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Staff Attorney - Medical and Nursing Home Debt
Full-time, salaried, exempt
Volunteer Lawyers Project of CNY, Inc.

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

Position Description

VLPCNY seeks an attorney to manage the Medical and Nursing Home Debt Program – A Consumer Empowerment Grant from the New York Health Foundation. The overarching goal of this grant is to empower healthcare consumers by strengthening efforts to end medical debt in Central NY. This project aims to address medical and nursing home debt in Central New York through education, advocacy and direct client services that will help build the case for and support the statewide End Medical Debt in New York campaign and identify individual clients to demonstrate issues with private nursing homes for advocacy with the Attorney General's office.

A. MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Provide direct representation to consumers facing medical debt collections or who have medical debt collections they can challenge. Through direct client representation VLPCNY will uncover patterns of noncompliance with existing law and VLPCNY will identify and prepare individual client stories to strengthen the campaign to end medical debt and work to address abusive nursing home practices.
2. Help to develop and provide in-depth medical and nursing home debt outreach and training materials that will be provided both in-person and virtually throughout the region. This includes, but is not limited to, the development of an online toolkit for unrepresented consumers facing medical debt that can be used to help consumers understand their rights.
3. Conduct at least 12 community legal education outreach trainings regarding medical debt and/or nursing home debt. The focus will be on basic consumer rights as well as recent changes in the law and proposed changes. Education will also be provided to trusted community members such as the Central New York Housing and Homeless Coalition and the Human Services Leadership Council.

4. Collaborate closely with statewide, local, and national groups that address consumer debt related to medical and nursing home issues. Participate in the End Medical Debt Campaign. The Staff Attorney will participate in educational and/or advocacy visits with legislators throughout Central New York, will participate in campaign meetings and strategies, and will work closely with local organizers on the campaign. The Staff Attorney will also work closely with other legal advocates across New York State and nationally that work to fight medical and nursing home debt.
5. Help with recruitment and targeted outreach to volunteer attorneys and law students as well as providing mentorship, through training, supervision, assistance with cases, and general support.
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 VLPCNY policies and procedures.
8. Participate in a cooperative "teamwork" approach with all VLPCNY personnel and volunteers in the mutual endeavor to render effective, responsive service to clientele.
9. Assist with maintaining data and reporting on grant deliverables.

Job Qualifications:

Required: Membership in the New York Bar in good standing; a strong commitment to serve disadvantaged and needy individuals and families; an appreciation for and understanding of the central role that VLPCNY has in ensuring access to justice for all. Demonstrated organizational, administrative and technological skills, including knowledge of basic computer and database programs.

Preferred: At least three years experience practicing law, especially in consumer debt, with a preference for 3+ years of experience in medical and nursing home debt . Experience working or volunteering in partnership with anti-poverty community based organizations; experience coordinating and managing projects; and the ability to project a favorable image of the program in public relations activities, resulting in widespread community support and a positive reputation.

Salary & Hours: Salary is DOE. Generous benefit package included. This job description is not an exclusive statement of the roles and responsibilities of the position. Other duties may be required. 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 trainings, meetings, community outreach events, and meet with clients and volunteers as necessary in person using proper social distancing (VLPCNY will provide appropriate personal protective equipment including masks and dividers). For the safety of our clients, community and staff, all VLPCNY staff must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19.

To apply, please submit cover letter and resume to Mary C. John, Esq. at mjohn@vlpcny.org. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled, though we are hoping to fill the position by the November 15, 2022.

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.

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