



Creating Opportunity. Ending Discrimination.

Staff Attorney

Background: HOPE Fair Housing Center (HOPE), established in 1968, is the oldest fair housing center in Illinois. HOPE works to create greater housing opportunities for all. We ensure everyone has the chance to live in the community and home of their choice free from discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, familial status, sexual orientation, age or any other characteristics protected under state or local laws. HOPE accomplishes this through public policy, education, outreach, advocacy, enforcement, training, and community development.

Position Overview: The Staff Attorney will provide legal advice and representation of HOPE and its clients in fair housing matters in mediation, administrative settings and litigation, as well as collaborate with outside counsel as needed. The Staff Attorney will also be responsible for supervising the enforcement team staff, providing direction and oversight for the testing program, investigating housing discrimination complaints, and working with staff to develop and implement legal strategies that advance HOPE's mission and the goals of its clients.

Reporting to the Deputy Director of HOPE, the Staff Attorney will have the following areas of work:

Primary Responsibilities

- Developing and implementing strategies with HOPE's enforcement team to investigate complaint-based and systemic discrimination by housing providers, mortgage lenders, appraisers, other housing service providers and government;
- Providing supervision and assistance to enforcement team members on their work which includes but is not limited to intake, case work, investigation, and testing;
- Overseeing the design, implementation and analysis of all investigations to assess compliance with fair housing and civil rights laws and recommend appropriate next steps;
- Advocating for, mediating resolutions, and in some cases representing HOPE and its clients in fair housing matters outside of and including in court and administrative venues. Activities include but are not limited to: providing general legal advice; drafting demand letters and reasonable accommodation requests; drafting and filing fair housing complaints; drafting motions, pleadings and other legal agreements and contracts;
- Maintaining full and accurate records and case files;
- Conducting investigational research of complex housing issues as necessary;
- Keeping abreast of trends in the housing sector and providing support for HOPE's resource development initiatives;
- Cultivating and maintaining relationships with outside counsel or other relevant organizations when appropriate;
- Professionally and effectively representing HOPE in a variety of forums, as assigned;

- Working collaboratively, sharing knowledge, participating in discussions and providing fair housing guidance to staff, interns and colleagues;
- Participating in other enforcement or education related activities as determined by the Deputy Director;
- Performing other duties as assigned.

Working Conditions:

The position requires flexibility in schedule, duties, or unexpected events/circumstances that may occur, so tasks not specified here may be required to successfully execute the position and may be asked upon by the Deputy Director.

Evenings and weekends and off-site work are required. The schedule is flexible and is subject to the needs of organizational operations. This position is supervised by the Deputy Director.

Successful Candidate will Demonstrate:

- Passion for HOPE’s mission and its core values of innovation; housing equity, justice, and fairness for all; community reinvestment; solidarity with and accountability to communities served by HOPE
- Strengths around creativity, resourcefulness, persistence, and self-reflection
- Proclivity to risk-taking and a willingness to fail, learn, and adapt
- Preference towards a non-directive, client and staff-led relationship
- Openness to new approaches to HOPE’s work, delivery of services, and engagement with clients and communities
- Openness to regular, 360-degree feedback and an environment of mutual accountability
- Ability to engage a diverse community of people
- Commitment to confidentiality, integrity, and professionalism

Required Qualifications:

- Applicants must have a JD from an ABA -accredited law school and be a member, in good-standing, of the Illinois Bar.
- Three years of experience in housing and/or civil rights investigations and/or litigation, or similar equivalent experience with an ability to learn fair housing with limited direction.
- Possess or develop a strong understanding of:
 - Fair housing statutes
 - Complaint investigation best practices
 - State and federal administrative complaint and legal processes
 - Landlord/tenant laws and issues
 - Various additional legal concepts pertaining to fair housing
- Ability to access, read, and analyze legal documents, professional and legal journals, federal and state fair housing statutes and regulations, and court cases
- Strong attention to detail with keen analytical and time management skills
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to timely meet specific contract requirements
- Ability to think broadly, strategically and tactically about HOPE’s mission and vision
- Ability to represent HOPE effectively in a professional manner
- Demonstrated commitment to fair housing and/or civil rights
- Strong technology-related skills including familiarity with Microsoft Office, online databases and ability to navigate the internet

- Bilingual skills a plus but not required

Accountability: The Staff Attorney is accountable to and supervised by HOPE's Deputy Director.

Salary and Benefits: This is a full-time (40 hours a week) exempt position that includes health and dental insurance, life insurance, IRA matching up to 3% (currently offered but at the discretion of the Board) and generous paid time off. The starting annual salary is between \$70,000 and \$75,000 and depends on relevant experience.

To Apply: Interested parties may e-mail their cover letter and resume to info@hopefair.org
No calls please.

Women, people of color, LGBTQ, people with disabilities and veterans are strongly encouraged to apply.

HOPE is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The position will remain open until filled.