



Washington State Office of Civil Legal Aid

CHILDREN'S REPRESENTATION PROGRAM (CRP)

1112 Quince St. SE

MS 41183

Olympia, WA 98504

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR ATTORNEY REPRESENTATION FOR CHILDREN IN DEPENDENCY & TERMINATION PROCEEDINGS IN THURSTON, MASON, GRAYS HARBOR, PACIFIC, SKAMANIA, KLUCKITAT, ADAMS & YAKIMA COUNTIES

Overview

The Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) is an independent agency in the judicial branch of state government. Recognizing that “the provision of civil legal aid services to indigent persons is an important component of the state's responsibility to provide for the proper and effective administration of civil and criminal justice,” the Washington State Legislature established OCLA in 2005 to manage the then-small state investment in civil legal aid services to low-income people in Washington State. In the years since, the Legislature has greatly expanded the scope of OCLA's responsibilities.

Consistent with [The Washington State Supreme Court's June 4, 2020 Statement to the Legal Community](#), OCLA acknowledges that it and its contracted civil legal aid providers operate in a law and justice system historically grounded in racism and that time and again has administered justice differentially depending on the racial identities of those involved. OCLA was an initial subscriber to the [Washington Race Equity and Justice Acknowledgments and Commitments](#). As outlined in its own [Race Equity and Justice Statement of Purpose](#), OCLA is committed to being an active partner in carrying out the Washington State judicial branch's commitment to ensuring equity and justice for people and communities throughout our state.

OCLA's Children's Representation Program (CRP) underwrites and oversees the delivery of effective, standards-based and equity-informed representation for children and youth for whom attorneys are appointed under state law. The CRP is committed to fostering fundamental change in Washington State's child welfare and juvenile court practices, which have historically and continue to cause disproportionate harm to BIPOC children and youth, as well as children and youth who have a range of learning and related disabilities; who suffer multiple and compounding traumas; who identify and/or present as gender or sex non-conforming; and who lack a legal voice in the process.

The CRP is currently seeking exceptional contract attorneys with a passion for equity and justice for children and youth involved in the child welfare system to accept appointments made under RCW 13.34.212(3) to provide legal representation for children 8-17 subject to dependency proceedings; 0-17 subject to both termination and dependency proceedings; and youth 18-21 participating in the extended foster care program in **Thurston, Mason, Grays Harbor, Pacific, Skamania, Klickitat, Adams, and Yakima, Counties.**

Compensation: The compensation rate for a full-time contract is set at a range of \$158,000-\$168,480 annually DOQ. Full-time contracts consist of a maximum caseload of 45 dependency clients and up to 15 additional collateral cases related to the underlying dependency (e.g. termination proceedings) for a total of 60 cases. Part-time contracts are compensated as a percentage of a full-time contract on the basis of caseload. Contracted compensation is intended to cover a contracted attorney's salary as well as the attorney's business operating expenses (e.g. office rent, supplies, support staff).

Support: CRP-contracted attorneys have access to funds for expert services, pursuant to OCLA's [expert services policy](#), as well as access to technical support from CRP staff. The CRP also coordinates and hosts a number of CLEs annually to ensure contractors can meet contractual training requirements.

Travel: Attorneys for children and youth are expected to have periodic in-person contact with their clients and to attend any meeting or proceeding in-person where their client is also physically present. Contractors are eligible for reimbursement for mileage, lodging, and incidental expenses incurred during the course of qualifying case-related travel, pursuant to OCLA's [travel policy](#).

If you are interested in becoming a contractor with OCLA for representation of children and youth in Thurston, Mason, Grays Harbor, Pacific, Skamania, Klickitat, Adams, and Yakima Counties, please follow the application procedures detailed below.

Qualifications

- Licensed member in good standing of the Washington State Bar Association.
- One to three years (1-3 years) experience practicing public interest law, especially child welfare law, is preferred.
- Ability and willingness to meet OCLA's Children's Representation Program Standards for Attorney, including:
 - Participation in OCLA's case activity and outcome tracking requirements and use of OCLA's Case Activity, Reporting and Oversight System (CAROS).
 - Completion of OCLA CRP's web-based foundational training series.
 - Participation in eight (8) hours of child welfare-related trainings and CLEs on an annual basis, including two (2) hours of training related specifically to issues of equity in the child welfare system
 - Maintaining professional liability insurance.
 - Submitting to semi-annual reviews by CRP staff as part of the CRP's oversight function.
 - Engaging in regular consultation with CRP Program Counsel on issues relating to the provision of contracted legal representation.
- Demonstrated commitment to providing [standards-based](#), culturally sensitive, and equity-informed representation to children and youth.
- Ability to employ effective, trauma-informed communication with children and youth consistent with their developmental ability to understand.
- Demonstrated commitment to investigating and raising issues relating to racial inequities and systemic biases that are prejudicial to the child or youth, in consultation with the child or youth.

- Be or become fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or petition for a religious or disability-based exemption.

For new attorneys or attorneys with limited experience representing children in dependencies, the following conditions are required in addition to those listed above:

- Willingness to actively participate in regional Communities of Practice and engage with designated CRP Attorney Mentors.
- Participation in regional orientation trainings.

Application Procedure

Applications will be accepted until positions are filled. To apply, please email the following information to crp@ocla.wa.gov with the county or counties of interest in the subject line.

Complete applications include all of the following application materials:

- Letter of interest which includes the following details:
 - Each of your qualifications as per above;
 - The nature of your current practice, including caseload capacity
 - Experience, if any, representing children and youth in the child welfare system;
 - History of demonstrated commitment to principles of equity and social justice and willingness to support the commitments outlined in OCLA's [Race Equity and Justice Statement of Purpose](#) and [The Washington State Supreme Court's June 4, 2020 Statement to the Legal Community](#); and
 - County or counties of interest
- Resume
- Three professional references to include at least one former employer
- Redacted, self-authored legal writing sample.

OCLA reserves the right to amend this Request for Qualifications and/or to refrain from contracting with any or all applicants. The request for qualifications does not obligate the State of Washington or OCLA to contract for the services specified.