

Housing Counselor/Paralegal – Peekskill, NY

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley

<http://www.lshv.org>

Job Type: Housing Counselor/Paralegal – Peekskill office

Schedule Type: Full-Time

Date: July 14, 2021

About Us

For more than 50 years, Legal Services of the Hudson Valley (LSHV) has been providing free, high-quality legal counsel in civil matters when basic human needs are at stake including: eviction and foreclosure prevention, domestic violence, disability, elder law, healthcare, consumer fraud and more. Our services support almost 600,000 poor and low-income families and individuals who cannot afford an attorney in our seven-county service area. With the gap separating those who can and cannot afford legal representation widening each day, we work to ensure that everyone has equal access to justice, regardless of their ability to pay. As the only provider of comprehensive civil legal services in the lower and mid-Hudson Valley (Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Rockland, Orange, Ulster and Sullivan), LSHV is proud to have handled almost 15,000 cases impacting more than 34,000 household members including 13,000 children last year. LSHV has ten offices, a staff of 165, including 100 attorneys and 35 paralegals.

Legal Services of the Hudson Valley is proud to be an equal opportunity employer that celebrates our employees' differences. Applicants of diverse race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability and veteran status, are strongly encouraged to apply. Our differences make us better.

Position Description

Reporting to the Attorney-in-Charge of the Peekskill office, the Housing Counselor/ Paralegal is responsible for working with individuals and families residing in Northern Westchester in the Solutions to End Homelessness Program (STEHP) who are experiencing housing instability. The Housing Counselor/ Paralegal will meet with clients on a regular basis to devise Housing Stability Assessments that will assist clients in maintaining housing through budgeting, linkage with employment services, referral to other social supports, and access to rental arrears and other financial assistance, when appropriate. The Housing Counselor/Paralegal will also be responsible for working with individuals and families affected by an HIV diagnosis, who are receiving legal services through an LSHV attorney. The Housing Counselor/ Paralegal will conduct outreach as well as meet with clients on a regular basis to collect documentation and update information required by the funder. Additionally, the Housing Counselor/ Paralegal will provide support to the Peekskill office as needed.

Responsibilities

- Prepare intake applications, review financial qualifications, and describe STEHP to potential participants
- Assess and recommend clients residing in Northern Westchester in eviction cases for admission to the STEHP
- Collect documentation from Staff Attorneys and other sources to establish client eligibility
- Identify clients for rental arrears and other financial assistance, when appropriate
- Create Housing Stability Assessments with clients
- Assist clients with completion of housing applications and conduct follow-up calls to schedule appointments to witness lease signing and check delivery
- Conduct research on other rental or utility subsidies available
- Conduct home-visits for habitability determination and conduct research to determine reasonableness and any other HUD related standards
- Meet with clients weekly, bi-weekly or monthly, based on need to discuss habitability conditions, rental expense, financial and budgeting obstacles
- Determine household revenues and create budget plans including modifying spending and establishing savings, when needed, to enhance longer term financial and housing stability
- Make referrals to employment programs, assist with resume building, mock interviews and referrals applications
- Provide follow-up with families who are working on goals that address the root causes of homelessness
- Conduct community outreach to educate community members and service providers on the STEHP
- Work with landlords to provide STEHP participants with safe and affordable housing and attend landlord/client interviews
- Train new Housing Counselors
- Assist the Housing Coordinator and Staff Attorneys in maintaining accurate reporting of outcomes and with consumers including demographics of population served

- Complete paperwork and case recording in compliance with federal, state and local requirement
- Collaborate with other agencies to cover rental arrears
- Paralegal duties attendant to HIV-related funding include:
 - Screening, intake assessments and re-assessments,
 - Provision of technical, legal, investigative and research support,
 - Meeting with clients at LSHV's offices, the client's home or other venue to collect information and documentation, and
 - Assisting staff attorney in reporting outcomes, conducting outreach and inputting all necessary client information in electronic case management and grant monitoring systems
- Attend and engage in staff meetings, trainings and supervision
- Perform other duties as assigned by supervisor

The person hired will be expected to adhere to program and case handling standards, funder requirements, and the highest professional standards. The position requires occasional travel to locations within LSHV's seven-county service area.

Qualifications:

- Associate degree:
- Experience in human services
- Excellent working knowledge of computers and software such as Microsoft Word, Excel and data entry
- Strong written, interpersonal and oral communication skills
- Excellent organizational and time management skills
- Ability to work effectively with a diverse group of stakeholders
- Valid NYS Driver's license and vehicle required

Preferred:

- Bachelor's degree
- Bilingual (English/Spanish)

Please apply at our career center and include cover letter, resume, writing sample and three references:

[Housing Counselor/Paralegal – Peekskill, NY - Legal Services of the Hudson Valley](#)

"I treasure the opportunity to work with colleagues whom I respect and admire. It is an honor to work at Legal Services of the Hudson Valley. With every court appearance, every client meeting, every negotiation with opposing counsel, every brief I submit, I take great pride in promoting justice, leveling the playing field for our clients and advocating with every fiber of my being for our clients." LSHV Staff Attorney