



National Homelessness Law Center: 2023 Justice Fellowship

Request for Applications

The Law Center Justice Fellowship

The National Homelessness Law Center seeks applications for its inaugural 2023 Justice Fellowship. The Fellowship will provide the opportunity for a mid-career attorney currently working in civil legal aid or social justice to take a six-to-nine-month sabbatical from their day-to-day duties at their home organization and join the Law Center team to focus on a specific policy or litigation strategy to address the criminalization of homelessness in their home community or state. The Justice Fellowship will enable civil legal aid attorneys across the country to make a deeper impact on systemic litigation or policy projects.

About the National Homelessness Law Center

The National Homelessness Law Center (Law Center) serves as a legal arm of the national movement to end homelessness. Multiplying its impact many-fold through the support of a large network of pro bono lawyers, the Law Center uses its legal expertise to help pass, implement, and enforce laws addressing the immediate and long-term needs of persons experiencing homelessness or who are unstably housed. While seeking universal enjoyment of human rights, the Law Center team also understands homelessness disparately impacts Black, Indigenous, and other people of color, women, members of the LGBTQ+ community, people with disabilities, and those living at the intersections of multiple forms of marginalization, and our policy responses must consciously and affirmatively address those inequities.

A primary area of the Law Center's work is defending the rights of people experiencing homelessness against policies that punish them for surviving in public spaces in the absence of adequate alternative housing. The Law Center's national [Housing Not Handcuff's Campaign](#) (HNH Campaign), comprised of over 3,000 members, pursues legislative and litigation strategies to challenge these laws and policies. The HNH Campaign includes the [Housing Not Handcuffs Justice Network](#), a hub for over 100 lawyers and advocates around the country working to end the criminalization of homelessness. The HNH Campaign saw its most significant legal victory to date in the landmark 2019 decision in *Martin v. Boise*, where the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit found enforcement of anti-camping or similar laws unconstitutional when no adequate alternative shelter or housing was provided.

How the Fellowship works

The Fellow will remain an employee of their home organization. The Law Center will provide payment to the home organization in an amount that constitutes the Fellow's salary for six to nine months (exact timeframe determined in consultation with home organization and Fellow), up to and not exceeding \$50,000 ("Fellowship payment").

During the time of the Fellowship, the Fellow is expected to dedicate their full time to implementing their proposed Fellowship Project and therefore may be considered to be on paid leave or paid sabbatical from the home organization. The home organization may occasionally make requests of the Fellow's time to address administrative items, but in no way should expect the Fellow to undertake legal or policy work on behalf of the home organization's clients or partners.

The Fellow must continue to be employed by the home organization. The home organization must agree to continue to pay the salary of the Fellow during the period of the Fellowship, provide local administrative support (e.g. office space, computer, IT support, litigation management software, Westlaw/Lexis, etc., as needed), health benefits, and any other fringe benefits offered to employees of the home organization. The home organization must also agree to allow the Fellow to return to their original position at the home organization at the conclusion of the Fellowship. The Fellow will work primarily in their home location, but may be asked to travel to the Law Center's headquarters in Washington, D.C. at certain points during the Fellowship. These travel costs would be reimbursed by the Law Center.

During the course of the Fellowship, the Fellow will be treated as a member of the legal team at the Law Center. The Fellow will receive initial orientation onboarding and will be expected to attend regular staff and legal meetings with the Law Center Legal & Policy team. The Fellow will be able to conference their project with Law Center attorneys and draw on Law Center resources, such as our pro bono network, for research or litigation development, or media contacts and social media channels to help support public advocacy around their project. It is not expected that the Fellow's project will necessarily achieve its full outcome by the end of the Fellowship, but that the investment of time will have moved the project toward a successful launch (e.g. litigation filed, legislation drafted, campaign organized, etc.) and have a plan for sustainability following the Fellowship. If the project is litigation-based, the Law Center may, but is not obligated, to join as co-counsel beyond the Fellowship period.

Fellows also commit to being active alumni of the program, providing occasional guidance and mentorship to future Fellows, sharing the work of the Fellowship through webinars and conferences, and providing feedback to help improve the Fellowship experience.

Selection Schedule

August 16, 2022: Application period open

September 30, 2022 11:59pm ET: Application period closes

Mid-October– early November: Fellowship interviews and selection

Mid-November: Fellowship announced

December: Fellow makes transition plans to eliminate day-to-day commitments at home organization

January 2023: Fellowship commences

Summer 2023: Fellowship concludes

Requirements: Applicants are expected to have at least 5 years of legal experience providing free civil legal aid to unhoused or unstably housed persons and/or engaging in policy advocacy to end homelessness. The applicant must be an attorney, licensed and in good standing to practice law in the state in which they expect to conduct their advocacy.

Elements of Fellowship Proposal

Applicants should submit a proposal package, summarizing their work experience and identifying and describing a state or local systemic litigation or policy matter on which they propose to work during the Fellowship that has the potential to meaningfully reduce the criminalization of homelessness in their community. Successful Fellowship applications will include:

- Resume
- Three references, including a current supervisor and any others who can speak to your ability to accomplish the proposed project
- Project proposal (3-5 pages in length), which includes:
 - Brief project summary
 - Statement of community need
 - Project Goals
 - Timeline
 - Prospective community partners/collaborators
 - How this project advances racial equity in your community
 - What makes you the right person to do this project
- Statement signed by the home organization's Executive Director verifying the prospective Fellow has discussed the Fellowship with their home organization and the home organization supports the applicant and is willing and able to meet the requirements of the Fellowship program, including those applied to the home organization.

Instructions to Prospective Fellows:

Proposals should be addressed as follows:

Julia Hartenstein, Director of Operations

National Homelessness Law Center

hr@homelesslaw.org

Subject line: [Your name] Fellowship Application

Please attach all Fellowship Package documents in .docx or .pdf format.

This Fellowship is supported by the [Foscarinis Fund](#), named for the Law Center's founder to support the next generation of justice advocates.