



Community Legal
Assistance Society

Advancing Dignity, Equality and Justice Since 1971

EARLY RESOLUTION ADVOCATE

MENTAL HEALTH LAW PROGRAM (“MHLP”) (FULL TIME, DEFINED TERM CONTRACT)

[The Community Legal Assistance Society \(“CLAS”\)](#) is seeking an Early Resolution Advocate to work in our Mental Health Law Program (“MHLP”). This position is a full-time, fixed term position until March 31, 2025, with the possibility of extension.

Located on the unceded territories of the ʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations in what is now known as Vancouver, CLAS provides free legal services to disadvantaged people throughout British Columbia through five programs: the Mental Health Law Program, Community Advocate Support Line, Community Law Program, SHARP Workplaces Program, and the BC Human Rights Clinic.

[The Mental Health Law Program \(MHLP\)](#) provides representation to involuntarily detained people at Mental Health Review Board (“MHRB”) hearings under the BC *Mental Health Act* and to people at BC Review Board (“BCRB”) hearings under the Mental Disorder Provisions of the *Criminal Code of Canada*.

PURPOSE OF POSITION:

The role of the Early Resolution Advocate is to support clients seeking an early resolution to their MHRB hearings, and to support legal staff, and external roster lawyers of the MHLP with the follow up and coordination of issues arising out of MHRB and BCRB hearings. This position also liaises with stakeholders to assist with the mutual coordination of processes and procedures, and to facilitate communication.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Advise clients with MHRB hearings, in specified circumstances and as directed, of their rights and provide legal information, prior to the assignment of an advocate or lawyer;
- Follow up, coordinate and triage processes and communications for hearings at the MHRB that are rescheduled and postponed;
- Support MHLP operations by liaising with the Mental Health Review Board, the MHRB Youth Navigator, the BC Review Board, in-patient and out-patient psychiatric facilities and clinics, health authorities, community resources, referral organizations and other relevant services;
- Communicate with roster lawyers contracted by MHLP to represent clients, for troubleshooting purposes;
- Assist MHLP advocates and lawyers as requested by obtaining the necessary medical records disclosure for MHRB hearings;
- Communicate with clients and potential clients in a compassionate, professional, and trauma-informed manner;

- Maintain accurate and current records of their work done on clients' files;
- Assist with database management and statistical and other reporting as directed; and
- Provide other legal administrative and communications support as needed.

QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS, AND EXPERIENCE:

- Experience working in a public-facing advocacy role or other legal sector position;
- Experience assisting clients who are living with mental health issues, poverty, and/or experiencing a crisis in a friendly, patient, trauma-informed, culturally safer, compassionate, and professional manner;
- Able to communicate effectively with individuals diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder including providing legal information related to civil commitment procedures and competency determinations;
- Understanding of the *Mental Health Act* of BC as well as other statutes and regulations and court decisions pertaining to mental health law;
- Knowledge of the litigation process, legal terminology, and statutory interpretation, and experience in mental health law is an asset;
- Strong initiative and ability to work independently as well as collaboratively as part of a team in a busy, high-volume environment;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills;
- Strong conflict resolution skills;
- Knowledge of and ability to administer relational databases is an asset;
- Post-secondary education, preferably in law-related areas such as criminology, social work, or a paralegal program.

COMPENSATION:

CLAS offers medical, dental, and extended health benefits after three months and pension after one year of employment, fifteen paid annual sick days, a generous vacation allowance and bonus days off during the holiday season. CLAS has a hybrid work model of working remotely as well as in the office. The salary range is currently between \$62,210 to \$67,765 depending on experience, with annual increases.

START DATE:

The preferred start date for this position is 2nd January 2024.

APPLICATION DETAILS:

Closing date is **15th November 2023 at 5:00 pm (PST)**. Interviews will be held on a rolling basis.

Please submit your application including a cover letter and resume in **PDF format** to **careers@clasbc.net**. **CLAS thanks all applicants for their interest; only those selected for an interview will be contacted. Two to three references will be required for those interviewed.** Should you have any questions regarding this position, please contact us at the email above.

CLAS strives to create a diverse and inclusive workplace. A workplace that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve strengthens our ability to achieve our mission. We strongly encourage applications from members of communities that face discrimination and disadvantage. In order to achieve a representative team, preference may be given to applicants self-identifying as a member of one or more of the following groups: Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ2S+ people, and people from ethnic or cultural minorities. We encourage applicants to self-identify in their application if they feel comfortable doing so.