LOUISIANA CENTER FOR CHILDREN’S RIGHTS
EMPLOYMENT POSTING

JOB DESCRIPTION: Mitigation Specialist (New Orleans)

TASK: Conduct mitigation investigation for Miller/Montgomery cases throughout the state

SALARY: $35,000 to $65,000 annually (commensurate with experience)

MUST HAVE: Access to a vehicle for use in local travel and a cell phone

POSTING CLOSES ON: May 17, 2019

START DATE: As soon as possible

PROBATIONARY PERIOD: 90 days

The Louisiana Center for Children’s Rights is a nonprofit that represents and advocates for young people in Louisiana’s justice system. LCCR seeks a skilled and committed mitigation specialist to play an integral role in the development of best practices for defense teams working with children who face life without parole sentences in Louisiana. Mitigation specialists work closely with lawyers in LCCR’s multidisciplinary model of team-based advocacy. The work of mitigation specialists is carried out mostly in the field – in private homes, schools, businesses, courthouses, and on the street – and requires creativity, perseverance, empathy, responsibility, and excellent communication skills.

Organizational Overview

In New Orleans, LCCR is the juvenile public defender, providing holistic, dedicated, skilled, and client-directed advocacy for hundreds of young people in the city’s juvenile justice system every year. Our clients are represented by multidisciplinary teams – case managers, social workers, attorneys, and investigators – that develop and implement comprehensive advocacy plans to help children achieve their goals in court and in life. Statewide, LCCR advocates for a smaller, more humane justice system for young people. As part of this, LCCR advocates for and represents clients who have/or are facing a life without parole sentence.

LCCR believes that every defense team member brings vital skills and viewpoints to the high-quality advocacy that our clients deserve. Our work includes representing young people in court; investigating the state’s claims and developing strong defenses; helping families navigate

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the school system to find the right fit for each child; advocating for special education services; connecting clients with community-based services like trauma counseling, medication management, and vocational training; and arranging for young people and their families to receive government benefits. We respond to the causes and consequences of arrest, aiming to make a long-term difference in the lives of our clients.

**Responsibilities**

The *Miller* Mitigation Specialist will be responsible for the investigation and development of competent, thorough and quality mitigation in accordance with statewide performance standards, the American Bar Association Guidelines and national best practices.

The Mitigation Specialist’s specific responsibilities will include:

**Mitigation Investigation**

- Develop and prepare comprehensive, competent and reliable biopsychosocial histories for each client;
- 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;
- Maintain thorough and accurate records;
- Synthesize information from interviews, records and documents for the defense team;
- Work closely with the defense team to develop a unified theory and strategy for each case.

**Other Administrative and Program Responsibilities**

- Prioritize responsibilities and use resources effectively and efficiently;
- 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 *Miller* Mitigation Supervisor.

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. The *Miller* Mitigation Specialist will report directly to the *Miller* Mitigation Supervisor. The persons in this position will be expected to work effectively within the defense team and with clients.

**Qualifications**

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● A Bachelor’s Degree;
● Prior experience with the investigation and development of defense mitigation, the development and preparation of biopsychosocial histories, and/or social work or mental health experience is preferred but not required.
● 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 development and the jurisprudence surrounding children in the adult justice system;
● A demonstrated commitment to juvenile justice and criminal justice reform
● Computer skills, including the use of automated investigative tools and technology;
● 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.

Compensation and Hours

The salary range for this position is $35,000 to $65,000 per year, depending on experience. Vacation, parental leave, and health benefits are provided. The position is full-time, and no outside, compensated work is permitted. Depending upon case and client needs, mitigation specialists can expect to be called upon to work some nights and weekends.

How to Apply

Applicants must submit: (1) a cover letter; (2) a resume or C.V., including an e-mail address and daytime and evening telephone numbers; and (3) a list of three professional references, including the name, address, telephone number and, if available, e-mail address of each.

Applications will be reviewed upon receipt and position is open until filled. We prefer to receive applications by email. Please do not call with inquiries.

Applications should be directed to:

jobs@laccr.org