



Senior Attorney – Asylum, Removal, and Detention Program (Full-Time)

New Mexico Immigrant Law Center (NMILC) is seeking a talented and committed professional to lead our removal defense, asylum and detention programming, supervise attorneys, DOJ Representatives, paralegals, and volunteers and provide direct legal services and advocacy.

The Context:

NMILC's mission is to advance equity and justice by empowering low-income immigrant communities through collaborative legal services, advocacy, and education. Each year we provide direct legal representation and assistance with immigration-related matters to thousands of immigrants and advocate for laws and policies that respect the rights of immigrants. Our model focuses on establishing relationships with local, state, and national organizations, and governmental institutions to expand access to legal services to historically marginalized immigrant communities. Due to the political landscape and attacks on immigrant rights in recent years, we are experiencing heightened visibility and substantial growth, having doubled the size of our staff, budget, and number of funders in the last five years. We are now over 25 employees strong and have an annual budget of over \$2.5 million. In the last year the asylum policy changes have led to unprecedented demand for legal services and advocacy. NMILC is seeking an experienced Senior Attorney who is well versed with direct immigration legal services and advocacy. We are also seeking an individual who is a skilled manager, has strong interpersonal skills, and the ability to directly communicate with leadership and staff.

The Opportunity:

At this critical time, we seek someone who is eager to manage various aspects of NMILC's legal programs. As our ideal candidate, you are an experienced immigration attorney who is well versed with direct immigration legal services and advocacy. You have a combination of strong personal, interpersonal, and organizational competencies. You are collaborative, self-aware, and values-based. You are an engaged listener, open and articulate, and have well-honed relational skills that enable you to develop and maintain trust with your supervisees and colleagues and directly communicate with leadership and staff. You are a skilled legal advocate, adaptive to the rapidly changing immigration climate, and know when to be action-oriented and roll up your sleeves to help out other team members.

Job Responsibilities:

- Lead and manage asylum, detention, and removal programming and staff, including planning, assigning, and directing work, appraising performance, creating plans for professional development, ensuring the maintenance of complete and accurate client records in the case management system, addressing complaints and resolving problems for employees and program participants;

- Manage, train, and supervise the asylum/detention team that consists of a staff attorney, DOJ Accredited Representative, paralegals, and interns;
- Provide support, training and mentorship to pro bono attorneys and legal volunteers, as needed;
- Conduct regular case audits of team cases;
- Identify new and creative ways to respond to internal and external needs in the delivery of legal services;
- Provide direct counsel and direct assistance to clients in asylum and removal cases that would not be appropriate for volunteers, DOJ Representatives, or newer staff attorneys, such as those seeking relief from removal and appeals, and support with other active cases as needed;
- Supervise and manage the asylum pro se programming and rapid response programming;
- Identify legal advocacy issues and legal service delivery needs and confer regularly with NMILC's staff and partner organizations to address them;
- Support NMILC staff in fostering collaborative relationships with legal service providers, immigrant service providers, government officials, local bar associations, and advocacy organizations and with your team, represent NMILC as needed to these agencies;
- Appear for interviews with media outlets, press conferences, or other media, as needed, to inform the community about relevant changes and updates in immigration policy.

Qualifications:

- J.D. or equivalent experience and license to practice law in any U.S. state or district;
- Minimum of five years of immigration law, asylum, detention, and removal experience;
- Experience in the non-profit field preferred;
- Bilingual Spanish and English required;
- Excellent written, analytical, oral and organizational and time management skills;
- Ability to travel within the state and border region as needed;
- Commitment to NMILC's internal organization values, which can be found at www.nmilc.org/values;
- Demonstrated commitment to immigrant rights and social justice issues;
- Experience working with volunteers, immigrant communities, and/or in detention center settings is a plus; and
- Experience with policy, advocacy and/or systems change work is a plus.

Key Competencies:

- **Interpersonal Skills:** High emotional intelligence and relational skills; must consistently demonstrate teamwork and positive day-to-day work relationships and interactions with staff, stakeholders, government officials and community members; listens and maintains openness to others' ideas; can facilitate team members bringing up different perspectives in a respectful way; effective at resolving interpersonal conflict.
- **Managing people:** Supportive approach to supervision; Approachable, easy to work with and consult with; Strong commitment to mentorship, ability to identify strengths in supervisees/mentees, and ability to create atmosphere of encouragement and support among supervisees/mentees; Fosters quality focus in others; continually aims to improve processes and services; continually works to improve supervisory skills.

Environment

NMILC is an equal opportunity employer: immigrants, transgender and gender non-binary individuals, and people of color are strongly encouraged to apply. NMILC is a progressive organization and applicants are expected to collaborate in an inclusive and diverse environment. We are a group of highly dedicated and motivated individuals seeking transformative change for our state and welcome anyone who is interested in being part of our team.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, NMILC's staff is partially working remotely. This position is usually based out of our Albuquerque office. If the successful candidate is hired while NMILC's staff is still remote, we will work with that candidate to ensure that they have the tools, equipment, and digital onboarding to be successfully integrated into our remote work environment. **As national and state guidance allows, the attorney will be expected to be physically present in the Albuquerque office.**

Salary and Benefits

Annual salary for an attorney with 5 years of relevant experience is \$64,480 and is higher for individuals with additional years of experience. For example, for someone with 10 years of asylum and removal legal experience the annual salary would be \$74,672. NMILC is proud to currently offer a generous benefits package, including;

- 100% of premiums for excellent health, vision, and dental plans, including coverage for qualifying family members
- Access to a 401K plan and discretionary employer match up to 10% (determined each fiscal year based on funding projections)
- Access to an optional Flexible Spending Account for pre-tax funds for medical and/or dependent care cost.

NMILC also recognizes the value in supporting the needs of staff outside of work and that investing in staff's ability to take care of themselves and their families enables them to do their best work. In this effort, we currently:

- Provide flexible work schedule and remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Provide leave of 15 paid vacation days during the first year of employment and an additional two days of leave each year after two years of employment, 35 paid holidays (including federal holidays and 2 weeks for winter break, 1 week for spring break, and 1 week for summer break, in coordination with the local public school schedule), and 10 paid health-related days;
- Provide up to 5 hours of paid break/meal time each week

To Apply

Please submit your: a) resume; and b) cover letter describing how your lived or work experience would make you a good fit for this role to jobs@nmilc.org. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled.