



## Washington State Office of Public Defense

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March 15, 2022

Applications due no later than April 13, 2022

**Exempt Recruitment**  
**Staff Attorney, Disproportionality Unit**  
**\$105,000 – \$115,000 annually**

*Washington State Office of Public Defense*  
*Olympia, Washington*  
[www.opd.wa.gov](http://www.opd.wa.gov)

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### We Want You to Join Our Passionate Public Defense Team!

#### About the Washington State Office of Public Defense (OPD)

We are an independent judicial branch agency mandated to implement the constitutional and statutory guarantees of counsel and to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of indigent defense services funded by the state.

**Mission:** Upholding the rights of all people who are facing the loss of liberty or family by providing statewide leadership, administration, and support to the multidisciplinary public defense profession.

**Vision:** Public defense clients, everywhere in the state, receive truly equitable and client-centered representation from fully supported professionals.

**Values:** Justice ■ Service ■ Equity ■ Excellence

We administer a variety of programs, including systemic improvement programs and programs providing direct representation. To learn about OPD's programs click [here](#). We are dedicated to excellence in public law and indigent defense, and we seek talented candidates who share this commitment to client-centered service. We value employees who bring diverse backgrounds in education, employment, community activities, and life experiences to enhance our office.

#### Program Description

The Disproportionality Unit is responsible for providing high level support for equity and antiracism trainings in cases to support OPD contract attorneys who deliver indigent defense across Washington and also responsible for developing and delivering equity, inclusion and antiracism training across the OPD programs.

#### The Disproportionality Unit Program Purpose Statement:

Create distinctive, diverse legal training content and advocacy tools for legal professionals to address racism and bias issues that arise in indigent defense and right to counsel cases.

## **The Position**

OPD seeks an attorney who has proven litigation and trial experience developing effective equity-based legal arguments to address systemic racial and economic disproportionality in the legal system. This attorney will understand how race, gender, national origin, disability, and class intersect to create disparities for individuals and families who are accused of crimes or otherwise face state intervention into their lives.

The successful candidate will report directly to the Disproportionality Legal Training Coordinator, work closely with OPD leadership, OPD managing attorneys, and external partners to develop and implement specialized legal training to help public defense attorneys throughout the state identify and successfully argue disproportionality issues in trial and appellate courts.

The daily work site is at the OPD office in Olympia, periodic travel is required in Washington State, including occasional overnight travel. Out-of-state travel occurs infrequently.

## **Minimum Qualifications**

- Licensed attorney in good standing with the Washington State Bar Association.
- Five years in trial and/or appellate practice in criminal defense, or child dependency/termination of parental rights, or civil rights/social justice issues.
- Demonstrated understanding of and experience advocating against the impact of race, bias, discrimination, and differential treatment of communities disproportionately composed of Black, Indigenous, and people of color, individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+ or other sexual minorities, individuals with disabilities, immigrants, limited English speaking persons, and others who have been historically disproportionately overrepresented in the child welfare and related law and justice systems.
- Comfortable engaging with data and statistical research projects.
- Possess strong legal writing and research skills.
- Able to develop and sustain respectful professional relationships with stakeholders to include attorneys, courts, legislators, and others in communities throughout Washington.
- Ability to think strategically, prioritize tasks, and to function independently as well as part of a team in a collaborative environment.
- Proficient with computer use and have the ability to become proficient in the use of specialized case management tools.

## **Desired Qualifications**

- Have an ability to create innovations in systemic litigation practices that will drive data research projects.
- Capability to conduct individualized consultation to attorneys statewide seeking technical assistance on specific criminal defense and parent representation /child welfare issues.
- Proven experience working with clients living in poverty and/or from diverse cultures.

## **General Responsibilities**

- Professionally networking with external partners and stake holders to develop those relationships that strengthen our ability to promote social justice and system reforms applicable to indigent defense advocacy.
- Exercise mature judgment in potentially sensitive, high-stress situations.
- Participate in and foster a collaborative working environment at OPD, statewide stakeholder groups, and in demographically diverse local court systems.
- Diligently follow attorney and state employee ethics requirements.
- Conduct all activities with the highest degree of professionalism in furtherance of OPD's Mission, Vision and Values.

## **Compensation**

\$105,000 - \$115,000 annually, DOQ.

Compensation depending on qualifications. Washington State employees are offered a comprehensive benefit package that includes: paid holidays, vacation and sick leave, retirement and health, dental and life insurance coverage for self and family. There are also options for deferred compensation and pre-tax flexible spending accounts.

## **Application Process**

Interested candidates should *submit the following by email* to [Tracy.Sims@opd.wa.gov](mailto:Tracy.Sims@opd.wa.gov)

- Letter of interest.
- Current résumé and a list of at least three professional or lived experience references.
- A self-edited writing sample describing the outcomes of a specific project or program that the candidate has managed or been involved with as a principal
- [Application for State Jobs](#) (Word file) (Rev. 6/4/19)

## **COVID-19**

With regard to COVID-19, OPD will follow the guidance of federal and state restrictions in considering any future at home or in office work requirements and will strive to maintain a policy that is safe for the office and individual employees. Currently, people working in the office must be vaccinated or have an accommodation approved by the Director.

## **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

We vigorously pursue diversity in the work force. Women, racial and ethnic minorities, persons over 40 year of age, LGBTQIA+, persons with disabilities, formerly incarcerated, prior child welfare involvement, and military veterans are encouraged to apply. Pursuing diversity, equity and inclusion means that as an agency, and as individuals, we are committed to ensuring that all employees enjoy a respectful, safe, and supportive working environment.

## **Teleworking**

Our offices are in Olympia, Washington. We have teleworking options available by policy, and will be considered on an individual basis depending on the needs of the position and the availability of adequate equipment.