



West Oakland Office
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Berkeley Office
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1432 Franklin St
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JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

STAFF ATTORNEY

Homeless Action Center (HAC) is a community-based legal services program founded in 1990 to provide legal services to homeless people in Alameda County. Over time, HAC's specialty became public benefits advocacy, with a focus on Social Security disability benefits. The process of qualifying for disability benefits can be lengthy and difficult. Employing a client-centered focus and harm reduction principles, Staff Attorneys work closely with other legal services programs and social services programs to assist clients in meeting their emergency and longer-term needs during this process. HAC represents over 2,000 clients at a time. Please refer to www.homelessactioncenter.org.

STAFF ATTORNEY POSITION

HAC is seeking Staff Attorneys. The Staff Attorneys will primarily represent clients in applications and appeals for SSI/Social Security Disability benefits and Medi-Cal.

Duties include but are not limited to the following:

DIRECT CLIENT SERVICES

- Represent forty clients in all stages of the application process for Social Security disability benefits, including initial, reconsideration, administrative hearings, the SSA appeals council, and federal district court.
- SSI/SSDI/Medi-Cal representation generally includes the following duties: receive client referrals; contact potential clients; interview clients and complete applications, appeal forms, authorized representative forms, retainer agreements, and medical releases; obtain and document protective filing dates; obtain and summarize medical records and other evidence; correspond with clients' physicians and other treatment providers; arrange medical assessments and transportation to medical appointments; submit information electronically; collaborate with SSA and DDS via phone, email, fax and mail; develop legal arguments and write persuasive letters; and maintain regular contact with clients.
- Should the case proceed to the hearing level, the attorney will represent the client at an Administrative Hearing, which includes drafting a pre-hearing brief, giving an opening statement, answering questions from the judge, conducting a direct exam of the client, and cross examining medical and vocational experts.
- Post hearing, attorneys may file for Appeals Council review, and possibly District Court review.
- Assist clients with other issues related to disability benefits, like overpayments, payee issues, and employment issues.



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- Help clients apply for and retain other public benefits, like General Assistance and Food Stamps.
- Provide legal advice, brief services and referrals to callers and walk-in clients.

GENERAL OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Greet and assist drop-in clients.
- Perform periodic “on duty” shifts, which includes answering the office phone and providing brief services.
- Attend monthly staff meetings and all-staff trainings.
- Attend regular case reviews with managing attorneys.
- Assist in office cleaning.
- Enter case data into agency case management software (Prevail).
- Track time and complete monthly timesheets.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Staff attorneys must be admitted in good standing with the State Bar of California. Applicants who have recently passed the bar exam and are awaiting admission to the bar are encouraged to apply. Verification of bar passage may be requested if not yet admitted. Excellent writing and communication skills are essential. Sensitivity to people with disabilities is required. Our clients are very vulnerable people who deserve your absolute best work. Must be well organized, hard-working, reliable, dedicated, detail oriented and have the ability to work cooperatively with others in a collegial, yet challenging, environment. Must be comfortable applying harm reduction principles. A sense of humor is important, too.

OFFICE ENVIRONMENT:

HAC has three office locations. Attorneys share office space in an open office environment. The office is often chaotic and can be loud, but the open space encourages collaboration. We represent clients who are disabled, both mentally and physically, often homeless or on the verge of homelessness, and experiencing or with a history of severe trauma. Though we have a casual office environment, we expect that all staff will treat our clients with dignity and respect at all times. Finally, please note that we have animals – cats and dogs – in the offices.

SALARY & BENEFITS:

Starting salary commensurate with experience, based on scale; entry level salary for licensed attorneys is \$57,500. Employer paid health, vision, dental. Subsidy for Commuter Check



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program. 403(b) account available without employer contribution. Generous vacation, holiday and sick time.

TO APPLY:

Please email a **cover letter, resume, and three references as a single attachment** to the hiring committee, at Recruitment@homelessactioncenter.org by May 31, 2018. HAC is committed to equity in hiring. We encourage people of color, people who identify as LGBTQIA, and members of other minority groups to apply. If selected for an interview, you will be contacted. No phone calls please.