Job Description

Job Title: Staff Attorney
Location: New York, NY
FLSA Status: Full Time, Exempt
Classification: Professional
Department: Immigration and Refugee Services
Program/Contract: Unaccompanied Minors Program
Reports to: Supervising Attorney

Supervisory Responsibilities: Yes ☐ No ☒

Summary: The Unaccompanied Minors Program (UMP) at Catholic Charities Community Services protects the rights of young immigrants to make informed decisions about their lives. Annually, we help thousands of young immigrants facing family separation, government detention, and deportation. Outside the courtroom, UMP welcomes recently arrived young immigrants with educational and integration opportunities, including the country’s first medical-legal partnership for unaccompanied minors, a recreational soccer league, and partnerships with New York City museums, dance theaters, and other cultural institutions to introduce immigrant youth to the world of opportunities at their doorstep in their new home.

The UMP staff attorney works under the supervision of a Supervising Attorney and alongside a case manager and paralegal to provide legal services to young people who are, or have been, in federal custody under the Office of Refugee Resettlement. In addition to immigration legal services, the UMP staff attorney defends the rights of young people to family unity, safety, and bodily integrity while in government custody, and other emergent legal needs of immigrant youth. The position includes extensive contact with youth, including youth who have suffered abuse, abandonment, neglect, or other trauma.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities include the following. Other duties may be assigned.

- Provide direct representation to unaccompanied minors in immigration and family matters before USCIS, EOIR, and state family courts.
- Provide legal services to children who are detained in Office of Refugee Resettlement shelters throughout downstate New York. Core services include legal intake interviews, bond hearings for youth seeking less restrictive custody, federal litigation for separated youth seeking immediate family reunification, referrals to and collaboration with other legal service or litigation organizations as needed to protect the rights of youth in federal custody.
- Appear as friend-of-the-court and record counsel at regular detained dockets in immigration court to provide case updates for youth pending release from ORR custody.
- Maintain electronic and paper case files, monthly statistics and case reports, and other reporting to stakeholders.
• Train, mentor and manage legal interns, fellows and volunteers for work on individual cases, presentations, legal screenings, and related work.

Position Type and Expected Hours of Work:

This is a full-time position. Days and hours of work are 9:00 AM to 5 PM Monday - Friday. Additional hours may be required to meet court and program deadlines, or client needs.

Working conditions and physical demands required:

The demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job.

• Travel at least 50% of the time using public transportation, traverse city streets; occasionally ascend/descend stairs, and be exposed to outside weather conditions.
• Sit at a workstation and use a computer at least 30% of the time.
• Carry a laptop to offsite work locations.

Qualifications

Education and/or experience required:

• Juris Doctor.
• Experience in family and/or immigration law, including clinical or pro bono experience, preferred.
• Admission to NY Bar; will consider law graduates and attorneys working towards admission to the NY Bar.

Skills, Licenses, and/or competencies required:

• Fluency in Spanish.
• Excellent oral and written communication skills.
• Excellent interpersonal skills, maturity, and an ability to work both independently and in a highly collaborative team environment.
• Excellent organizational, project management and computer skills.
• Demonstrated commitment to public interest law, particularly to children’s issues and/or immigration.
• Ability to travel throughout the five boroughs, the Archdiocese and Long Island.