services (PLS) provides free civil legal assistance to low-income people in western North Carolina. PLS has offices in Asheville, Burnsville, Newland, Spruce Pine, Hendersonville, Rutherfordton, Brevard, Highlands/Cashiers and Marshall. With a dedicated staff of ninety-six, including thirty-six attorneys plus supporting staff, and an active pro bono panel of 300 private attorneys, the program provides free services to more than 20,000 people per year to meet their basic needs, primarily in the poverty law areas of housing, public benefits, domestic violence prevention, health care, immigration, and consumer law.

Nature and Location of Position: The Benefits Attorney will support the WNC Economic Recovery Program by advising and representing clients concerning their eligibility and other legal issues relating to SNAP, Medicaid, Supplemental Social Security Income, Veterans Administration, and other need-based benefits as their incomes increase with more earned income and increased child tax credits. The Attorney will conduct outreach and education activities for potential clients and community partner organizations throughout the state. Additionally, the Attorney will represent or advise consumers as needed in appeals relating to the Affordable Care Act Marketplace Health Insurance. This position covers a service area of 18 counties in WNC as part of a multi-year grant funded expansion of anti-poverty work within the broad areas of free tax preparation/tax credits and outreach/enrollment for Affordable Care Act health insurance. The WNC Economic Recovery Program is designed to have long-term impact through two main priorities: (1) reduce the child poverty rate in each WNC county and (2) increase the insured rate through quality, affordable health care coverage in each WNC county. The program will work in conjunction with the entire PLS legal aid staff to support expanding free legal assistance to help a growing number of very low-income people each year to solve problems related to basic needs, particularly housing, domestic violence, health care, and insufficient income. Work will include some travel throughout Pisgah Legal Service's 18 county service area in WNC.

Other Responsibilities

- Commitment to PLS' mission, values, and vision.
- Experience in handling Social Security Disability, SSI Disability cases and/or NC SOAR trained
- Excellent writing, analytic, interpersonal, and public speaking skills
- Ability to work independently, as well as part of a team in a fast-paced environment – including possible supervision of attorneys and non-lawyers.
- Strong organizational skills and adept at managing multiple priorities and deadlines.
- Prior legal experience preferred, particularly experience working on public benefits legal issues,
- A willingness to handle a varied case load.
- An understanding of the civil legal needs of low-income people, including the unique needs of populations that experience particular barriers to access to justice systems.
- Ability to effectively communicate, to motivate others, and to work collaboratively with diverse groups of people with varying perspectives, and experience and expertise.
- Ability and willingness to learn and integrate new technologies and methodologies to efficiently perform responsibilities.
- Document all work in Legal Server case management software.
- Organize and conduct outreach and educational presentations.
- Develop and maintain community relationships including other non-profit agencies, government officials, government employees, community leaders and others.
- Travel within our service area and also to meetings or conferences in other parts of NC.
- Adhere to program priorities and case handling policies, procedures and standards of practice, as well as the highest professional and ethical standards.
- Keep abreast of developments in the law and disseminate information to staff, volunteer attorneys and the public.
- Work with volunteers, including volunteer attorneys, on a regular basis.
- Assist in fundraising in coordination with PLS Development Team.

Qualifications

- N.C. licensed attorney.
- Demonstrated commitment to serving low-income people and communities.
- Demonstrated skills at socio-economic and cultural sensitivity and ability to assist upset or ill people.
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work well with teams and independently.
- Fluency in Spanish would be an asset.

Salary/ Benefits

Salary ranges from \$50,310 – \$95,434 depending on experience. Excellent fringe benefits, including 401(k) retirement plan, as well as life, health, and disability insurance.

To Apply

E-mail resumé and cover letter describing relevant experience to employment@pisgahlegal.org. PLS invites all applicants to include in their cover letter a statement about how your unique background and/or experiences might contribute to the diversity, cultural vitality, and perspective of our staff and legal services practice.

Pisgah Legal Services is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status.