Policy Director
Full-time, Exempt
Seattle
https://nwirp.org/join/jobs-internships/

SUMMARY:

Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP) seeks an experienced, bilingual **Policy Director.**

The Policy Director, in collaboration with the Executive Director and Deputy Directors, will develop and advance the organization's public policy strategy. This full-time role will be based out of NWIRP's Seattle office. Applicants must be practicing attorneys and fluent in English and at least one other language, and additional languages are encouraged.

The Policy Director will be part of NWIRP's management team and will contribute to supporting NWIRP's mission, vision and values and strategic planning across the organization. The policy director will report to the executive director and work closely with the deputy, legal, and communications directors, and other members of NWIRP's management team and staff, as the primary bridge between internal goals and external partners.

The Policy Director is expected to travel across Washington State for legislative and executive advocacy, community outreach, and partnership events, with occasional out-of-state travel. This director is also expected to maintain a limited caseload and travel to Immigration Courts in Seattle and Tacoma and USCIS offices in Yakima, Spokane, and Seattle. A valid driver's license will be required to meet these expectations. The position may involve some evening and weekend work hours.

This position is expected to begin as soon as possible but no later than the end of 2026.

ABOUT NORTHWEST IMMIGRANT RIGHTS PROJECT:

Founded in 1984, Northwest Immigrant Rights Project (NWIRP) is a nationally-recognized legal services organization on the front lines of defending and advancing the rights of immigrants. With over 200 employees, NWIRP provides direct legal representation and assistance in immigration matters to thousands of people with low incomes who come from over 145 countries and speak over 80 different languages.

NWIRP challenges unjust policies through high-impact lawsuits and advocates for laws and policies that respect the rights of immigrants. NWIRP is also a trusted provider of immigration-related community education for immigrant communities and social service providers. NWIRP serves the community through four offices in Washington State (Granger, Seattle, Tacoma and Wenatchee), but the impact of our work is felt nationwide.

NWIRP's policy work is part of our systemic advocacy pillar.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

As Policy Director, you will oversee and implement our organization's public policy strategy, which centers NWIRP's client communities. You will work closely with the Executive, Deputy, Legal, and Communications Directors to:

- Lead NWIRP's advocacy efforts with legislative bodies and government agencies.
- Build and maintain partnerships, centering NWIRP's client communities.
- Participate in policy and systems change across federal, statewide, regional, and local levels, including budget monitoring and requests.
- Develop and implement strategic approaches to advancing policy advocacy goals in coordination with NWIRP's communications, litigation, and legal services staff. These may include legislative advocacy and education, comments on proposed rulemaking, and other avenues for advocacy.
- Work with NWIRP's executive, deputy and legal directors and directing attorneys to create strategic policy priorities on issues related to immigration enforcement and detention practices and due process protections, and issues impacting NWIRP client communities.
- Participate in formal and informal coalitions of legal services and advocacy organizations to advocate for policy reform.
- Analyze legislation and make vote recommendations, with input from NWIRP's legal teams, prepare talking points on legislation as appropriate, and work with staff to identify client stories to support policy positions.
- Engage State and Congressional staff, community members, and the public on issues relevant to NWIRP's priority concerns.
- Supervise the development of (including writing and review of others' work) advocacy and educational materials on emerging policy issues, and work with NWIRP staff, Board members, and other stakeholders to build their capacity to respond to such issues effectively.
- Where necessary and in coordination with NWIRP's Grants & Contracts and Development teams, write and edit grant reports and project proposals and contribute to cultivate and maintain individual and organizational donors, such as in answering donor questions about NWIRP's policy advocacy work.
- Help analyze and integrate NWIRP data into talking points, in coordination with the communications director.
- Participate in media interviews to promote NWIRP's advocacy goals, with support from NWIRP's communications team.
- Perform other job-related duties as assigned.

All NWIRP staff attorneys, including the Policy Director, are expected to:

- Provide direct representation to individuals in removal proceedings before the Immigration Court, on appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals or before the federal courts, and before the Department of Homeland Security;
- Provide direct representation to persons submitting affirmative applications with USCIS and the Department of State;
- Conduct presentations, workshops, legal clinics, and intakes, by phone and in person;
- Conduct case analysis to determine eligibility for immigration protections/status under the immigration laws;
- Maintain a working knowledge of significant policies, laws, practices, and trends in immigration law, particularly as it impacts low-income immigrants and those impacted by the criminal justice system;
- Establish, organize, and maintain files up to date;
- Perform administrative tasks related to grant reporting such as timekeeping, submitting timesheets, tracking training, and other duties in a timely manner;
- Participate in NWIRP's outreach, community education, and development efforts; and,
- Perform other tasks and responsibilities depending upon need.

SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS:

- Admission to the Bar of any state in the U.S., preferably Washington State;
- A minimum of 10 years of policy, advocacy, work at federal, statewide,regional, and local levels;
- A minimum of 10 years of immigration legal experience, including experience supervising legal staff;
- A minimum of 10 years experience delivering community education and translating legal concepts and

impacts into accessible language for broad audiences;
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, and ability to organize information clearly and concisely;
- Ability to provide trauma-informed and culturally inclusive legal representation;
- Commitment to creating a welcoming, professional, and inclusive environment for staff and clients, and to working with a diverse community in a challenging environment;
- Strong sense of judgment and decision-making;
- Demonstrated ability to engage with a range of stakeholders;
- Ability to work independently (with competing deadlines), and collaborate closely with team members;
- Commitment to working in a diverse working environment;
- Fluency in English and another language (additional languages are encouraged); and
- The applicant must have a valid driver's license as the position involves some travel.

As policy director, you are also someone who:

- Has a demonstrated commitment to immigrant rights and eagerness to support NWIRP's Mission, Vision, and Values;
- Has strong advocacy skills to provide high-quality and culturally competent legal representation;
- Is successful in establishing rapport with staff, facilitating ongoing communication amongst teams;
- Is a systems thinker—you have the ability to conceptualize workflows through a systematic approach, are proactive in identifying opportunities for process improvements, and encourage others to do so as well;
- Is a problem-solver–you have the ability to anticipate barriers to effective and efficient representation and can problem-solve with input from staff and the management team to address any barriers;
- Is an effective manager, able to establish and maintain open lines of communication with staff;
- Is one who is able and willing to be a teacher, mentor, and support the professional growth of team members;
- Reacts to feedback productively;
- Will develop and maintain external connections with partner agencies to serve NWIRP client communities; and
- Is willing to take on other tasks as needed to advance NWIRP's work.

Physical demands: While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to sit, stand and walk; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; talk and hear; utilize a phone, computer, keyboard, pen, and paper. Occasional work on nights and weekend hours. Travel may be required; travel reimbursements apply.

Emotional demands: While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to discuss topics including, but not limited, to discrimination; child abuse, neglect, abandonment; domestic abuse; violence, and psychological trauma.

BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION:

This is a fulltime, exempt and salaried position. The beginning salary will be based on NWIRP's attorney scale plus a management bump of $18,000 flat. For example, the 2026 annual salary, with the base pay plus bump, for a directing attorney with 10 years of experience would be $128,044.82. For someone with 20 years of qualifying experience, the annual salary plus bump would be $145,560.20; 30 years would be $159,203.22. The maximum salary for this role, reflecting 40 years of relevant experience plus the bump, would be $173,214.80.

This position is a confidential role and is **not** covered by NWIRP's Collective Bargaining Agreement; however, the employee will receive many of the same benefits as a union member, including:

- Fully paid health, vision and dental plans for employee-level coverage with employer-funded HRA and HSA options;
- FSA and Dependent Care accounts;
- Automatic, employer contribution of 3% to 403(b) retirement plan;
- Generous paid health-related leave (12 days per year);
- Generous paid vacation (15 days during your first year);
- 14 paid Holidays with the ability to float 5 holidays;
- Employer-paid disability, life and AD&D insurance;
- Opportunities for paid professional development;
- Subsidized transit pass is available for the Seattle office; and
- Eligibility for paid-Sabbatical after 5 years of service.

NWIRP is currently an eligible employer under the Federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program.

Northwest Immigrant Rights Project is an equal opportunity employer committed to providing a work environment free from discrimination and harassment. NWIRP does not discriminate on the basis of class, race, color, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, political ideology, age, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, or the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability. Excepting any undue hardship, NWIRP will provide reasonable accommodations upon request for candidates taking part in all aspects of the selection process. Please contact HR@nwirp.org for accommodations.

REPORTS TO:

Executive Director

TO APPLY:

Please upload a single-file document through our Careers Page containing your cover letter, resume, and a list of (3) professional references.

In your cover letter, please address the following:

1. Your particular interest in NWIRP's mission and values; and
2. Your qualifications for the role.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the role is filled. Preference will be given to applications received before Monday, November 16, 2026.