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Immigration Staff Attorney – Afghan Legal Services
Full-time, salaried, exempt
Volunteer Lawyers Project of CNY, Inc.

The mission of the Volunteer Lawyers Project of CNY, Inc. (VLP) is to provide access to justice through engaging the legal community in volunteer service to those in need. VLP receives funding from a variety of public and private sources and enjoys strong support of local bar associations.

Position Description

Reporting to a Supervising Attorney or Program Director, a Staff Attorney works primarily in a specific practice area. VLP seeks a full-time Immigration Staff Attorney to work providing legal services to Afghan parolees in Central New York.

Must be a member in good standing of the bar of the highest court of any state in the country or U.S. Territory and have three or more years of experience as an attorney, including at least two years of immigration law experience or work under the supervision of a senior attorney with three (3) or more years of immigration law experience. Ability to communicate in English required and ability to also communicate in a language other than English preferred.

A. BROAD FUNCTION: Provision of legal services to Afghan evacuees, specifically for the special immigrant visa (SIV) process, asylum applications, temporary protected status (TPS), employment authorization applications, renewal of parole requests, and other services as needed. Provide direct legal representation, and support to pro bono attorneys, providing high quality services in a professional manner. Also, must prepare and present at meetings and trainings as needed.

B. MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Interview clients and prospective clients as necessary and render legal advice as appropriate.
2. Represent clients in administrative agencies, courts, and other forums.
3. Prepare immigration applications, briefs, memoranda of law, pleadings, motions, and other legal documents.
4. Maintain up-to-date knowledge of law and procedure in relevant areas of indigent practice.
5. Help provide technical support to pro bono attorneys representing immigration clients from Afghanistan, through mentoring, maintaining a resource library, and reviewing drafts of filings.

6. Adhere to ethical standards including maintaining client confidentiality in all transactions.
7. Maintain case files including complete and accurate entries of all case transactions and process such files in accordance with society policies and procedures.
8. Participate in a cooperative "teamwork" approach with all VLP personnel and volunteers in the mutual endeavor to render effective, responsive service to clientele.
9. Assist with maintaining data and reporting on grant deliverables.

Traits of our ideal candidate:

- Positive attitude and flexibility – willingness to jump in and help out wherever needed.
- Team player who can analyze and solve issues as they arise.
- Fully embrace mission and purposes of the organization, with a deep commitment to social justice issues and serving immigrants.
- Maintain high standards of professional demeanor, including in communications with funders, staff, volunteers and clients.
- Strong work ethic, ability to work productively in a fast-paced environment.
- Strong organizational skills including the ability to manage multiple projects and details simultaneously.
- Ability to work with sensitive and confidential information.

We expect this position to be both in-person and virtual with some opportunity for hybrid or work from home hours each week. We expect a willingness to attend USCIS interviews, community outreach events, and meet with clients as necessary in person using proper social distancing (VLP will provide appropriate personal protective equipment including masks and dividers). For the safety of our clients, community and staff, all VLP staff must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19.

OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Volunteer Lawyers Project of CNY, Inc. is committed to a work culture of zealous advocacy, respect, diversity and inclusion, client-oriented defense, access to justice and excellent representation. We are dedicated to building a strong professional relationship with each of our clients, to understanding their diverse circumstances, and to meeting their needs. Our ability to achieve these goals depends on the efforts of all of us.

VLP is an equal opportunity employer. VLP seeks to hire individuals from diverse backgrounds and with diverse experiences who are professional, collaborative, and creative thinkers with a passion for our mission.