



Job Title: Staff Attorney, Benefits Law Project

Volunteers of Legal Service (VOLS) seeks a full-time Staff Attorney to work in our Benefits Law Project. The ideal candidate is a highly motivated attorney who is passionate about providing free legal services to New Yorkers with limited resources in New York City with a focus on access to public benefits. This role will report to the Supervising Attorney for Benefits and Housing Law and is part of union ALAA UAW Local 2325.

Organizational Mission

For 40 years, VOLS has partnered with New York City’s leading law firms and companies as well as community-based organizations to help close the access to justice gap for low-income New Yorkers. VOLS provides free, civil legal services to New Yorkers with limited resources, including seniors, veterans, individuals entitled to public benefits, immigrant youth, children and their families, mothers in prison or jail, and small business owners. Last year, VOLS assisted clients on more than 4,000 legal matters, and our services benefited over 6,400 individual New Yorkers. VOLS’ staff of 22, including 15 attorneys and law graduates, works with volunteers from over 80 law firms/companies to exponentially increase our impact. We partner with 150 community groups to ensure that our services are accessible and address local needs.

VOLS strives to build and retain a diverse and inclusive team, and we actively seek a diverse candidate pool. We strongly encourage candidates who have had lived experience in the communities we serve.

VOLS Benefits Law Project:

The VOLS Benefits Law Project helps New Yorkers access essential public benefits that help meet basic needs, increase economic security and independence. The BLP assists with unemployment insurance benefits, housing and rent related benefits, Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE)/ Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) benefits for seniors and disabled adults under the NYC Rent Freeze Program, and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

Our team assesses clients for eligibility, helps clients apply for benefits as well as renew and recertify existing benefits, and appeal denials of benefits. Our helpline allows New Yorkers to reach knowledgeable attorneys directly and ask questions about eligibility, the application process and other concerns related to benefits access.

Responsibilities:

- Client Engagement and Intake:
 - Conducting screenings of applicants for service, including obtaining necessary demographic data, determination of eligibility, and scope of the client’s request for assistance. This includes helpline callbacks, in-person clinics, and other sources of intake.



- Pro Bono Support:
 - Providing substantive and logistical support to volunteer attorneys with whom VOLS matters are placed.
 - Creating and conducting substantive trainings and training materials for current and potential volunteers.
 - Conducting and coordinating pro bono clinics.
- Direct client representation:
 - In addition to providing pro bono support, the Staff Attorney will also carry their own caseload of direct representation matters.
- Community engagement:
 - Attending community group meetings and strengthening VOLS' relationships with community organizations.
 - Engaging in community outreach, including workshops and presentations.
 - Creating and maintaining accurate and up-to-date resource materials.
- Engage in advocacy and policy efforts to support our client community.
- Use LegalServer, our web-based case management system, to maintain data on clients, services, and impact.
- Participate in committees and collaborative efforts to benefit the office, as appropriate.
- Performing other duties as assigned by the Supervising Attorney for Benefits and Housing Law and Legal Director.

Qualifications:

- Experience ranging from a law graduate eligible to be admitted to the New York State Bar to an attorney admitted and in good standing in New York State with up to 5 years of experience.
- Familiarity with public benefits eligibility.
- Excellent writing and oral communication skills.
- Ability to work with people in crisis.
- Demonstrated commitment to social justice, providing high-quality, free legal services to low-income New Yorkers and promoting volunteerism.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Experience with LegalServer or other case management platforms.
- Experience leading educational workshops and trainings.
- Bilingual fluency in one of the top five languages spoken in NYC, a plus.
- Familiarity with landlord tenant law.

The position will be hybrid after the first six months. The position will be fully in person during the six-month probationary period. After, employees may work remotely up to eight days per



month. Local travel to meetings, clinics, and other events are required.

All candidates must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 including a Bivalent vaccine dose or latest 2024–2025 COVID vaccine formula, unless provided a reasonable accommodation pursuant to applicable federal, state and local statutes.

Compensation and benefits:

The annual salary range for this position is \$67,626 - \$79,070 which will be determined by our collective bargaining agreement and be commensurate with experience. VOLS offers an excellent benefits package, including health, life and disability insurance, a retirement plan to which VOLS contributes and the option to contribute to a 403(b) plan. We provide 25 days of paid vacation, 12 days of paid sick leave, and 3 personal days annually.

How to Apply:

To apply for the Benefits Law Project Staff Attorney position, please email your cover letter, resume to apply@volspobono.org with the subject "Benefits Law Project Staff Attorney." Request for writing sample and 3 references to follow. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. No phone or email inquiries, please.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commitment:

VOLS strives to build and maintain a diverse workplace that embraces staff with different backgrounds, identities, and experiences. We seek a diverse applicant pool and particularly welcome and encourage applicants from marginalized communities, including, but not limited to, those who identify as Black, Indigenous, people of color, women, queer, transgender, gender non-conforming, disabled, immigrants, uniformed service, people from low socio-economic backgrounds, and those directly impacted by the legal system.

VOLS is an equal opportunity employer, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, creed, age, disability, sexual orientation, biological sex, gender identity/expression, family status, military service or any other status protected under the law.