



Washington State Office of Civil Legal Aid

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Notice of Position Vacancy

Position: Blake Civil Impact and Reentry Legal Aid Services Program Manager
Agency: Washington State Office of Civil Legal Aid
Salary: \$115,000 -- \$120,000 Annually DOQ
Location: Olympia, WA (preferred); Alternative locations possible
Travel: Some Statewide Required
Open: August 1, 2022
Closed: Open until filled. This announcement will remain open, and applications taken until the position is filled. The Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) reserves the right to close recruitment at any time.

Mission

Recognizing that the provision of civil legal aid services to indigent persons is an important component of the state's responsibility to provide for the proper and effective administration of justice, the mission of the Washington State Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) is to secure, invest, and oversee the use of public funding for civil legal aid to low-income people in Washington State and to ensure accountability for public funds dedicated to this purpose <https://ocla.wa.gov>. OCLA embraces the Washington State Supreme Court's [June 4, 2020 "Call to Action"](#) to the judiciary and broader legal community to identify and address systemic policies, practices, laws, and rules that perpetuate bias and unfairness in the Washington state law and justice system.

Overview

OCLA is looking for a manager to administer and oversee the Blake Civil Impact and Reentry Legal Aid Services Programs.

On February 25, 2021, the Washington Supreme Court issued the opinion in *State v. Blake* (*Blake*) declaring that drug possession laws that impose a strict liability standard without an intent requirement are unconstitutional and void. The *Blake* decision effectively voided all drug possession convictions under current and prior state laws.

In response to the *Blake* decision, the Washington State Legislature enacted a number of measures to address the retroactive implications including, but not limited to, (a) claims for relief from convictions that are now void, (b) recovery of legal financial obligations (LFO's), (c)

recovery of wrongfully collected LFO's, (d) vacation of sentences, and (e) where appropriate, resentencing of offenders who have been convicted of multiple criminal offenses.

The Legislature also provided substantial funding to the courts, counties, and a number of other entities to help address the impacts of the decision on those who have been previously convicted under unconstitutional laws. OCLA was tasked with providing online automated plain language forms, outreach, education, technical assistance, and some legal assistance to help resolve civil matters surrounding legal financial obligations and vacating the sentences of defendants whose convictions or sentences are affected by the decision in *State v. Blake*.

For FY 2023, the Legislature increased funding to \$2.5 million for legal assistance to individuals eligible for civil relief under the State v. Blake decision. The funding will (a) ensure equity of statewide access to *Blake* legal information, training, and advice, (b) target support for and services to members of the *Blake* community most harmed by the war on drugs that fueled disproportionate efforts to enforce the statute found unconstitutional, and (c) establish a mechanism to incorporate members of the *Blake*-affected community(ies) in the design and oversight of these efforts.

In 2020, the Legislature directed OCLA to establish a statewide reentry legal aid project to promote the successful reentry of formerly incarcerated people. Following a public process, the Office of Civil Legal Aid selected the Civil Survival Project to establish and operate the statewide Reentry Legal Aid Program (RLAP).

Principal Responsibilities

The Program Manager oversees the day-to-day operation of the Blake Civil Impact and Reentry Legal Aid Services Program and Reentry Legal Aid Program. Working under the direction of the OCLA Director and the executive leadership team, the Program Manager will:

- Originate and monitor contracts with participating civil legal aid programs
- Define, track, aggregate, analyze and report on data documenting the services provided including qualitative and quantitative outcomes achieved
- Foster and support a collaborative working relationship between OCLA and the Washington State Office of Public Defense (OPD) in responding to the *Blake* decision
- Oversee the process for receipt, approval, and payment of invoices
- Serve as the primary liaison between OCLA, the Washington State Legislature and other key stakeholders on matters relating to *Blake* and Reentry legal aid programs
- In consultation with OCLA executive leadership, develop, track, oversee, and programs budgets, and expenditures
- Actively participate in internal processes and initiatives including operationalizing OCLA's race equity and justice efforts
- Perform such other duties that, in consultation and under the supervision of the OCLA Director or the Director's designee, as may be required

Skills and Background

- Juris Doctor and in good standing with the Washington State Bar Association (required)
- At least five years' experience (combined) working in the criminal and civil justice systems (preferred)
- Demonstrated understanding of the impact of race, bias, discrimination, and differential treatment of communities disproportionately composed of Black, Indigenous, and people of color, individuals who identify as LGBTQ2S or other sexual minorities, individuals with disabilities, immigrants, limited English speaking persons, and others who have been historically disproportionately overrepresented in the criminal justice systems (required)
- Knowledge and understanding of courts, the civil and criminal justice systems, and criminal law and procedure (required)
- Experience with governmental contract management, oversight, data tracking, and reporting (preferred)
- Excellent written and oral communication skills (required)
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office Suite applications (especially Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) (required)
- Experience with data tracking, analysis, and reporting (preferred)
- Ability to quickly learn and master new software applications, as required (required)

Reporting

The Program Manager reports to the Director of the Office of Civil Legal Aid or the Director's designee.

Compensation and Benefits

Salary: \$115,000 -- \$120,000 Annually (Depending on Qualifications)
Benefits: Paid medical/dental, life insurance, and long term disability insurance programs
Leave: Paid vacation and sick leave benefits
Retirement: Employer contributions to state retirement benefits

[Click here for more benefit information](#)

Application Procedure

Applications must be filed electronically with jobs@ocla.wa.gov and should include the subject heading **Statement of Interest – Blake-Reentry Program Manager**.

Submissions must include:

- A cover letter and resume outlining the applicant's credentials and professional/lived experience that is responsive to the skills and background outlined in this Notice
- A list of at least three (3) peer professional references
- A self-edited writing sample.
- Application for State Jobs (Word file)

Additional Information

OCLA is institutionally committed to building and maintaining an anti-racist culture. This includes a commitment to intentionally listen, learn, and take action to meet the challenges outlined in the Supreme Court's June 4, 2020 open letter referenced above. The Blake Civil Impact and Reentry Legal Aid Services Program Manager will be part of a team that, together, serves as guardians of these values both internally and in our relationships with client service contractors.

The Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) is committed to equity and inclusion in hiring and employment practices and full compliance with federal and state equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination laws. OCLA strongly encourages members of diverse and historically disfavored demographic communities to apply. OCLA will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, citizenship, or immigration status; families with children; gender (including gender identify or gender expression); marital status; sexual orientation; age; veteran or military status; the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability (actual or perceived); or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. Individuals needing a reasonable accommodation for the application or interview process should contact support@ocla.wa.gov.

OCLA provides substantial professional flexibility, including hybrid office/remote arrangements, consistent with necessary accountability considerations and the specifics of each employee's substantive job requirements. We also support Washington State's greenhouse gas reduction efforts.