JOB DESCRIPTION:

**Miller Mitigation Supervisor**

The Louisiana Center for Children’s Rights seeks an experienced mitigation supervisor to serve as a critical member of LCCR’s Miller defense team. The Miller Mitigation Supervisor will supervise five mitigation specialists working as members of defense teams for children and adults convicted as children who face life without parole (LWOP) sentences in pretrial, sentencing and re-sentencing litigation. The Miller Mitigation Supervisor will also carry a caseload of Miller clients. The position is located in New Orleans.

This is an opportunity for a highly motivated individual to play an integral role in the development of best practices for mitigation specialists and defense teams working with children who face LWOP sentences in Louisiana. Strong candidates will have significant mitigation investigation experience in capital and/or Miller litigation; experience developing comprehensive biopsychosocial histories; substantive knowledge of adolescent development and the jurisprudence surrounding children in the adult justice system; familiarity with medical and mental health issues; a demonstrated commitment to juvenile justice and criminal justice reform; and the ability to communicate effectively with a range of people.

LCCR places a high value on diversity in our workplace. Formerly incarcerated individuals, people of color, women, LGBT persons, and people with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

**Summary of Work**

The Louisiana Center for Children’s Rights is a statewide, non-profit advocacy organization focused on reform of the juvenile justice system in Louisiana. LCCR is the juvenile public defender for children arrested and prosecuted in New Orleans. Statewide, LCCR works to promote and protect the rights of all children in Louisiana’s juvenile and adult justice systems both through the direct representation of children in the adult system and through educating system actors on the developmental differences between children and adults.

Prior to reforms passed in 2017, Louisiana was home to the nation’s highest per capita rate of juvenile LWOP sentences. Every year, dozens of Louisiana children are arrested and charged as adults for offenses carrying the possibility of life without parole.

In 2012, the United States Supreme Court handed down *Miller v. Alabama*, which held that mandatory LWOP sentences for children under the age of 18 violate the Eighth Amendment’s prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment. *Miller* required that courts conduct individualized sentencing hearings that take into account the child’s individual character, life circumstances, and other mitigating factors. *Miller* also held that LWOP sentences were only permissible for the rare and uncommon child.

Unfortunately, LWOP for children who face those sentences remains the norm in Louisiana rather than the exception. District Attorneys are seeking to re-impose the sentence in one-third
of all cases where children received LWOP prior to *Miller*, and they continue to seek the sentence in numerous new cases across the state.

Through a new contract with the Louisiana Public Defender Board, LCCR will now represent all indigent children and adults convicted as children who face life without parole sentences. LCCR’s attorneys and mitigation specialists will provide client-centered, zealous and high quality defense services in all cases under the supervision and guidance of the Legal Director. LCCR’s model of representation relies on statewide performance standards as well as the best practices from around the country.

**Position Responsibilities**

The *Miller* Mitigation Supervisor will train and closely supervise five regional mitigation specialists while also carrying a reduced caseload. The Mitigation Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring the investigation, development and preparation of mitigation evidence, including comprehensive, competent and reliable biopsychosocial histories, in all of LCCR's cases. The Mitigation Supervisor will ensure that all mitigation investigations are conducted in accordance with statewide performance standards, the American Bar Association Guidelines and national best practices. The Mitigation Supervisor must have significant experience in conducting mitigation investigations.

The Mitigation Supervisor’s specific responsibilities will include:

**Supervision**

- Develop and implement training program for mitigation specialists, including training on statewide performance standards, ABA guidelines and national best practices;
- Supervise all mitigation investigators in all aspects of their work, this shall include participating in the defense team work in at least one case with each mitigation specialist;
- Communicate clear individual performance goals to staff, and provide coaching, support, and guidance to help staff achieve those goals and render excellent services to clients;
- Regularly observe and review performance, and provide fair, constructive, and timely feedback, both formally and informally, on the performance and work product of supervisees;
- Oversee staff administrative compliance.

**Mitigation Investigation**

- Develop and prepare comprehensive, competent and reliable biopsychosocial histories for each client;
- Conduct client interviews;
- Locate and interview potential witnesses with relevant information about the client’s life, family, community, medical history and mental health;
- Locate and retrieve records, documents and other evidence pertaining to the client’s life, family, community, medical history and mental health;
- Identify and work with experts in consultation and/or as potential witnesses;
- Identify, investigate and develop mitigating evidence;
- Identify, investigate and mitigate potential aggravating factors;
- Investigate the underlying facts of the crime where appropriate;
- Synthesize information from interviews, records and documents for the defense team;

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• Work closely with the defense team to develop a unified theory and strategy for each case.

Other Administrative and Program Responsibilities
• Prioritize responsibilities with mitigation specialists and ensure that resources are used effectively and efficiently;
• Ensure that mitigation specialists carefully keep electronic and paper records, case files, calendars, activity logs, case lists, and timesheets, and perform other administrative tasks as directed;
• Supervise interns as appropriate;
• Other projects as directed by the Legal Director.

All LCCR staff must perform all duties in accordance with applicable law, ethical rules, and the performance standards promulgated by LCCR and by the Louisiana Public Defender Board.

Reporting Relationships

The Miller Mitigation Supervisor reports to the Legal Director.

Qualifications
• A Bachelor’s Degree and a minimum of five years of work experience;
• A minimum three years of experience in the investigation and development of mitigation for the defense in capital cases, children facing life without parole sentences and/or adults convicted as children in resentencing hearings, including the development and preparation of biopsychosocial histories;
• Excellent oral and written communication skills, interpersonal skills, the ability to work well in a team-based, client-centered approach and the ability to communicate effectively with diverse populations;
• Substantive knowledge of adolescent psychology, adolescent development, mental health and other relevant issues;
• Strong leadership skills;
• Strong work ethic, ability to work independently within a team and willingness to work late hours and/or weekends when circumstances demand it;
• Daily use of a car, with a valid driver’s license and insurance, and the ability to travel regularly throughout Louisiana.

Salary and Compensation

The salary for this position is commensurate with experience and competitive in the field of public interest. Vacation, parental leave, and health benefits are provided. The position is full-time, and no other compensated work is permitted.

Application Instructions

Applicants must submit: (1) a cover letter; (2) a resume or C.V; (3) a sample memo from past mitigation investigation; and (4) a list of three professional references, including the name, phone number and, e-mail address of each.

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All submissions must be made via email to jobs@laccr.org. Please place “Miller Mitigation Supervisor” in the subject line of emailed submissions. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Please do not call with inquiries.

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis so interested applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. The position will remain open until October 15, 2018.