

Housing Justice Director
Location: Within 1 Hour of Washington, DC
Full-time; Start Date: September 2024

The National Homelessness Law Center (Law Center) seeks a strategic, collaborative, mission-driven thought partner to serve as our **Housing Justice Director**. The Law Center serves as the legal arm of the national movement to end homelessness and is looking for a **Housing Justice Director** compelled by the national housing crisis and energized by our vision of housing as a human right and dismantling structural racism as we seek to end homelessness.

ABOUT THE LAW CENTER

Founded in 1989, the Law Center fearlessly advances federal, state, and local policies to prevent and end homelessness, while fiercely defending the rights of all unhoused persons. Our work has put unhoused children back in school, won new resources for affordable housing, prevented homelessness for renters, overturned laws that criminalize homelessness, and built support for the human right to housing, now a major component of federal domestic policy. We play a critical role in protecting, defending, and promoting the rights of unhoused persons to ensure they can lead national, state, and local efforts to end homelessness.

Our core conviction is that no one should have to go without safe, affordable housing, especially in a country as wealthy as ours. The Law Center's work, in partnership with national, state, and local partners, is critical now more than ever as the eviction and affordable housing crises, exacerbated by the pandemic, push record numbers of people and families into homelessness. People of color, people living with disabilities, women, children, the elderly, victims of interpersonal violence, and members of the LGBTQ+ community are disproportionately and uniquely affected by homelessness, and our work consciously and affirmatively seeks to address these interrelated inequities. In April 2021, the Law Center welcomed its second Executive Director, Antonia Fasanelli, a national leader recognized for her expertise in housing and homelessness law and policy. The Law Center elevates the power and voices of persons with lived expertise in working toward systems change.

We are proud of our high-quality and committed team of 15 staff persons and our large corps of volunteer attorneys. Although headquartered in Washington, DC, Law Center staff live and work across the country. Working remotely is an option for this position.

For more information, explore our website at www.homelesslaw.org.

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF POSITION

The Housing Justice Director will direct the Law Center's legal and policy work focused on housing law and policy. The Law Center's housing justice work is rooted in racial justice and the notion of housing as a human right. The Law Center pursues much of its broader federal housing policy work in concert with and as a member of the [National Coalition for Housing Justice](#), while leading in two key areas – the federal surplus property program (also known as Title V of the McKinney-Vento Act) and banning source of income discrimination in housing. The Housing Justice Director will not currently supervise any staff, but will work collaboratively with the Law Center's Youth Homelessness Team, particularly

the Youth Shelter and Housing Attorney, who works to advance due process rights of unhoused youth in housing and shelter, the In-Housing Counsel program, which provides pro bono representation to sheltering and housing programs on a variety of legal issues, including zoning matters, and with the Senior Policy Director.

Federal Surplus Property Program (Title V) - The National Homelessness Law Center has been at the forefront of Title V advocacy since passage of the Stewart B. McKinney Act in 1987 (now renamed to the McKinney-Vento Act). The Law Center has been the primary legislative and regulatory advocate for Title V, successfully blocking attempts to reduce or eliminate the program over the years and has served as the sole entity monitoring compliance with the Title V program. The Law Center partners with the National Council of State Housing Agencies and the National Coalition on Housing Justice on its Title V advocacy and the Urban Land Institute on educating state and local governments and nonprofits about the availability of Title V property.

Prohibiting Source of Income Discrimination in Housing - "Source of income discrimination" refers to the practice of refusing to rent to a housing applicant because of that person's lawful form of income. The Law Center partners with the Poverty and Race Research Action Council (PRRAC) on its federal advocacy and support for state and local organizations seeking to bar source of income discrimination or enforce existing laws.

This is an ideal opportunity for an attorney who thrives in a values-aligned organization. The Law Center's budget for 2024 is \$2.3 million. The Law Center is financially sound and maintains a reserve.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead the Law Center's federal, state and local policy advocacy efforts and technical assistance work to advance housing justice, including in the federal surplus property program and source of income discrimination areas including federal legislative, regulatory and agency advocacy; supporting state and local partners in state and local policy and agency advocacy; and identifying and developing opportunities for litigation;
- Partner and support housing coalitions and tenant organizing networks, and assist state and local advocates and persons with lived experience, to develop a comprehensive set of tools, resources, and advocacy materials;
- Foster and serve the Law Center's efforts to advance housing justice through local, state, and federal policy efforts, providing technical assistance, including litigation, if necessary, and growing its collaboration with local grassroots, policy, and legal advocates, including the National Coalition for Housing Justice, state and local housing coalitions and tenant organizing networks;
- Plan and execute training programs, including webinars, on Law Center housing policy priorities;
- Write reports, legal memoranda, advocacy letters, fact sheets, and other materials to support the Law Center's work;
- Develop and supervise pro bono projects to support the above work;
- Provide input to the Development Team to help write and report on grants for program work;
- Collaborate with the Executive Director on annual and strategic planning for the program and track and evaluate results; and
- Collaborate with other Law Center staff on cross-organizational priorities.

QUALIFICATIONS

- You have a J.D. and are an attorney admitted and in good standing in at least 1 US jurisdiction.
- You have at least 8 years of attorney experience with relevant policy or litigation experience.
- You have substantial policy advocacy and litigation experience in housing. Experience with federal affordable housing development laws a plus.
- You have experience working with directly impacted individuals and grassroots organizations on organizing, network, or campaign-building.
- You enjoy taking initiative, and you think strategically and creatively.
- You have an understanding of international human rights frameworks and share our belief that all human beings have the right to a basic standard of living that includes safe, affordable housing, healthcare, and freedom from discrimination and cruelty.
- You have a positive and constructive attitude.
- You write clearly and accessibly, and have experience editing others writing.
- You enjoy multi-tasking and thrive in a collaborative and fast-paced work environment.
- You have a justice-oriented understanding for how race and power impact relationships, organizational culture and partnerships. You are committed to personal and professional practice around deepening this understanding, through continuous learning, reflection and growth.
- You have experience in a social justice nonprofit. Any prior work experience in the housing justice and/or homeless-rights fields or relevant life experience is a plus.
- You have flexibility for occasional travel.

WHO YOU ARE

- You follow through on tasks until completion.
- You manage your time and stay organized to meet deadlines.
- You thrive in a fast-paced, team-centric environment and are a self-starter.
- You collaborate effectively with leadership, other staff, and volunteers.
- You handle sensitive information with confidentiality.
- You give and receive constructive feedback, are willing to learn, and ask for help when needed.
- You have a positive, problem-solving attitude.
- You have a strong commitment to social justice and the [values and mission](#) of the Law Center, viewing homelessness through a structural and anti-racist lens; the Law Center also encourages those with lived expertise of homelessness or housing instability to apply.

SALARY, BENEFITS AND LOCATION

Salary: The attorney will be paid in accordance with the Law Center's senior attorney salary scale which is based on years of experience. The scale for this position begins at \$87,500 for attorneys with 8 years of experience and goes to \$135,000 for attorneys with 27 years of experience.

Benefits: Health, dental, vision, life, short and long-term disability insurance all fully employer paid and a 403(b)-retirement plan with supplemental salary contribution. The Law Center provides a leave

package of vacation (20 days per year), sick leave (10 days per year), personal leave (5 days per year), and all Federal holidays. In addition, the Law Center closes two weeks per year. The Law Center has flexible work schedule options.

Location: The Law Center's headquarters is in Washington, DC, and DC residence or within an hour of commuting distance is necessary for this position.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Send cover letter and resume to HR@homelesslaw.org with "Housing Justice Director, Last Name, First Name" in the subject line. No phone calls, please.

The Law Center is an equal opportunity employer. The Law Center values an inclusive, diverse workplace and does not unlawfully discriminate on any basis prohibited by law. The Law Center encourages applications from all interested persons of any race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, personal appearance, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, or any other legally protected status. The Law Center values hiring people from diverse backgrounds and wants to encourage all who feel capable of performing the necessary duties of the role to apply, even if you are unsure your experience exactly matches the criteria of the job description.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: We seek to fill this position as soon as possible. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until filled.