



NAPW seeks experienced attorney for a special two-year staff attorney position in New York City. (The position may be extended, if funding permits.)

About the Organization:

National Advocates for Pregnant Women (NAPW) seeks to protect the rights and human dignity of all women, particularly pregnant and parenting women and those who are most vulnerable including low income women, women of color, and drug-using women. NAPW uses the lessons learned from the experiences of these women to find more effective ways of advancing reproductive and human rights for all women and families. Our work encompasses litigation, litigation support and legal advocacy; local and national organizing; public policy development, public education and outreach. Two principles guide all NAPW activities: to build bridges and align agendas across diverse public health and social justice movements, and to leverage and connect local organizing and activism with national advocacy and policy work. To that end, NAPW is actively involved in ongoing court challenges to punitive reproductive health and drug policies and provides litigation support in cases across the country. NAPW engages in local and national organizing and public education efforts among the diverse communities that are stakeholders in these issues, including the women and families directly affected by punitive policies, as well as public health and policy leaders.

About the Staff Attorney Position

The staff attorney will be responsible for the part of NAPW's advocacy program focusing on challenges and alternatives to punitive interventions based on pregnancy, drug use and treatment for drug related problems. NAPW seeks to ensure that: women do not lose their constitutional and human rights as a result of pregnancy, that addiction and other health and welfare problems they face during pregnancy are addressed as health issues, not as crimes; that families are not needlessly separated, based on medical misinformation; and that pregnant and parenting women have access to a full range of reproductive health services, as well as non-punitive drug treatment services. Examples of cases and issues in this program area include:

- In Missouri, a woman was arrested for child abuse after using marijuana once while she was pregnant.
- In New York a pregnant woman who drank alcohol was arrested for child abuse for "feeding her blood" to her unborn child.
- In Connecticut, Georgia, and California pregnant women who were receiving federally recommended methadone treatment had their children removed at birth based on the view that this medical treatment somehow constitutes a form of civil child (fetal) abuse or neglect.
- In Potter County, Texas, eighteen women were arrested after a local district attorney sent a letter to county physicians instructing them to report pregnant women with drug problems directly to the DA's office. The DA suggested that by turning women in for arrest they would be more likely to get treatment, but according to the federal drug treatment locator, there is not a single treatment program designed for women (much less pregnant and parenting women) within 100 miles.
- In Oklahoma and Tennessee women who have suffered stillbirths have been charged with first-degree murder based on the scientifically unsupported claim that a drug they took during pregnancy caused the stillbirth.
- Arizona and Washington DC responded to evidence of serious failures by their child welfare system proposing to treat unconfirmed positive drug tests on newborns and or newly delivered mothers as a basis for presuming maternal neglect.

Job Description and Responsibilities:

The Staff Attorney will work with NAPW's Executive Director and its organizing and education staff and consultants. The Staff Attorney will:

- Monitor relevant cases and new laws across the country and provide updates to NAPW activists and allies;
- Help select cases for direct involvement including, representing parties or amici;
- Serve as a nationwide resource for research, model briefs, motions, and technical assistance, helping advocates, public defenders, family lawyers, community organizers and others who are working to challenge punitive interventions based on pregnancy, drug use and treatment for drug related problems;
- Contribute to NAPW reports, publications, proposals and practice manuals;
- Help hire and supervise legal interns and inspire and recruit new pro bono sources of legal representation for women and families;
- Carry out public policy research and analysis;
- Participate in planning, implementing and carrying out conferences and meetings;
- Explain how issues addressed by the staff attorney connect to broader social justice issues through writing and public speaking;
- Work collaboratively with partner organizations;
- Represent NAPW in coalition activities.

Qualifications:

- The Staff Attorney must have a minimum of 3-5 years of experience that required significant litigation related legal research, writing and advocacy;
- Commitment to women's, civil, and human rights, reproductive justice, and drug policy and criminal justice reform;
- Excellent writing and communication skills and an ability to do creative legal research, writing, and advocacy;
- Commitment to collaborative cross cultural work, the ability to work well with people in diverse settings, and the ability to connect litigation and legal advocacy with local and national organizing efforts;
- A sense of humor, and the ability to build on the connections between the personal and political are a plus.
- Admission to a bar is required.

Compensation: This is a full time position. Salary is commensurate with experience and competitive with other national public interest advocacy organizations.

To Apply:

Interested applicants should send a cover letter explaining your interest in and qualifications for the position; resume, including names of three references with phone numbers; and one legal writing sample to:

- Attn: Search Committee (Staff Attorney), 39 West 19th Street, Suite 602, New York, NY 10011.
- Or via e-mail to: info@advocatesforpregnantwomen.org
Please put "Attn: Search Committee (Staff Attorney)" in the subject box.

Posted December 12, 2005. Priority given to applications received by January 10, 2006.

National Advocates for Pregnant Women is an equal opportunity employer.