

Centre Safe Staff Attorney

Reports to: Civil Legal Representation Project (CLRP) Director

Status: Full-time

Typical Work Hours: 40 hours/week

FLSA Classification: Exempt

Grade: E

Revision Date: August 2020

Organizational Expectations:

All employees at Centre Safe will demonstrate a commitment to our Core Values:

- 1) Commit to empowering survivors through trauma-informed and client-centered services that are intentionally equitable, inclusive, diverse, confidential and professional, and responsive to identified client and community needs.
- 2) Eliminate violence by challenging the structural inequalities and oppressions that perpetuate gender-based violence, recognizing intersectionality in the ways violence is experienced by survivors and the wider community.
- 3) Enhance and value our human resources through ethical stewardship of the knowledge, expertise, lived experience, and courage of spirit of the staff, volunteers, and directors, as well as our financial resources, facilities, and community relationships.

Employees are expected to become familiar with the *Centre Safe Employee Handbook* and abide by the policies within it.

All Centre Safe employees and Counselor/Advocate volunteers are Mandated Reporters of child abuse and will obtain the required clearances upon employment. All Centre Safe employees and volunteers will maintain and uphold client confidentiality under Pennsylvania State Law, specifically 23 PA C.S. 6102 and 42 PA CSA Sec. 5945.1.

Job Summary:

The Staff Attorney is responsible for providing legal information, legal advice, and representation to victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking, and for ensuring the effective civil legal representation of these victims. The Staff Attorney will also contribute to the coordinated community response to sexual and domestic violence in Centre County.

Primary Responsibilities:

- Represent, advise, and provide advocacy on behalf of Centre Safe clients in matters involving child custody, child and spousal support, divorce, protection orders, and other civil matters where appropriate.
- Participate in conflict checking to assure that conflict checking occurs before any advice to or representation of clients occurs.
- Collaborate with the Legal Advocates and other Centre Safe direct service staff to ensure clients have information about and, where appropriate, access to the full range of services available at Centre Safe.

- Develop expertise in the area of domestic violence civil law, family law (divorce, custody, and support), and protection orders.
- In cooperation with the Director of the CLRP, supervise the legal work of the CLRP Paralegal/Legal Assistant and Externs.
- Participate in the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence (PCADV) Attorney Network meetings.

Immigration Specialization

- Develop expertise in the area of domestic violence immigration law, including VAWA petitions, U-Visa petitions and T-Visa petitions.
- Provide legal information, legal advice and representation to Centre Safe clients in immigration matters related to domestic violence.

Other Responsibilities:

- Maintain a file maintenance system for the law office.
- Assist or advice complainants in the Title IX process at Pennsylvania State University.
- Participate in the coordinated community response to Domestic Violence in Centre County, including participation in collaborations with community leaders, organizations, Penn State University, Penn State Law School, and service providers where appropriate and as approved by CLRP Director.
- Participate in Centre Safe Staff Meetings and contribute to discussions and decisions as necessary and appropriate.
- Assist with tracking and compiling data for grant reporting.
- Maintain continuing legal education credits (CLE) as required for certification.
- Become a member of the Centre County Bar Association and participate in its activities as appropriate and as approved by CLRP Director.
- Participate in Centre Safe committees as appropriate.
- Other duties as assigned by the CLRP Director.

Qualifications:

- Law degree from an accredited law school and license to practice law in Pennsylvania. (Candidates taking the bar examination in October 2020 will be considered for this position, with continued employment contingent on passing the bar examination.)
- Ability to advise and communicate effectively with clients of different cultural, ethnic, racial, and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Excellent writing and negotiating skills.
- Strong oral argument and public speaking skills.
- Computer proficiency at a basic level including the ability to conduct website searches, navigate through programs and multiple screens, perform data entry, and use common word processing, email, calendar and spreadsheet programs (Microsoft Office programs preferred).
- Proficiency using Westlaw for legal research.
- Valid driver's license and reliable motor vehicle transportation.
- Must obtain and maintain required Child Abuse and FBI clearances.
- Must successfully complete the organization's Volunteer Advocate Training post-hiring.
- Prior experience in the practice of family and/or public interest law preferred.

Supervisory Responsibility: N/A

Working Conditions:

- Primary work location in Bellefonte, PA, with regular (weekly or more frequent) meetings in State College, PA (with a partially remote work schedule while COVID-19 restrictions continue).
- Meetings in Harrisburg, PA approximately 6 times per year (day travel only).
- Staff attorney must go to the Centre County Courthouse regularly for conferences and hearings.

This job description is not a comprehensive list of all actives, duties or responsibilities and may change without advance notice. This job description is also not a contract for employment and does nothing to change the at-will status of employment. The employer is an Equal Opportunity Employer.