

Innocence Project of Florida – Staff Attorney January 19, 2021

The Innocence Project of Florida, Inc. (IPF) is seeking a Staff Attorney with a demonstrated passion for social justice issues, beginning as early as April 2021 in its Tallahassee, Florida office. The Staff Attorney will be a full-time position and will report directly to the Executive Director. The Innocence Project of Florida is a 501(c)(3) non-profit legal defense organization dedicated to representing individuals in Florida prisons who can prove their innocence through the use of DNA testing or other newly discovered evidence. IPF is the premier criminal justice organization in Florida and has helped secure the release of numerous individuals who collectively spent over 530 years in prison for crimes they didn't commit.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:

DIRECT REPRESENTATION OF IPF'S CLIENTS:

- As co-counsel with IPF's Executive Director, represent IPF's clients claiming actual innocence in postconviction matters in state and federal court to achieve the (1) vacation of conviction and sentence, (2) dismissal of all charges, and (3) release from prison. In doing so, the Staff Attorney is expected to:
 - Collaborate with IPF's staff investigator and/or contract investigators to develop and execute fact investigation to support the development of postconviction claims;
 - Collaborate with conviction integrity units to investigate and resolve cases of common interest;
 - Retain expert services—including but not limited to DNA testing, expert case review, forensic analysis or reanalysis of evidence—necessary to develop viable postconviction claims;
 - Draft and file all necessary pleadings in accepted cases;
 - Prepare for and litigate all hearings and oral arguments in assigned cases;
 - Manage litigation tasks and workflow in IPF's case management system, Clio, to ensure compliance with all case-based deadlines;
 - Maintain organized physical and digital case files;
 - Maintain regular communication with clients through legal calls, written communication, and in-person visits, to provide clients with legal advice regarding their cases;
 - Travel as necessary to complete these and other case-related tasks;
- Collaborate with the Director of Transition Services in developing social services plans for clients that is sensitive to the needs and interests of the clients' individual legal cases;
- Represent IPF's clients in other non-judicial settings, such as parole and clemency;
- Assist in efforts to seek compensation for IPF's exonerated clients; and
- Take part in special litigation projects, as assigned by the Executive Director.

HELPING TO CHOOSE IPF'S CASES:

- Take part in regular legal team meetings to:
 - Review case memoranda and collaboratively decide whether to accept or reject cases for representation;
 - Update legal team on status of active litigation
 - Periodically consider process improvements to intake and screening process;
- Periodically assist Intake Department in reducing intake backlogs, as assigned by Executive Director.

TEACHING, MENTORING AND SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS:

- Meet regularly with legal interns to supervise student work on case review memoranda, assigned pleadings and other case-related research activities;
- Teach assigned topics as part of IPF's intern education program;
- Provide students opportunities for out-of-office experiences, such as prison visits and in-court support.

RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS AND IPF:

- Represent IPF at community, educational, fundraising and civic events, including giving oral presentations about IPF and wrongful convictions, as assigned; and
- Participate in virtual awareness events, as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE:

All candidates must have a Juris Doctor degree, and preferred candidates will possess at least 1-2 years of experience litigating criminal trial and/or postconviction cases. All candidates must be members of The Florida Bar or be willing to take the Florida Bar exam in July 2021. Fluency in reading, writing, and speaking Spanish is preferred.

KEY COMPETENCIES:

The selected candidate **must possess:**

- Superior communication skills, including the ability to effectively communicate with individuals of diverse backgrounds and varied educational levels;
- Superior writing and editing skills, with specific experience drafting legal pleadings and other documents;
- A willingness to teach and supervise the work of students and volunteers;
- Impeccable organizational skills and a demonstrated ability to multitask;
- A self-motivated work ethic and ability to direct their own work flow, while also working well in a collaborative, team-oriented environment; and
- An incredibly patient personality.

Most of all, the ideal candidate absolutely must have a strong commitment to assisting underserved populations, fighting against racism and racial injustice and furthering IPF's core mission of finding and freeing innocent people in Florida's prisons.

BENEFITS:

Besides being afforded the opportunity to work in an exciting, dynamic and collegial small-office environment, the Staff Attorney will receive a generous public interest salary commensurate with their level of experience; full health insurance coverage, short- and long-term disability coverage, life insurance and a generous vacation and sick time allowance.

COVID-19 NOTICE:

As of March 2020, all of Innocence Project of Florida's operations have moved online. The person who is hired for this position will be expected to visit IPF's office in Tallahassee, FL and various courts throughout Florida sporadically while maintaining appropriate social distance and safety protocols. The Staff Attorney's day-to-day job will be carried out remotely until otherwise indicated.

HOW TO APPLY:

No later than February 26, 2021, please send a cover letter, resume, list of references and salary requirements to Seth Miller, Executive Director at smiller@floridainnocence.org, with "Staff Attorney Position" in the Subject Line.

The Innocence Project Florida is an equal-opportunity, affirmative-action employer, that strives for diversity among its applicant pool as well as within its staff and board. We do not discriminate in employment decisions based on race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship, age or disability. We strongly encourage people from all backgrounds, especially racial and ethnic minorities, veterans, people with disabilities, and smart people with non-linear/non-traditional experience and educational backgrounds to apply for this position. Most importantly, no matter their background, the person selected for this position must embrace, advocate for, and deeply value equity, diversity, and inclusivity.