



CONSUMER LAW SUPERVISING ATTORNEY Rochester, NY

Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc.® (LawNY) has an immediate opening for a Supervising Attorney within our Consumer Unit. This position is program wide and will collaborate with all of the LawNY offices. This position can be housed in any one of our seven offices located in Rochester, Geneva, Ithaca, Bath, Elmira, Olean, or Jamestown, based on the selected candidate's preference. Moreover, LawNY offers a hybrid work schedule of up to three remote days per week during an employee's first six months, and up to fully remote thereafter, consistent with job responsibilities. This position will require periodic in-person appearances and some travel across the organization's service area.

Position Description

Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc.® (LawNY®) is a not-for-profit law firm providing free legal services to eligible clients in civil cases through seven field offices covering a fourteen county area in Western New York. Our Consumer Law Unit was created in 2017 to increase LawNY's capacity to represent clients with consumer law problems across our 14-county service area. Our consumer unit currently focuses on consumer credit debt defense, auto fraud, student loans, medical/nursing home debt, affirmative consumer litigation, bankruptcy, and more. Once fully staffed with this position and another open staff attorney position, the consumer unit will be composed of a team including two supervising attorneys, two staff attorneys, two staff paralegals, one or two AmeriCorps legal assistants, and a rotating group of law student volunteers and interns.

This position will join our existing supervising attorney in managing the day-to-day operations of the unit, including setting case priorities, accepting cases for representation, directing impact litigation and systemic advocacy strategies, and collaborating on grant administration and compliance. They will be directly responsible for supervising program staff, which may include attorneys, paralegals, and volunteers.

As a supervisor, we expect the person who fills this position to have demonstrated skills to foster productive, equitable relationships with all supervisees across a wide range of backgrounds. We expect those who fill this position will grow and adapt their practice to the needs of the community and the organization, and place an emphasis on strong supervision skills. Supervisors play a critical role in realizing LawNY's vision of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Every supervisor is expected to actively engage in learning and becoming increasingly skilled in supervision that supports this vision.

This position will also maintain a caseload of their own consumer cases. The attorney will focus on a wide variety of consumer protection issues, including predatory debt collection, credit reporting disputes, student loans, bankruptcy, and deceptive consumer practices. The attorney will be expected to staff LawNY®'s regional Consumer Hotline, providing information and resources to callers with consumer problems; Conduct initial client screenings and triage incoming consumer cases; Maintain a caseload of consumer law cases, with a focus on impact litigation; Assist staff on presentations and outreach to the community; Identify emerging trends in consumer law practice at the State and Federal level, by

participating in relevant workgroups and conferences; and Work with other LawNY® staff members and the community to develop strategies to address systemic consumer problems that adversely impact the low-income communities we serve.

The ideal candidate should have a strong understanding of the intersection of consumer issues with racial justice, and a willingness to incorporate racial justice principles into both the day-to-day legal work of the unit as well as overarching unit priorities and strategies. The applicant must also have the caring, patience, and emotional maturity to help low-income people navigate crisis situations.

This position will report to a Managing Attorney overseeing our organization-wide programs.

Responsibilities *These are the most significant responsibilities and primary functions of the position.*

- Provides legal services to low income clients and client groups including advice, negotiation, litigation and administrative advocacy in accordance with LawNY program priorities and case handling policies.
- Supervises caseload of supervised personnel, ensuring that each employee handles an appropriate amount of work, and coordinates the periodic review of these cases.
- Reviews and approves supervisee timekeeping and data entry; maintains thorough and timely case and file management and ensures compliance by supervisees under the program rules specified by the Legal Services Corporation, other funders, and LawNY's internal policies.
- Actively engages organizations led by impacted communities, community organizations, agencies and bar associations in developing and setting advocacy and litigation priorities and strategy.
- Provides supervision that is responsive to each supervisee's level of development, skill set, and learning style.
- Works to be aware of and to mitigate the ways that power dynamics and implicit bias, including supervisor/supervisee, job title, race, gender, and other factors may affect their relationships with supervisees.
- Collaborates with other human services providers, non-profit organizations and community groups as well as the courts, administrative tribunals and the private bar to spot common legal issues and patterns and discuss strategies for targeting systemic issues.
- Monitors developments in the law and leads both initial training for new consumer staff and periodic updates for experienced staff.
- Supports, encourages and co-counsels on affirmative and impact litigation, in collaboration with the Deputy Director of Litigation and Advocacy, regional litigation staff, and subcontractor/partner agencies.
- Maintains a high level of professional competence through attendance at training sessions, seminars and conferences and individual efforts to keep abreast of current developments in the area of poverty law, the application of a race equity lens to client service, as well as issues in the community affecting low-income people.
- Incorporates principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion and engages in learning to become increasingly skilled in supervision that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion (e.g. building a relationship with supervisees based on mutual respect and trust, understanding communication and work styles, having difficult conversations, developing conflict resolution skills, addressing microaggressions and interrupting implicit bias).
- Provides input as needed to administrator(s) on fundraising and grant reporting.

Qualifications *These are the basic qualifications for the position.*

- Admitted to practice and in good standing in New York State, eligible for admission without examination, or eligible for admission pro hac vice and willing to take the next available Bar examination.
- Three (3) or more years of previous experience at LawNY or in legal services.
- Demonstrated commitment of service to low-income people.
- Demonstrated leadership in critical issues facing low-income people.
- Commitment to engaging in learning and developing supervision skills that support diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Additional Traits and Skills *These are the traits, attributes, attitudes, and skills that speak to the candidate's ability to succeed in the position. **While no one candidate will possess all of the qualities listed, the ideal candidate will have many of these qualities.** LawNY encourages each candidate to think about their own personal knowledge, skills, and experience, as well as professional skills and experience, in relation to this list of traits and skills.*

- Track record of effective project management, supervisory, and/or leadership experience.
- Experience or familiarity with grant administration, reporting, and compliance.
- Affirmative and defensive civil litigation and advocacy experience in New York State and/or federal court and/or administrative forums, preferably in the area of consumer law and economic justice.
- Demonstrated ability to develop and undertake initiatives.
- Demonstrated ability to command the trust and respect of staff members, community groups and the legal community.
- Experience related to serving individuals from marginalized groups.
- An understanding of the concepts of institutional and structural racism and their impact on underserved and underrepresented communities
- Incorporates an anti-racist and anti-oppressive lens into legal practice.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, including a commitment to providing trauma-informed services.
- Experience and demonstrated skill in mentoring and training less experienced attorneys, paralegals and/or other staff.
- Humility in working with colleagues and clients across the spectrum of diversity, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, immigrant status, religious identity, physical and mental disabilities and/or limited English proficiency.
- Ability to work under deadlines and manage multiple tasks.
- Ability to lead and contribute to coalition efforts around consumer and economic justice issues.
- Knowledge of media and communications skills to effectively advocate for low-income consumers outside of the courts.
- True fluency in Spanish or another language other than English that is spoken by our clients is a plus.

Compensation

Salary is competitive and is set on a standardized organizational salary scale based on years of job experience. The annual salary for a Supervising Attorney with three years of legal experience is \$68,000.

We provide a superlative package of fringe benefits including:

- 94% employer paid health insurance, with significant HSA contributions to offset high deduction plans
- 100% employer paid dental and disability insurance
- \$50,000 automatic life insurance

- Remote Work Policy: New staff are able to work from home up to 3 days per week during their 6 month probationary period with manager approval. This increases to 5 days per week once successfully finished with a probationary period with manager approval.
- LawNY is committed to providing a work-life balance to their employees. We encourage and support a 35 hour work week to ensure our employees have this balance.

We also provide a very generous leave package including, in the first year of employment, 20 days of vacation plus 13.5 holidays and two floating holidays. Employees also receive 12 sick days and five personal days per year. New parents receive 20 days of paid new parent leave.

LawNY participates in the Legal Services Corporation loan repayment assistance program and is also a qualifying public service loan forgiveness (PSLF) employer.

Start Date & Application Timeframe

Applications for this position will close February 16, 2024. Please apply before then for full consideration. You will receive a confirmation email when your application has been received on our HR platform. LawNY® will contact you to inform you whether you have been offered an interview.

This position starts as soon as possible after offers are made, with a target start date of April 2024. The job will remain posted until filled. If not filled by this date, applications will be accepted on a rolling basis.

Application Instructions

To apply, submit your cover letter and resume through LawNY®'s **BambooHR platform**, [here](#). References will not be contacted until after any interview, and will not be contacted without your knowledge. To promote social justice and achieve our mission, LawNY® is committed to maintaining a diverse staff and creating an inclusive and respectful workplace. **In your cover letter, please explain how you think your lived and/or professional experience or background has prepared you to contribute to support a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion in LawNY's work.**

Questions or Accommodations? Contact Sandra Coyne at scoyne@lawny.org

Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc. (LawNY) is an equal opportunity employer, committed to inclusive hiring and dedicated to diversity in our work and staff. LawNY® strongly encourages applications from Black, Indigenous and People of Color, women, LGBTQIA+ individuals, people with disabilities, and persons from other underrepresented groups whose background may contribute to working in and sustaining an environment that enables staff and clients to feel empowered, valued, respected, and safe. LawNY welcomes applications regardless of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or any other consideration protected by law.