

**LAW FOUNDATION OF SILICON VALLEY**  
**JOB ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY PROJECT**  
**DIRECTING ATTORNEY**

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Mental Health Advocacy Project (MHAP), established in 1978, is the largest of five programs of the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley, a private non-profit organization established to secure justice and protect human rights by providing legal advocacy, counseling and access to the legal system for those who would otherwise be unrepresented. The atmosphere at the Law Foundation is highly dynamic and collegial. The Law Foundation staff is committed to and passionate about the organization's mission.

MHAP's goal is to empower people identified as mentally or developmentally disabled to live more independent, secure and satisfying lives through the enforcement of their legal rights and the advancement of their social and economic well-being. MHAP's 15-person staff helps clients resolve problems in the areas of care and treatment in the mental health system, housing, and financial benefits. In the past year, MHAP provided direct and legal advocacy assistance to over 5,000 clients through the work of attorneys and advocates in three legal practice units:

**Poverty Prevention:** provides assistance with public benefits, mainly SSI, SSDI, Medi-Cal, Medicare, and some CalWorks, Healthy Families, General Assistance; some family law (child support modifications), consumer rights, tax assistance, and equal access to public services;

**Housing Rights:** addresses issues of housing and homelessness by defending evictions and assisting with housing complaints, including discrimination, reasonable accommodations, abuse and neglect, landlord/tenant conflicts and habitability; Section 8 voucher and public housing terminations; and shelter discharges; further, MHAP continues to be a leader in local housing policy reform; and

**Patients' Rights:** works on both individual and system levels to ensure compliance with laws governing mental health patients' rights in psychiatric facilities and programs, and represents patients in mental health due process and capacity hearings. Also, helps individuals with autism, mental retardation, and conditions like mental retardation with complaints about developmental services, including access to regional center services. MHAP shares its patients' right advocacy law expertise with programs throughout the state.

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

The Directing Attorney of MHAP is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the program to achieve the objectives of each practice unit. The Directing Attorney is an integral part of a management team and reports directly to the Executive Director. A deputy directing attorney supports the directing attorney with supervision and operations.

**DUTIES**

1. Overall project management and program administration.
2. System reform, policy and legislative advocacy.
3. Extensive staff training and supervision.
4. Some client representation, as needed. Evaluation of meritorious cases for referral or in-house litigation.
5. Office procedures and program development.
6. Income generation; drafting and submitting grant proposals.
7. Administration of personnel policies and problem solving.

8. Tracking developments in relevant areas of law and policy.
9. Education of and outreach to community about legal issues confronted by and rights of individuals with mental health and developmental disabilities.
10. Public relations with contractors, Board of Directors, community, and clients.
11. Preparation and negotiation of government contracts.
12. Financial budgeting and expense monitoring.
13. Participate in other fundraising events.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS**

1. California Bar Membership.
2. Eight years experience (desired), including public interest law, direct services, and litigation.
3. Demonstrated ability to effectively develop and supervise large team.
4. Demonstrated ability to work with large groups of people, both staff and peer managers.
5. Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
6. Demonstrated ability to analyze complex problems, and develop creative solutions.
7. Experience in fiscal management, fundraising, and program administration.
8. Direct experience with or general knowledge of services and issues affecting individuals with mental health disabilities or other disabilities. Past or current consumers of mental health services are encouraged to apply.
9. Commitment to the rights of individuals with mental health disabilities.
10. Demonstrated experience working with and/or sensitivity to persons with mental health or developmental disabilities.
11. Ability to identify, investigate, and resolve client problems.
12. Ability to analyze, write, and present ideas and legal concepts clearly and concisely.
13. Ability to negotiate solutions to problems between service providers and clients.
14. Demonstrated commitment to equality of all people regardless of age, race, class, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.
15. Experience working with individuals from multi-ethnic communities a must.
16. Bilingual ability is strongly desired.
17. People from diverse backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply.
18. Valid California Driver's License.
19. Experience in using Microsoft Word, Excel, and Power Point.

#### **SALARY:**

\$70,000, depending on experience. Excellent benefits package (including health, dental, vision and life insurance, 401(k) employer match of 3% after first year, generous vacation and holidays, long-term disability, paid state and local bar dues, annual training stipend, and more).

#### **TO APPLY:**

Send letter describing interest and qualifications, resume, writing sample demonstrating persuasive and analytical abilities (limit 10 pages), and names and telephone numbers of 3 references to:

Eva Fong  
Law Foundation of Silicon Valley  
111 West St. John, Suite 315, San Jose, CA 95113  
(408) 280-2455; Fax (408) 293-0106  
Email inquiries to: [evaf@lawfoundation.org](mailto:evaf@lawfoundation.org)