Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service
Baltimore, Maryland
Cannabis Expungement Project -
Community Legal Advocate – Baltimore
(Full-time, temporary, non-exempt)

Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS), founded in 1981, is the oldest and largest volunteer legal services organization in Maryland. Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS) removes barriers to justice through free civil legal help, community engagement, and advocacy for equitable laws. Our vision is for a fair legal system that is free of injustice and equitably serves underrepresented Marylanders. We achieve this goal primarily through our core pro bono program and more targeted programs that serve specialized legal needs. For more program information, visit our website: www.mvlslaw.org.

MVLS' core values are teamwork, passion for MVLS' mission, commitment to clients, volunteers, and community partners, initiative and commitment to eliminate systemic barriers to justice based on race and economic disparities. MVLS is committed to fostering an inclusive culture in the workplace. Our work to end barriers to justice starts with increasing the racial diversity of our staff to better reflect the communities we serve.

As a result of the cannabis legalization referendum, MVLS has received **one-time funding** to implement a statewide outreach, education, and referral network to help expunge the records of Marylanders charged with cannabis-related violations. This position will focus on providing community education and outreach in Baltimore City and promoting and connecting residents with MVLS' legal services to stabilize housing, remove barriers to employment, and build legal knowledge in Baltimore communities.

The position is partially remote with approximately two to three days per week in-person at our downtown Baltimore office and the remaining days in the communities served. Local travel may be required. Mileage is reimbursed. **This is a one-year temporary position** and MVLS does not expect to receive renewal funding at the end of the grant period.

Job Responsibilities:

- Responsible for planning and executing targeted Baltimore City outreach to educate and provide legal tools to underserved communities and community-based nonprofits about cannabis legalization and criminal record expungement.

- Work with local leaders and residents to identify and implement best strategies for their particular programs, including building the relationships with their participants, providing support, and thinking creatively about how to engage the community further.
- Regularly attend various neighborhood outreach events.
- Steward existing relationships and identify new partners for outreach efforts.
- Develop and implement an outreach plan, and track and report on outreach efforts and successes.
- Provide outreach presentations including legal information regarding criminal record expungement.
- Coordinate outreach efforts with existing MVLS staff including the Outreach and Communications Manager and the Workforce Development Project.
- Work with a supervising paralegal and our Workforce Development team to refer clients for expungement representation.

Qualifications

- Experience in community organizing for social change and community improvement
- Passion for grassroots organizing
- Experience with strategizing and developing outreach and education campaigns
- A desire to develop strong relationships with a diversity of people, appreciation of meeting and engaging new people on a regular basis
- Excellent listening skills – the ability to identify a wide range of needs and respond accordingly
- A strategic thinker with the ability to identify and pursue opportunities and relationships
- Must be comfortable as a facilitator and trainer, and how to lead a meaningful discussion
- Excellent written and oral communication skills essential
- Able to confidently communicate with diverse audiences
- Evening and weekend hours required
- Candidate does not need to have substantive legal knowledge but will need to learn the basics of Maryland expungement law

Education –

- One to three years of community organization and outreach experience
- Demonstrated commitment through work experience, lived experience or volunteer experience to communities, such as:
  - Children, Domestic workers, Economically disadvantaged people, Immigrants and refugees, Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people, LGBTQ people, People of color, People with disabilities, People with HIV/AIDS, Sex workers, Victims of crime and abuse, and Women and girls.

Compensation –

Salary is $42,000 - $46,000 per year depending on experience. The position also includes excellent benefits, including: health, dental and vision insurance all paid by MVLS, group life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment insurance, a 403(b) retirement plan, a monthly commuter stipend equal to the value of an MTA pass, and generous leave time including vacation, personal, and sick days.

Job Location -
This position is hybrid – 3 days in office and 2 days remote per week. Travel to local in-person events will be required.

How to Apply –
Submit a cover letter, resume and three professional references from employers or school via email with "Community Legal Advocate – Cannabis Expungement Project" in the subject line to mvls@mvlslaw.org by 4 weeks from when position is posted. Applicants are encouraged to address the core values stated at the top of this job posting in their cover letters.

This application was posted on April 21, 2023. MVLS generally begins scheduling interviews after the four week application window has ended. Initial interviews with the hiring committee are scheduled for 45 minutes. For advancing candidates, a second 60 minute interview is held with the hiring committee and the Executive Director. Interview questions are provided in advance. Reference checks are made for final candidates. The interview process generally takes about four weeks.

Please, no telephone calls.

A COVID vaccination is required.

MVLS is an equal opportunity employer. MVLS does not discriminate against any applicant for employment or any employee on the basis of race, nationality, ethnicity, age, religion, disability status, sex assigned at birth, gender identity, gender presentation, sexual orientation, or immigration status.

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