

Policy Counsel- Job Description

Organization and Opportunity Overview

The ACLU-WI is a statewide non-profit, non-partisan, private organization with 22,000 members. The ACLU-WI is widely recognized as a cutting-edge and leading advocate for civil rights and civil liberties in the state, and works closely with other state organizations that share compatible goals. Our mission: *The American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin fights to protect, defend, and expand civil rights and liberties – particularly for communities historically denied their rights – through nonpartisan advocacy, community education, litigation, and organizing in order to create a more just future.* The ACLU of Wisconsin’s combined operating budget is approximately \$3 million with headquarters in the City of Milwaukee. The organization has a diverse staff of up to 30 individuals.

Position Overview

The Policy Counsel is a staff position within the ACLU-WI’s Policy Department. The Policy Counsel will engage in state and local policy advocacy before the Wisconsin State Legislature and municipal and county government bodies to advance ACLU-WI’s strategic work on issues related to First Amendment rights, criminal legal reform, LGBTQ+ rights and bodily autonomy, immigrant rights, and voting rights. This includes, but is not limited to, conducting rigorous legal and policy research, analyzing legislation, engaging in lobbying at the state and local level, and representing ACLU-WI in various coalition spaces to advance shared policy goals. The Policy Counsel will also work closely with staff across the organization on the Policy, Communications, Legal, Organizing, and Development and Engagement teams, as well as coalition partners and the ACLU National Office.

Job Context

This position is a full-time exempt position. The Policy Counsel reports to the Policy Director. The position may be based in either the Madison or Milwaukee area in a hybrid work environment (in-person and work from home). Work may include some nights and weekends and occasional travel at the expense of the organization.

Policy Counsel Primary Responsibilities:

- Conduct legal and policy research, including but not limited to the areas of criminal legal reform, First Amendment, immigration, LGBTQ+ rights and bodily autonomy, and strengthening democracy;
- Independently identify issues, legislation, policies, and opportunities relevant to ACLU-WI’s advocacy campaigns and other public policy goals;

- Draft, analyze, and revise policies and legislation, including amendments;
- Independently write and revise high-quality written material, including legislative testimony, memoranda, policy papers and reports, talking points and fact sheets, advocacy letters, know-your-rights guides, public commentary, and other content that further the legislative and policy priorities of the organization;
- Lobby individual lawmakers and testify before state and local legislative bodies on ACLU-WI's policy priorities;
- Cultivate and maintain key strategic relationships with elected officials, stakeholders, and peers at other organizations;
- Represent ACLU-WI in various community and stakeholder groups and coalitions and work in partnership with other organizations;
- Collaborate with inter-disciplinary teams to design policy strategies that are aligned with and supported by strategic communications, organizing, litigation, development and engagement, and other strategies and tactics;
- Serve as a spokesperson for ACLU-WI's policy positions in the media;
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

- Juris doctor from an accredited law school or other graduate degree in Public Policy or a related field;
- A minimum of three (3) years of relevant work experience at the federal, state, or local level.

The following qualifications are preferred but not required:

- Prior experience working with community and coalitions on policy advocacy projects (experience developing shared plans, coordinating external and internal communications, and understanding and skillfully navigating internal political dynamics among partner groups while remaining in good relationship);
- Prior experience in political strategic planning, including power-mapping and developing messaging and tactics for legislative campaigns.

Working Conditions: Hybrid work requirements consisting of approximately a 40-hour work week with work from home permitted when work responsibility allows, prioritizing caregiving and work-life balance needs.

- Ability to work extended hours including nights and weekends during state legislative session and as needed outside of legislative session;
- Ability to travel, as required.
- Ability to work at a computer for multiple hours a day;
- Prolonged periods sitting at a desk and working on a computer;

- Visual acuity for extensive reading, preparing, and analyzing information, and viewing a computer terminal;
- Ability to do light physical activity including occasional lifting and carrying of office supplies, packages, and equipment weighing up to 20 pounds to facilitate organization, filing, and event assistance.

Mental Demand: Decision making, emotional intelligence, giving and receiving feedback and building trusting, collaborative relationships. The nature of this work can be emotionally demanding and requires thoughtful communication.

Physical Requirements

- **Stationary positioning:** Must be able to remain in a stationary, seated position for 50 to 75% of the working period.
- **Mobility:** Ability to move about as needed in the office or at offsite venues. Occasionally may be required to ascend or descend from one level to another.
- **Transporting:** Must be able to lift and/or carry items weighing up to 10 pounds frequently and up to 25 pounds occasionally.
- **Communicating:** The ability to communicate information and ideas so others will understand. Must be able to exchange accurate information in these situations.
- **Determine/Observe:** The ability to observe details at close range.
- **Operation of Machinery:** Must be able to constantly operate a computer and other office productivity machinery, such as calculators, copy machines, computer, printers and other devices.
- **Temperature:** Typically works in a climate controlled, indoor environment. May occasionally work in other environments at offsite venues that would include some exposure to outdoor areas with variation in hot and cold temperatures

Compensation: Compensation is based on relevant experience and skills ranging from approximately \$67,309 - \$92,269 annually. The organization provides employees \$60 per month for internet and cell phone allowance. Benefits include paid vacation and sick leave, 12 weeks paid family medical / parental leave and optional medical (includes one plan at no cost to the employee) dental and vision coverage, life insurance, short and long term disability insurance; and an optional 401(K) retirement fund with a stepped employer match

How to Apply: Please **email** a single document of the requested documents to hr@aclu-wi.org, please use '[YOUR NAME]- Policy Counsel' in the subject line of the email. The requested items are the following:

- Cover letter explaining how you are qualified for this position and why you're interested in being part of the ACLU of Wisconsin;
- Resume;
- Final interviewees will need three professional references.

This job announcement provides a general but not comprehensive list of the essential responsibilities and qualifications required. It does not represent a contract of employment. The ACLU of Wisconsin reserves the right to change the description and/or posting at any time without advance notice.

The ACLU of Wisconsin is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and strongly encourages people of color, people with disabilities, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and formerly incarcerated people to apply. The ACLU of Wisconsin undertakes affirmative action strategies in its recruitment and employment efforts to assure that persons with disabilities have full opportunities for employment in all positions. We encourage applicants with disabilities who may need accommodations in the application process to contact us at hr@aclu-wi.org.

The ACLU of Wisconsin is composed of two separate corporate entities, the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin and the American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin Foundation. Both organizations share office space and employees.