



Impact For Equity
Staff Counsel, Criminal Legal System Program
Location: Chicago, IL

Impact for Equity, a highly regarded and impactful public interest law and policy center, seeks a dynamic and experienced attorney to help advance an ambitious agenda to decrease the footprint of the criminal legal system in Illinois and mitigate the harms experienced by those who encounter it.

Description

Impact For Equity, formerly known as BPI, is a public interest law and policy center that has been at the front lines of the fight for social justice in the Chicago region for over fifty years. Known for its innovative and effective advocacy for racial and economic equity, today Impact For Equity is deeply engaged in advancing systemic change in policing, the criminal legal system, and housing.

With collaboration as a core value, Impact For Equity partners with people directly impacted by racial and economic injustice and the community-based organizations that serve them. The organization's tenacious lawyers and policy staff employ a combination of legal tools, policy research, organizing, advocacy, and convening to achieve transformational change. Impact For Equity works to develop nuanced policies and programs, advance effective strategies, catalyze strong coalitions, and advance progress toward its overarching vision of a state where every person has the right and opportunity to live their fullest life in a thriving community and free of systemic barriers. A collaborative and stimulating workplace, Impact For Equity is committed to offering opportunities to learn, grow, and contribute meaningfully to work that advances racial, economic, and social justice.

Impact For Equity's Criminal Legal Systems team advocates for policies and practices that create and protect alternatives to, promotes justice and accountability in, and seeks equitable outcomes for those impacted by the criminal legal system in Illinois. We also advocate for police accountability, which seeks to increase public safety and promote racial justice. Our work currently focuses on working to enact systemic police reforms, reimagining the roles that police departments play in promoting public safety, reexamining traditional responses to crime, dismantling entry points into the criminal legal system,

decarcerating prisons, and expanding services and programming, transparency, and accountability mechanisms to mitigate harms people experience during incarceration.

The Position

Impact for Equity seeks a dynamic and experienced attorney with a demonstrated commitment to racial and social justice to join our Criminal Legal System team as Staff Counsel. The successful candidate will be flexible, creative, and comfortable working independently and within a team on multiple projects of varying complexity. This is an exciting opportunity to provide vision, leadership, and support on some of the most vital social justice issues of our time.

Responsibilities

An Impact For Equity Staff Counsel develops laws, policies, and programs; creates and implements advocacy strategies; and, as appropriate, engages in litigation, to promote program goals. In cooperation with the Program Director and other Impact For Equity colleagues, a Impact For Equity Staff Counsel works independently and within a team on multiple projects of varying complexity.

The responsibilities of Staff Counsel include:

- Conduct legal and policy research and analysis to develop and implement laws, policies, and programs, and, as appropriate, engage in impact litigation, to promote program goals;
- Explore, develop, and implement advocacy strategies and projects to address inequities within the criminal legal system, informed by legal and policy research, data analysis, and the expertise of directly impacted people and communities;
- Participate in, support and/or build coalitions, partnerships, and task forces, working to strategize, engage collaboratively;
- Prepare written materials including policy reports, issue briefs, op-eds, fact sheets, legal and policy memoranda, and legal briefs;
- Work with communications staff and colleagues to help develop and implement communication strategies and messaging to elevate Impact For Equity advocacy efforts and serve as spokesperson upon request;
- Build and maintain a deep working knowledge and professional expertise on priority legal and policy issues and the criminal legal system policy landscape;
- Develop and maintain strong, collaborative relationships with a broad range of stakeholders, including impacted individuals, community members and leaders, community-based and ally organizations, policymakers, professional subject matter experts, and funders;
- Engage in cross-team collaboration and support and supervise fellows and interns on discrete projects:

- Develop short- and long-range strategies and monitor progress in achieving identified project goals;
- Cooperate with development staff to assist in securing external funding to support the work;
- Consistently integrate equity concepts into projects and interactions;
- Exemplify Impact For Equity's core values and advance Impact For Equity's mission and vision in all aspects of the work; and
- Travel in Chicagoland, Illinois, and to national conferences and meetings as needed.

Qualifications

- Three or more years of relevant experience in public interest law, impact litigation or policy advocacy required;
- Exceptional legal and policy research skills;
- Exceptional communications skills, including writing and public speaking, with an ability to communicate clearly and effectively with a wide range of audiences;
- Experience engaging in creative problem solving, including an ability to craft novel and successful advocacy strategies, including policy advocacy, legislative advocacy, and/or litigation;
- Ability to develop complex projects and establish a systematic course of action to ensure successful project completion with a high degree of independence;
- Ability to synthesize a lot of information, juggle multiple projects and priorities, think strategically, adjust to changing circumstances, remain attentive to details, and meet deadlines in a creative, deadline-driven and collegial environment;
- Strong interpersonal skills and sound judgment;
- Demonstrated ability to build relationships with a broad range of stakeholders, including impacted individuals, community members and leaders, community-based and ally organizations, policymakers, professional subject matter experts, and funders; experience working with directly impacted people, community-based organizations, community organizers, and/or coalitions, a plus;
- An enterprising mindset, a demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and a passion for social justice and Impact For Equity's mission.
- Ability to travel;
- Knowledge of and/or experience working on an issue or issues related to the criminal legal system are a plus, but not required;
- Multilingual skills are a plus, but not required; and
- Juris Doctor degree and admission to the Illinois Bar.

The salary for this position is commensurate with experience with a likely range between: \$70,000-\$90,000.

This is a full-time, salaried position with some evening and weekend hours required.

Impact for Equity offers a generous benefits plan that includes health/ dental/ and vision insurance; a 403(b) retirement plan; holiday, vacation, and sick PTO; a cell phone benefit; and a hybrid work schedule.

To Apply

Please apply using the application portal at impactforequity.org, including a resume, writing sample, and a cover letter explaining your interest and qualifications for this position. If your candidacy advances, you will be asked to provide a list of three professional references. Impact for Equity will accept applications until the position is filled.

Impact for Equity currently maintains a hybrid work environment with days in the office each week. Impact for Equity requires all employees to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition of employment. Accordingly, successful candidates must submit proof of vaccination prior to the commencement of employment, unless they qualify for a reasonable accommodation for bona fide medical or religious reasons.

Impact for Equity is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. We strongly encourage applications from people of color, immigrants, people with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ community, people with lived experiences of poverty, and people from underrepresented and historically marginalized groups.

Reasonable accommodation will be made so that applicants with disabilities may participate in the application process. Please advise in writing of special needs at the time of application.