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JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: STAFF ATTORNEY POSITION – SYSTEMIC LITIGATION

December 2024

The Florida Justice Institute, Inc. (FJI), a nonprofit public interest legal organization, seeks a full-time staff attorney to develop and pursue civil rights cases to further FJI's impact litigation efforts. The staff attorney will work and strategize with our team of experienced civil rights lawyers and paralegals in FJI's practice areas, including:

- Representing incarcerated people and their families in cases challenging conditions of confinement to improve prison and jail conditions. These cases may involve claims addressing solitary confinement, medical and mental health care, disability access, abuse, and violence, First Amendment issues (such as free speech, censorship, and religious freedom), the imposition of fines and fees, wrongful death and serious injury claims, and others.
- Litigation to stop the criminalization of poverty in cases that often involve representing homeless individuals challenging ordinances prohibiting panhandling and other life-sustaining conduct, with an aim toward facilitating reform of policies toward homelessness.
- Other civil rights litigation in areas affecting criminal justice policy or participation in democratic processes.

Reporting directly to the Litigation Director, the successful incumbent will work with at least one other attorney and paralegal.

The ideal candidate will be located in, or willing to relocate to, the Miami area to be able to work in FJI's Miami office, with flexible remote teleworking options.

Job Responsibilities

- Evaluate conditions of prisons and jails, identify areas of reform, strategize around methods of reform through litigation and advocacy.
- Review and evaluate ordinances and others law to identify potential areas of legal challenge.
- Handle all phases of civil rights litigation, primarily in federal court. This will entail, at a minimum, building cases through interviews and document review; drafting complaints, motions, responses, memos, discovery requests and responses; conducting legal research; handling discovery; communicating with opposing counsel; working with experts; handling trials; and handling appeals if necessary.
- Represent clients in the aforementioned litigation.
- Communicate with incarcerated clients and witnesses by phone, visit, and letter.
- Monitor settlements and consent decrees through investigations and post-litigation work.
- Evaluate and research requests for legal assistance and communicate with potential clients about such requests.
- Coordinate and work with co-counsel.
- Conduct advocacy efforts related to criminal justice reform, possibly involving legislative advocacy.
- Draft media updates on cases, as needed.
- Some travel around Florida, including visiting clients and witnesses in prisons and jails, will likely be required.
- Any other duties as assigned by the staff attorney's supervisor.

Qualifications

- A minimum of two years of civil litigation experience required. Experience with federal civil rights litigation is strongly preferred, as is working with incarcerated people. Time spent clerking for a federal judge is acceptable as experience.
- Familiarity with the nonprofit legal ecosystem a plus.
- Must be admitted to the Florida Bar or become admitted at the earliest practical time.
- Must possess excellent legal research and writing skills, communications skills, and analytical skills.
- Must be able to work in a cooperative, collegial environment and as part of a team.
- Must have a demonstrated ability to problem-solve, exercise sound judgment, take initiative, and work independently.
- Must have a demonstrated commitment to social justice, as well as a commitment to representing incarcerated people and other disenfranchised individuals, and an interest in the preservation and advancement of civil liberties and civil rights.
- Must understand and value racial equity and be committed to continued learning on issues related to race, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Multilingual preferred.
- Must be self-motivated and capable of complex analytical work.

Salary/Benefits: Salary is competitive with other public interest law firms in Florida and commensurate with experience. FJI offers an excellent benefits package that includes substantial vacation and sick time; paid federal holidays; medical and dental insurance; life insurance; a retirement plan; and paid parental leave.

About FJI: Founded in 1978, the Florida Justice Institute (FJI) is a nonprofit public interest law firm that uses impact litigation and advocacy to improve the lives of Florida’s disenfranchised residents and underinvested residents, while focusing human rights in the justice system, empowerment for vulnerable populations experiences homelessness & poverty, and dignity for people with disabilities.

For more visit the FJI website: <https://www.fji.law/what-we-do>.

Application: Interested and qualified candidates should send a cover letter and resume in one PDF file via email to careers@fji.law with the following format in the subject line: “**Systemic Litigation Attorney Application – {Applicant Name}**”. No phone calls. Due to the volume of applicants, FJI cannot respond to each one. The position will remain open until filled.

FJI is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. Women, people of color, people with disabilities, LGBTQ individuals, and formerly incarcerated persons are particularly encouraged to apply.