



## **Job Announcement: Senior Advocacy Attorney (Full-Time)**

### **ABOUT US**

The Immigrant Defense Project (IDP) is a New York City-based nonprofit that works to secure fairness and justice for all immigrants by transforming the racially-biased criminal and immigration systems. IDP was founded over twenty years ago to address the crisis of escalating criminalization and mass deportation. Our work attacks the injustices at the intersection of the criminal and immigration systems via a multi-pronged strategy that includes strengthening immigrant defense through technical assistance and trainings, challenging unfair laws through impact litigation, shaping local, state, and federal policy through advocacy, and working alongside communities to build alliances and education.

IDP's advocacy work seeks to advance IDP's mission by building unity and power to fight for the rights of all immigrants, in particular those with criminal legal system contacts and subject to discriminatory policing, in order to reverse and ultimately end the era of mass criminalization and deportation. Core strategies in this work include i) identifying interventions to advance and protect the rights of immigrants with criminal contacts and to challenge the logics that fuel their perpetual punishment ii) expanding and deepening relationships in this work with key partners from community organizations, to legal advocates and elected representatives, and iii) leveraging IDP's expertise on crim-imm issues in pursuit of key change for the communities we fight for.

### **POSITION SUMMARY**

IDP's Senior Advocacy Attorney focuses on identifying, supporting and implementing strategic policy and advocacy responses to advance IDP's impact and mission. Core responsibilities include working with IDP's advocacy and policy team and other teams as appropriate to: 1) Develop, lead and support creative state and local policy interventions to minimize or eliminate immigration consequences in the criminal legal system and to curtail ICE enforcement practices and policies; 2) Provide and/or facilitate legal and technical expertise in legislative and advocacy work at the intersections of criminal and immigration law in furtherance of team priorities; 3) Represent IDP in coalitions, forums, and convenings on these issues; and 4) Support strategic communications within these areas.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Advance IDP advocacy and policy priorities and strategies, focused on (but not exclusive to) state efforts to reduce immigration consequences from criminal system contacts, reduce mass incarceration, detention and deportation, and end the entanglement between immigration and local law enforcement.
- Analyze state and city laws and policies to identify and develop strategies in furtherance of IDP's mission to pressure targets to win real-world change.
- As needed, draft language for bills in furtherance of IDP's mission and priorities and facilitate the provision of crim-imm technical assistance to legislative staff, community organizations, and other stakeholders in support of policy goals as appropriate.
- Lead support and advocacy for individual clemency requests to the Governor for non-citizens in collaboration with our technical support teams
- Consult with impacted teams at IDP to plan legal resources, advice, and/or trainings on policy developments
- Cultivate partnerships and alliances with legislative staff, government entities, coalition partners, legal advocates and grassroots organizations to collaborate on state and local policy initiatives at the intersection of the criminal and immigration systems and to end the vilification of people with criminal convictions
- Build strategic alliances with criminal and immigrant justice advocates, through participation in the Justice Roadmap, in coalition work, and in active outreach as appropriate.
- Draft and develop advocacy and communications materials, including memoranda of support, public statements, policy research, and talking points as needed.
- Provide occasional strategic support on federal immigration policy analysis and advocacy projects and foster relationships with the New York Congressional Delegation as appropriate

## **QUALIFICATIONS:**

- JD or LLM and bar admission in good standing (preference but not required to be in New York)
- Five to ten years of relevant cumulative experience which:
  - May include experience practicing law in the state criminal system on behalf of immigrants. In particular, candidates with experience with Padilla advisals or post-conviction relief are encouraged
  - May include experience representing people in removal proceedings and affirmative applications for relief, particularly with criminal legal history
  - May include experience with community organizing, advocacy, and/or legislative and policy campaigns (particularly but not exclusively at the state level in New York)

- Demonstrated commitment to immigrant rights, racial justice and social justice issues, a belief in the principle that nobody is disposable, and a desire to fight against the mass criminalization, detention and deportation of immigrants impacted by the criminal legal system.
- Ability to work in a respectful, supportive and collaborative manner both internally across teams and externally with individual community members, community-based organizations and other advocates.
- Exceptional organizational and written and oral communication skills; ability to timely respond to and balance numerous requests for assistance
- Strong command of Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Google Suite (Docs, Slides, Sheets, etc.), and other standard productivity software.
- An interest in learning about participatory policy-making and practices that ensure community members can inform and decide on policy
- Must be eager to build relationships and collaborate both across programs internally and with community-organizations, legal advocates and other stakeholders externally
- Oral fluency in a language other than English that is amongst the top languages spoken by immigrants in NYC is a plus

#### **LOCATION:**

The Senior Advocacy Attorney role requires occasional travel to New York City as well as Albany (during legislative session) and therefore must be able to commute to NYC and Albany with sufficient notice. Currently, IDP staff are working remotely or in a hybrid model. We are mindful of the need to keep our staff healthy to ensure we can achieve our mission in the long term and believe many people thrive by working remotely and using a flexible schedule.

#### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

The salary range for this position is \$80 - 90K and is commensurate with relevant experience. IDP offers a generous benefits package including:

- 20 vacation days, at least 20 additional holidays, and summer Fridays
- Stipend for cell phone and other work from home expenses
- Paid six-week sabbatical after 6 years of employment
- Generous medical and dental benefits
- Commuter benefits, flex spending accounts and generous 401k matching program

#### **TO APPLY**

We are looking to fill this position as soon as possible and will be screening applications and interviewing on a rolling basis. Please submit a cover letter and resume to [jobs@immdefense.org](mailto:jobs@immdefense.org) with the subject line "Senior Advocacy Attorney." Writing samples and three references will be requested for those interviewed. No phone calls please.

*The Immigrant Defense Project is an Equal Opportunity Employer that actively recruits women, people of color, persons with disabilities, persons with diverse gender and sexual identities, immigrants, and formerly incarcerated persons.*