

New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty - Legal Director

The Legal Director is central to guiding a creative and holistic legal strategy at NMCLP that advances social and economic justice, by providing impact litigation and legal advocacy to protect rights, address systemic injustice and promote community priorities and voices. The position fosters collaboration among attorneys and policy advocates and ensures adequate planning and resourcing of legal casework, while maintaining high standards for quality legal work. The Legal Director provides supervision and support to attorneys and paralegal staff, fostering a healthy, inclusive and collaborative workplace. This position is a key member of NMCLP's core leadership team.

NMCLP is a nationally recognized nonprofit law firm that engages in systemic advocacy and impact litigation to advance the health, economic, and educational wellbeing of New Mexico's families. We partner with communities across New Mexico, including immigrant and Native American communities, to provide advocacy and representation through the courts, the legislature and administrative agencies, community education, and media. NMCLP prioritizes education, housing, food and health justice, public benefits and workers' rights, among other issues. To learn more about NMCLP, please visit our website at www.nmpovertylaw.org.

Responsibilities

- **LEGAL STRATEGY:** Leads the development and execution of NMCLP's legal strategies through an approach that is community-driven and includes a range of services. Ensures all legal work – legal representation, litigation, legal education, and administrative advocacy and rulemaking advocacy - is coordinated, community informed and aligned with organizational goals. Partners with the Policy Director to integrate legal and policy advocacy, providing legal analysis and support for policy initiatives. Works collaboratively with legal teams staff, external co-counsel, community organizations, and advocacy partners to develop and implement legal advocacy. Represents the work and vision of NMCLP to partners, stakeholders, the public, and the national legal services community.
- **IMPACT LITIGATION:** Oversees all impact litigation, ensuring that it advances NMCLP's priorities and strategic vision. Approves and guides complex litigation and appeals, helps identify co-counsel, and helps resolve ethical, highly technical or novel legal issues. Sets litigation and legal casework practice standards based on values and holistic strategies. Develops and supports staff to develop clear work plans and evaluation tools to improve effectiveness and accountability across legal teams.

- **SUPERVISION AND TEAM COLLABORATION:** Supervises attorneys and legal staff by overseeing work product quality and fostering professional growth, within an inclusive and collaborative environment. Supervises and provides litigation support to legal staff and ensures that lawyers at every level in the program have access to the resources they need and tools to grow professionally. Fosters a culture that centers NMCLP's values for equity, inclusion and belonging for staff.
- **STRATEGIC AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP:** Plays a crucial role within NMCLP's core leadership team. With Policy Director and senior staff, develops structure and alignment of legal and policy strategies and evaluation. Helps develop and manage project plans, annual work plans, and long-term strategies that reflect community needs. Supports strategic use of data and technology to strengthen legal advocacy. Contributes to budgeting, resource management, and the development of internal systems that support staff, values, and organizational goals. Ensures organizational policies and procedures align with NMCLP's values and goals. Assists in the development of internal structure of the organization that supports the strengths, values and needs of the staff and the mission and vision of the organization. .

This position currently directly supervises two full-time attorneys and one paralegal. Supervision may include summer law clerks. The position reports to the Executive Director and is a key member of NMCLP's core leadership team, which includes the Executive Director, Policy Director, Legal Director, Development Director, Communications Director and People and Operations Director.

This position is based in Albuquerque, NM and requires some physical presence at the office and ability to attend in-person meetings. The typical salary range is \$105,000-\$130,000, commensurate with experience.

Qualifications and Experience:

- Demonstrates a deep understanding of and relentless commitment to NMCLP's mission, and economic and racial justice for New Mexico's communities.
- Minimum of 8 years of experience in civil litigation in state and federal courts, including substantial experience in a leadership role.
- Minimum of 3 years management experience.
- Visionary and bold, creative strategic thinker and problem solver.
- Proven expertise in crafting and executing impactful legal strategies, setting ambitious yet achievable objectives and rigorously evaluating progress to deliver outstanding results.
- Commitment to lawyering for community priorities, and familiarity with aligning litigation to grassroots advocacy strategies.
- Familiarity and experience with best practices and structures that support organizational growth and team-based collaborations.
- Demonstrates advanced institutional project management skills to plan and implement advocacy projects as a team, and that extend beyond traditional legal casework.

- Excellent interpersonal skills with the ability to work closely and collaboratively with a diverse staff and community partners.
- Strong understanding of legal and policy issues relevant to the organization's focus areas and legal strategies that address those issues, including litigation seeking injunctive relief, class action litigation and appellate work.
- Excellent research, analytical, and writing skills.
- Experience engaging with policymakers, government agencies, and advocacy organizations.
- Ability to communicate complex legal and policy concepts to diverse audiences.
- A strong track record of supervisory experience; adept at motivating, advising, coaching and providing constructive feedback to staff at all levels.
- Shows a strong commitment to personal and professional growth, with a continuous drive for self-improvement and reflective practice.
- A champion of culturally competent leadership, fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace environment that embodies the organizational values.

Preferred qualifications:

- Fluency in Spanish
- Strong roots in New Mexico through personal and/or professional history.
- Experience in a nonprofit setting.

Things to know about the job:

- Full-time (40 hours).
- Position is based in Albuquerque, NM and requires some physical presence at the office and ability to attend in-person meetings.
- We are an equal opportunity employer committed to a healthy, collaborative, and inclusive work environment for a diverse staff. We strongly encourage applications from Black, Native, and indigenous people, people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ+, and New Mexicans and individuals of multiple backgrounds and identities.
- We offer a competitive salary and a healthy benefits package: paid vacation, sick, and other leave (13 holidays including Juneteenth, Indigenous People's Day and your birthday), paid parental leave, 401k retirement plan, and opportunities for professional development.
- Not sure if you meet all of the qualifications listed? We recognize that no one person will. If you are interested in this job, we encourage you to apply in confidence by emailing a resume and cover letter that describes what interests you about the mission of NMCLP to contact@nmpovertylaw.org. Position will be open until filled, with first consideration given to applications received by May 28, 2025.

