



## LEGAL DIRECTOR

OVERLAND PARK, KS **OR** WICHITA, KS  
JANUARY 2024

### ABOUT THE ACLU OF KANSAS

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Kansas is a non-profit and non-partisan organization dedicated to preserving and advancing the civil rights and legal freedoms guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The ACLU of Kansas works in the state legislature, the courts, and local communities to protect the rights of all people living in Kansas. The organization's work includes efforts to strengthen and defend First Amendment rights, voting rights, reproductive rights, racial justice, LGBT rights, immigrants' rights, stopping government surveillance, and reforming the criminal justice system. The ACLU of Kansas often works in broad-based coalitions made up of individuals and organizations from across the political, partisan, and ideological spectrum. The ACLU of Kansas is an affiliate of the national American Civil Liberties Union, has an annual budget of approximately \$2.1 million, and has more than 30,000 supporters across the state. The headquarters of the ACLU of Kansas is in Overland Park, Kansas.

The ACLU of Kansas comprises two separate corporate entities, the American Civil Liberties Union of Kansas and the ACLU Foundation of Kansas. Both entities have the same overall mission, and share office space and employees. The ACLU has two separate corporate entities in order to do a broad range of work to protect civil liberties. The ACLU Foundation of Kansas is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that primarily engages in litigation and public education. The ACLU of Kansas is a 501(c)(4) non-profit corporation that primarily engages in lobbying and advocacy. The ACLU of Kansas also provides operational and funding support for Kansans United for Civil Liberties, a Section 527 political action committee. More information about the ACLU of Kansas is available at [www.aclukansas.org](http://www.aclukansas.org).

### POSITION OVERVIEW

The ACLU of Kansas seeks a visionary, dynamic, creative, self-motivated team player to serve as its Legal Director. This senior-level position will lead the organization's statewide program of impact-oriented litigation and legal advocacy. Reporting directly to the Executive Director, the position may be based either at the ACLU of Kansas's primary office in Overland Park or at a new site in Wichita.

This position involves some travel to communities around the state, including to state and federal courthouses. This is a management position, with current supervisory responsibility for three full-time employees in addition to legal fellows, legal interns, and legal volunteers.

The ACLU of Kansas has adopted a "campaign" approach for its work. Work is focused on pursuing specific integrated advocacy campaigns to achieve measurable goals that will expand civil liberties, while building the long-term power of the ACLU and the civil liberties movement. The organization's campaigns for the next four years are criminal legal reform and voting rights. Both campaigns have legal advocacy or litigation objectives they seek to attain at the state level and at the local level.

### PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

- In coordination with Executive Director, develop vision and set overall strategy for the ACLU of Kansas legal program.

- Ensure the ACLU of Kansas maintains an active and diverse litigation docket consistent with organizational and campaign priorities.
- Serve as lead counsel for cases pursued by the ACLU of Kansas, where appropriate.
- Investigate and litigate select civil liberties/civil rights cases in state and federal courts.
- Manage and litigate active cases, including: drafting and developing arguments for briefs and motions; managing all aspects of discovery; managing in-court proceedings; negotiating settlements; and maintaining client relationships throughout the case.
- Supervise legal staff (including volunteers and legal interns/fellows).
- Prepare legal memoranda and demand letters.
- Review, comment on, or write amicus briefs.
- Provide legal analysis to other ACLU staff, when appropriate.
- Coordinate collaboration with and legal support for other ACLU of Kansas programs in the promotion of integrated advocacy.
- Collaborate with national ACLU partners and participate in national ACLU conferences.
- Establish, maintain, and manage a robust set of co-counsel relationships with law firms and cooperating attorneys, within and outside of Kansas.
- Maintain communication and contact with the broader legal community in Kansas.
- Serve as a spokesperson for the ACLU of Kansas in the press, as a public speaker, and before other audiences, as appropriate.
- Coordinate media strategies for legal cases with communications staff.
- Collaborate with communications staff in drafting press releases, op-eds, and articles for newsletter, website, social media, and other outlets.
- Report on legal program activities to funders and the ACLU of Kansas board of directors, as applicable.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the Executive Director.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Undergraduate degree and JD required.
- Bar licensure in at least one state is required at the time of application. Admission to the Kansas Bar will be required for the successful candidate; candidates not yet admitted to the Kansas Bar will be required to waive in within six months of hire or sit for/pass the next available Kansas bar exam.
- At least seven years of civil litigation experience, with at least 5 of those years as USC 1983 litigation or other plaintiff-side civil rights experience. Experience in both federal and state courts

strongly preferred.

- Prior experience managing an organizational/advocacy litigation docket and prior experience in managing legal staff strongly preferred.
- Experience working on racial justice issues and using a racial justice lens.
- Substantial knowledge of constitutional and statutory civil liberties and civil rights law.
- Excellent analytical, communication (written and oral), and research skills, with the ability to articulate legal concepts and complex issues tactfully and effectively to a variety of audiences.
- Strong legal writing and editing skills.
- Demonstrated ability to build and sustain relationships with diverse groups.
- Initiative, vision, and ability to develop and implement short and long-term legal and litigation strategies.
- Exceptional ability to work independently and keep organized in a fast-paced environment, manage several projects simultaneously, and adjust strategy to frequently changing demands.
- Understanding of how to work collaboratively with colleagues across departments and functions; experience in integrated advocacy strongly preferred.
- Ability to manage, lead, and inspire professional growth in legal staff.
- Commitment to the highest ethical standards and professionalism.
- An unwavering passion for the mission and goals of the ACLU, including demonstrated interest in civil liberties, equity and racial justice is essential.

## COMPENSATION

Salary for this position is based on experience, with a range that begins at \$100,000. Relocation assistance may be available for candidates outside of Kansas. The ACLU of Kansas offers excellent benefits, including medical and disability insurance (fully paid by employer), a 401(k) match program, and generous vacation, holiday, and sick leave.

## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Please submit a letter of interest, a current resume, a relevant legal writing sample of no more than 5 pages, and three professional references (identifying each reference's relationship to you and each reference's email address and phone number). Email your application to:

Vanessa Phipps, Sr. Human Resources Consultant  
[vhipps@aclukansas.org](mailto:vhipps@aclukansas.org)

Please include "Legal Director" in the subject line. Applications accepted until the position is filled. No calls or in-person applications, please.

## DEADLINE

Applicants will be reviewed beginning immediately and will be accepted until the position is filled, at which time the job announcement will be removed from our website. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. No phone calls or in-person applications, please. The ACLU of Kansas strongly encourages formerly incarcerated individuals to apply.

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*This job description provides a general but not comprehensive list of the essential responsibilities and qualifications required. It does not represent a contract of employment. The ACLU of Kansas reserves the right to change the job description and/or posting at any time without advance notice.*

*The ACLU of Kansas is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU of Kansas encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, or veteran status. The ACLU of Kansas undertakes affirmative action strategies in its recruitment and employment efforts to assure that persons with disabilities have full opportunities for employment in all positions.*