



Pine Tree Legal Assistance Inc.
Job Posting
Fair Housing Enforcement Attorney

Organization Overview

Pine Tree Legal Assistance is Maine's oldest and largest civil legal aid provider. Pine Tree Legal Assistance employs a diverse team of individuals, each committed to making our communities more just.

We are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees. We encourage applications from people with diverse backgrounds, including women, Black, indigenous and people of color, people who identify as LGBTQ+, people with disabilities, immigrants, and people who have experienced poverty or homelessness. We believe that there should be fairness, justice, and equality for all, and, that if we can instill more fairness in our society, there will be less poverty. Our mission is to ensure that state and federal laws affecting poor people are upheld, while also addressing the systemic barriers to justice faced by Mainers with low incomes. To achieve our mission, we provide free civil legal assistance in cases where it can make a difference in one's ability to meet one's basic human needs or in enforcing one's basic human rights. Want to learn more, please visit www.ptla.org

Position Overview

Pine Tree is the primary agency in Maine engaged in enforcement of the Fair Housing Act and Maine Human Rights Act on behalf of individuals and to address systemic discrimination when possible. The Fair Housing work at Pine Tree seeks to address discrimination and bring justice to individuals that have experienced discrimination in housing because of their race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, familial status, disability, national origin, or religion. In addition to representing individuals, Pine Tree employs testing of housing providers to uncover discriminatory practices.

We are currently looking for a Fair Housing Enforcement Attorney who is responsible for enforcement of national and state fair housing laws through direct representation of low-income Maine residents who experienced violations of their rights as protected class members. Specific grant requirements are defined in the Statement of Work between Pine Tree Legal Assistance and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in connection with the current award (which runs through June 30, 2023.) The attorney will provide direct representation in the administrative complaint process through the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and/or the Maine Human Rights Commission. The attorney should also expect to represent clients in Maine's Superior Courts or Federal Courts, but especially in the Kennebec Superior Court in Augusta. Court cases will involve affirmative litigation to seek injunctive relief and damages, including emotional damages, as well as legal fees. The litigation is frequently complex and involves extended discovery and motion practice. The administrative complaints in the attorney's case load are not summary proceedings and frequently require extended work. The attorney in this role is also expected to consult and with and provide supervision support for the work of the local office paralegals and attorneys both in the provision of limited legal assistance and in other work that advances the purpose and intent of the Fair Housing Unit.

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Community outreach is a critical component of the work performed by the attorney. In addition, trainings and presentations related to the Fair Housing Act and Maine Human Rights Act are also a critical component of the position with targets set out in the grant requirements. Compliance with grant reporting requirements is also a component of the position. Other required activities include development of written client education materials, collaborations, and other initiatives designed to address specific legal needs of low-income individuals harmed by discrimination and to affirmatively further fair housing. The attorney is expected to work closely with the Fair Housing Testing Coordinator in executing project goals and strategizing around case development and affirmative action to address systemic discrimination in housing practices.

This position is best suited for an attorney comfortable with the expectations and requirements of affirmative litigation. Trauma-informed lawyering skills are valuable.

Interested applicants should submit a letter of interest, a current resume and 3 professional references to Deputy Director and position supervisor Mr. Chet Randall (crandall@ptla.org) with copies to Executive Director Ms. Nan Heald (nheald@ptla.org), and HR Director Ms. Olesya Shkut (oshkut@ptla.org).

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