



Job Opening at Solid Ground

Job Title: Benefits Attorney

Department: Advocacy

Status: Exempt

Supervisor: BLA Program Manager

Union Affiliation: OPEIU
(Associated dues will apply)

FTE: 1.0

Salary Grade: 212

Solid Ground believes poverty is solvable. Our communities are stronger when we support stability and break down the barriers to overcoming poverty. Solid Ground does both. We combine direct services with advocacy to meet basic needs, nurture success, and spread change. Through our programs, people gain stability and build skills that equip them to move forward in their lives. Through advocacy, we work toward ending racism and other oppressions embedded in our institutions, policies, and culture that hold people back from succeeding. We bring the voices of people experiencing poverty into the political process, furthering social justice and supporting our entire community to reach its potential.

- Demonstrate the initiative to learn and enhance skills that promote anti-racism, cultural competency and an understanding of oppression and its impact.
- Participate in intentional learning efforts, including events relating to understanding and dismantling institutional racism and building cultural competency.

Job Summary

The Benefits Attorney provides civil legal representation in administrative and Superior Court hearings, and advice and dispute resolution services to low-income persons who have had public benefits denied, terminated, or reduced. The Benefits Attorney also conducts community outreach and provides training for community agencies around public assistance benefits.

Essential Responsibilities, Duties and Tasks

DSHS Benefits: Provide legal representation and dispute resolution for DSHS benefits clients including interviewing, investigation, review of case files, preparation of witnesses, settlement negotiation and administrative hearing representation. Research, write and file appeals with the Board of Appeals and King County Superior Court on behalf of clients as needed.

Public Assistance: Provide information and legal advice regarding public assistance programs to callers

and walk-in clients. Make referrals to other community resources. Instruct and provide materials to clients who proceed without representation.

Community Outreach: Conduct client outreach and community trainings, including providing information and advice to other community and legal service programs. Develop collaboration with other legal and social service providers, including developing sites for video telephone technology for client interviews. Prepare fact sheets, referral information and other materials for trainings and for the use of other agencies and clients.

Management: Hire, supervise, evaluate, and train legal interns and volunteers working with the program. Provide necessary support through regular staff meetings and identify and schedule trainings and workshops to enhance skills.

Public Benefits: Provide technical assistance to the Basic Needs Program Manager around public benefits policy changes. This includes, but is not limited to legal research, helping to develop innovative policy solutions, and legislative testimony.

Record Keeping: Maintain internal record keeping systems including client files, intakes, client logs, closing memoranda. Prepare monthly statistical reports and other outcome documentation for program reports.

Teamwork: Represent agency in meetings, coalitions and task forces relating to public benefits issues and clients, including state and county public benefits meetings. Participate in program, department and agency-wide meetings and committees as required.

The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

Education & Experience

Requires:

- A Juris Doctor degree, and at least two years of experience practicing law.
- Membership in Washington State Bar Association.
- Experience conducting legal research.
- Experience supervising staff and/or managing volunteers.
- Personal connection or experience with our client community and/or public benefits is preferred.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Excellent communication skills, both oral and written, with an emphasis on legal writing and persuasion.
- Excellent problem solving, facilitation and conflict resolution skills.
- Excellent organizational abilities, initiative, and attention to detail.

- Self-motivated with an ability to prioritize and problem-solve.
- Ability to work individually in a self-directed manner and as part of a team.
- Ability to develop collaborative relationships with legal and social service providers.
- Willingness and ability to work with people from a variety of racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds, with various lifestyles, sexual orientations, and of all ages.
- Knowledge of local community services and resources available to populations served by the program.
- Demonstrated commitment and interest in providing legal services to the low-income community.
- Access to reliable transportation, valid driver's license, vehicle insurance that meets Washington State's minimum guidelines and the ability and willingness to travel throughout King County and on occasion to Olympia.
- Proficient knowledge of computer software, including experience conducting legal research on the internet
- Ability and willingness to work outside of normal business hours to attend meetings, trainings, and client interviews.

Physical Demands/Working Conditions: This position works in an office setting, performing general office duties 85% of the time and 15% of the time in the field. Employees spend 50% of office time on the computer, 25% of the time answering the phone, and 10% misc. (85% in the office) and 15% of their time in the field. Work outside the office is 15%, training and outreach, and 5% driving. Position requires employee to lift/carry up to 20 pounds rarely, 5-10 pounds occasionally and push/pull 10 pounds seldom, 1-5 pounds frequently. Position has the ability to sit/stand as needed. Stairs not required.

Hours and Compensation: This is a regular 40/week, union position starts at **\$78,881.00 per year plus benefits**. Salary range \$78,881-\$112,242. Benefits include medical, dental, short-term and long-term disability insurance, basic life insurance, 401(k) savings plan including agency contribution and match, holiday pay, generous paid personal leave package and tax-sheltered health care and dependent care accounts. Solid Ground employees may be eligible for a standard annual increase. The amount may be determined by an employee's union membership.

Solid Ground is an equal opportunity employer committed to workplace diversity. We do not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, race and color, religion, marital status, national origin, disability or veteran status.