**Bilingual Paralegal - Domestic Violence Victims Services/Immigration**
Location: Waukegan
Hours: full time

Prairie State Legal Services (PSLS) is a not-for-profit legal aid organization that provides civil legal aid services to the poor, elderly, and people with disabilities. PSLS has 12 offices serving 36 counties throughout northern and central Illinois. PSLS focuses services on legal problems that impact the ability of our clients to meet their basic human needs, including physical safety, access to healthcare, adequate housing, and similar needs. It is the only legal aid organization in the majority of its service area. Annually, PSLS handles over 22,000 applications for legal help and serves over 16,000 clients. We pride ourselves on fostering a work environment that is motivating, collaborative, and fun, with plenty of opportunities for professional growth.

Job Description

Under this project, PSLS provides comprehensive legal assistance to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, with a focus on matters that arise as a direct result of the client’s victimization. The Paralegal will work under the supervision of an attorney with more than 10 years of legal experience in immigration law to assist immigrant victims of domestic violence and sexual assault to obtain the appropriate immigration assistance. Once the agency obtains Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) recognition, the Paralegal will receive training to put them on the path to obtaining a Department of Justice, BIA accreditation for the purpose of representing immigrants at United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, USCIS.

Responsibilities

Among other duties as assigned, the Paralegal will:

* Interview victims of abuse in a manner sensitive to the trauma they may have experienced and attuned to honoring their choices
* Assess the needs of victims in terms of their immediate legal needs for protection and other legal issues that are an outgrowth of abuse
* Engage with domestic violence and sexual assault providers to coordinate service delivery and identify/address issues that have an impact on victims
* Under the supervision of a licensed attorney, provide services including legal research and factual investigation, counsel and advice, brief services and document preparation, dispute resolution and representation of clients with immigration issues including U-visa, T-visa, VAWA-self petitions, and other family-based immigration relief
* Provide accurate and complete information for grant reporting to grant funders including documenting services in the case record
* Attend training required by the grant
* Actively participate in staff committees or task forces focused on services for victims
* Develop and maintain networking relationships with local, state, and federal governments and community agencies that serve our client population, including those serving persons with disabilities, older adults, and other special needs
* Work closely with interpreters to serve with clients with limited English proficiency
* Exhibit a high level of personal energy, organization, and commitment to the position and the PSLS mission

Salary and Benefits

Full-time position, 37.5 hours per week. Salary starts at $35,000 per year, higher depending upon experience; Excellent comprehensive benefits package including health, dental, retirement, training and education, and generous leave time.

Qualifications

* College degree or a diploma from a recognized training program for paralegals, prior BIA accreditation, or significant relevant job or other experience
* Prior work with immigrant community or issues preferred
* Excellent time management, organizational, oral/written communication, and research skills
* Strong interpersonal skills
* Proficient in the use of Microsoft Office Suite and other computer applications is needed
* Spanish language proficiency and ability to translate and interpret are highly preferred

The ideal candidate will have demonstrated experience in effectively communicating with and serving victims. Local travel is required, with a valid driver’s license and reliable transportation.

Application Details

Please indicate “Paralegal – Waukegan” in the subject line and email a letter explaining your interest and experience, resume, three references, and a short writing sample (no more than 10 pages) to:

* Director of Human Resources Jessica Hodierne at jkhodierne@pslegal.org
* Program Administrator Connie Peterson at cpeterson@pslegal.org

**Resumes accepted until position is filled.**