

**Tenant Defense Program Director – 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 the Deputy Director of Civil Programs, the Tenant Defense Program Director is an attorney that directs VLP's eviction defense and tenant rights programming. Duties include:

**Program Management**

- Ensure that the Eviction defense and tenant rights programs continually aligns with VLP's mission and purposes.
- Maintain an understanding of other legal services providers both regionally and in the state that provide similar legal services and collaborate and coordinate with them to avoid duplication and maximize client services while continuing to improve VLP programs.
- Must be available and/or present every morning from 8:30am until 11:30am, Monday through Friday at Landlord Tenant Court in the City of Syracuse, as well as occasional appearances at town and village courts as needed.
- Continually work to create effective and innovative ways to provide legal services through engaging volunteers. This includes both attorneys and law student volunteers who represent clients under NYS Student Practice Orders.
- Directly supervise support staff (currently two non-attorneys) and any future staff attorneys or fellows that we hire under the program.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers under their supervision are maintaining accurate and timely records in VLP's case management and document management systems regarding program operations and client services.
- Track program grant performance to ensure that programs are on track to meet grant expectations.
- Assist with drafting and reporting for grants, making fundraising requests, and helping with other efforts to raise and maintain funds for the organization.
- As approved by the Executive Director, act as the primary spokesperson for the Eviction Defense program, including responding to requests from local media.

## **Direct Representation of Clients**

- It is anticipated that the Program Director will maintain a small ongoing caseload of direct representation cases in landlord tenant court, as well as be the supervising attorney for law students practicing under a student practice order.

## **Volunteer Coordination**

- Recruit, train and supervise volunteers (lawyers, law students, paralegals and others) in provision of legal services .
- Provide or coordinate CLE trainings to support all volunteers so that volunteers are current on relevant laws.
- Develop and maintain volunteer resources and best practice manuals.
- Ensure that all volunteers are providing culturally competent legal services.

## **Community Education, Outreach and Engagement**

- Provide legal trainings to the community regarding the areas of law related to eviction defense and tenant rights.
- Participate in community meetings, associations, taskforces, etc. that are related to the eviction defense and tenant rights.
- Engage in outreach including meetings with key stakeholders, preparation of flyers and other written materials, publicity, and more, to ensure the community is aware of VLP's services.

## **VLP Organizational Development**

- As requested by the Executive Director, participate in strategic planning and organizational capacity-building activities.
- Perform additional duties as assigned by the Executive Director or Deputy Executive Director of Civil Programs for the benefit of the organization.

## **Minimum Qualification Standards:**

- Juris Doctorate Degree.
- Admitted to practice law in New York, or eligible for admission within 3 months of being employed.
- Passion for tenant rights and safe housing.
- At least one full year of relevant experience practicing as an attorney.
- Experience working with (or volunteering with) vulnerable and diverse populations.

**Additional Preferred Qualifications:**

- Experience with volunteer engagement.
- Experience with managing staff or volunteers.

**Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:**

- Positive attitude and flexibility – willingness to jump in and help wherever needed.
- Team player who can analyze and solve issues as they arise.
- Fully embrace the mission and purposes of the organization.
- 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.

Salary is dependent upon experience, starting at \$85,000/year for 1 full year of relevant experience and increasing with more relevant experience. Benefits package included. This job description is not an exclusive statement of the roles and responsibilities of the position. Other duties may be required.

To apply, please submit cover letter and resume to Sal F. Curran, Esq. at [scurran@vlpcny.org](mailto:scurran@vlpcny.org). Applications will be accepted until the position is filled, and we are hoping to fill the position as soon as possible.

***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.*