



Job Announcement: Outreach Specialist, Housing

Location: Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Remote, or Hybrid

Regional Housing Legal Services (RHLS) is a nonprofit law firm that works with nonprofit organizations to create and preserve decent, safe, affordable, and sustainable housing for lower-income people living in Pennsylvania. Our mission is to work to create housing and economic opportunity in underserved communities in Pennsylvania and to effect systematic change for the benefit of lower-income households statewide. RHLS drives successful housing creation because of its unique expertise in affordable, sustainable housing, community and economic development, utility matters and preservation of home ownership.

Our work can sometimes be wonky and filled with technical jargon. We need to find ways to better connect, share information and work with impacted communities. That's why we are looking for two non-lawyer advocates who are experienced in community outreach and community engagement to fill the position of Outreach Specialist for our Housing work.

We seek to fill two positions – one focused on the Eastern part of the state and the other focused on the Western part of the state. The positions can be office-based, remote or hybrid, but in any case they will require regular in-person presence for community engagement and client-related activities. The positions are grant-supported for approximately two years (and we are actively seeking long-term funding). The work will include a range of outreach, engagement and educational activities.

These positions are exciting opportunities for a person with strong outreach and engagement skills, who is a self-starter and team-oriented, and who wants to help community members and nonprofit partners create and preserve safe, affordable and equitable housing and healthy communities.

About Regional Housing Legal Services

Founded in 1973, RHLS engages in legal advocacy focused primarily on affordable housing and community development in Pennsylvania. Key issue areas include low-income housing development, government policy around housing issues (including affordability, racial equity, systemic inequities and the intersection of housing and health), and continuity of residential utility service for low-income households. RHLS has a full-time staff of 21 and a budget of approximately \$4 million per year.

RHLS provides legal assistance to approximately 60 community-based organizations each year -- providing counseling and legal representation to organizational clients to support the development of a range of affordable residential projects. RHLS also is actively involved in a wide range of research and advocacy activities designed to increase funding for affordable housing, improve access to policymaking for impacted communities, and to address inequities in existing programs and systems.

Responsibilities

- These positions are responsible for helping to brainstorm, design and implement an effective outreach strategy to ensure that community residents in selected locations are well-informed about housing-related programs, services, and opportunities – including information about governmental programs, RHLS’ services, and the services of allied organizations.
- Tasks are likely to include (but are not limited to):
 - Researching locations and contacts to better understand and partner with communities.
 - Building relationships with community groups and leaders to support the work they are doing in the communities they serve, with the goal of increasing opportunities for residents to have a say in key planning projects that will affect their neighborhoods.
 - Creating communications (writing copy) such as social media posts and graphic templates for outreach.
 - Co-designing and implementing ways to gather qualitative information, such as surveys and focus groups to gather input from the public.

- Supporting virtual and in-person public meetings, community events, focus groups, interviews, and more via logistics/event planning, note taking, summarizing and reporting.
- Helping us report on what we're hearing from the community, and what how we can improve our work with the community;
- Support the implementation of RHLS' diversity, equity, and inclusion principles.
- This role will often require work beyond typical office hours, especially to attend community meetings or trainings in the evenings or on the weekends.
- Travel will be required for outreach work as well as for periodic travel to the main office. Travel expenses will be compensated.

Job Qualifications (these are examples and we expect that the people we hire may have some but not all of these):

- Bachelor's Degree and 2 years related experience in community organizing, community outreach and engagement, human services or a related field. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered.
- Prior experience in legal-aid related community outreach is ideal.
- Preference for candidates with experience with affordable housing and community development systems and services.
- Preference for Spanish-speaking applicants.
- Strong oral and written communication skills including presenting, facilitating, and relationship-building, along with the ability to interact with a diverse population of residents, community partners and other stakeholders.
- Willing and able to work in different environments, including spending a large amount of time within communities.
- A demonstrated commitment to economic and racial justice.
- The ability to work with racially and economically diverse groups with varied experiences and perspectives.
- Lived experience or other direct knowledge of low-income housing issues.

Compensation

Salary is dependent on experience. The salary range for 2-7 years of experience is approximately \$48,000 to \$55,000 / year. RHLS has a generous employee benefits package, including fully funded health insurance (no premiums) for employees, their partners, and dependents up to 25 (if not otherwise covered); 15 days of vacation in the first year of service; 13 holidays; 15 sick days; 4 days of personal

leave; flex time option; an employer 403(b) starting at 5% (no match required); and employer-paid short-term and long-term disability insurance. All full-time employees are eligible for a four week sabbatical after 7 years of employment with RHLS.

The positions can be filled in-person in Pittsburgh or Philadelphia, as primarily remote positions, or hybrid. Whether the position is in-person, remote, or hybrid, there will be extensive travel and in-person community activities. Much of our work in the Eastern part of the state will be focused on the Philadelphia suburbs and the Scranton area. In the Western part of the state we will often be focused on the northwest corridor between Pittsburgh and Erie, and including Allegheny county and the city of New Castle. But we are also trying to reach communities in more isolated and sometimes-ignored areas of the state.

To Apply

Send a letter expressing interest in and qualifications for the position, together with a resume to: OutreachHiring@RHLS.org. RHLS also welcomes nominations for the positions.

Applications will be accepted until the positions are filled, but we strongly urge interested applicants to apply as soon as possible.

Regional Housing Legal Services is an equal opportunity employer. We seek to build diversity, equity and inclusion both within our organization and in partnership and allyship with the communities we serve. Persons with lived experience relevant to this work are encouraged to apply.