

**Position Description:**

**Legal Director**

**HOURS / STATUS:** Full-time (32 - 40 hours/week) / Salaried, exempt employee

**SCHEDULE:** Monday – Friday, 8 hours/day, between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm

**LOCATION:** Must physically reside in Oregon & be available for in-person in Portland

**REPORTS TO:** Executive Director

**About Our Relationship**

**You:** You are an experienced civil rights attorney with a passion for housing justice. You bring a proven track record of meaningful civil rights litigation and experience supervising a team of committed advocates. You have experience in team building, are innovative in problem-solving and have the ability to improve processes. You have a keen understanding of poverty, institutionalized racism, and a passion for ending inequities created by denied resources for certain communities, particularly communities of color.

**Us:** We are a statewide justice-minded, equity-focused civil rights organization working to end housing discrimination throughout Oregon. We have high expectations about conducting our various enforcement grants while finding innovative ways to increase relationship with culturally specific agencies and partners throughout the state. We appreciate your commitment to racial equity and your desire to grow with the organization. We have dynamic staff located throughout the state of Oregon, fiercely committed both to our work to end housing discrimination and also to support and nurture one another. We recently received funding to expand our work and are fortunate to bring more dedicated individuals onboard.

**FHCO Mission / Organization**

The Fair Housing Council of Oregon (FHCO) is a statewide civil rights organization promoting justice, equity, and inclusion in housing throughout Oregon. We work to end housing discrimination by providing education, outreach, technical assistance, and enforcement opportunities specifically related to federal, state, and local fair housing laws. This 30-year-old, 501(c)(3) public benefit organization has staff throughout Oregon, with its main office in Portland, Oregon. We are the only private fair housing organization in the state. FHCO is unique in that we emphasize education and outreach as much as enforcement. In addition to providing information and referral, advocacy, and investigation services, FHCO provides complainants with assistance in navigating fair housing legal and administrative processes. The organization also provides technical assistance to public sector officials.

**Website:** [www.fhco.org](http://www.fhco.org)

**Position Summary**

Under the supervision of, and with support from, the Executive Director, the Legal Director serves as legal resource, advisor, and support across the organization, with a special focus on support for the Enforcement team. The Legal Director works collaboratively with and supports the entire Enforcement team and directly supervises Enforcement team managers.

*(Please note that during the current stay-at-home orders, the FHCO offices are closed to the public. FHCO staff currently are working remotely but some duties in this position will be required to take place in FHCO’s Portland office.)*

**Essential Duties and Responsibilities**

**Legal Support for Organization (50%)**

* Support recruitment, hiring, supervision, and mentorship of enforcement team staff including conducting regular meetings, support for the testing program, and helping monitor caseloads and advise team on developing cases with strategic and meaningful impact.
* Collaborate with and advise enforcement team on strength and legal soundness of evidence for systemic investigations, including testing protocols.
* Advise on civil litigation & administrative processes in systemic discrimination cases at HUD or in federal or state court as needed.
* Provide legal analysis for FHCO’s fair housing policy and advocacy initiatives at the local, state, and federal levels.
* Assist in supervising the agency’s annual legal internship program including attending yearly outreach event with Lewis & Clark Law School and selecting and supervising yearly intern
* Supports and advises on strategic education, outreach, and advocacy initiatives to affirmatively further fair housing as needed
* Assists with development of strategies and content as needed for public communication including press, reports, and publications
* Lead legal research

**Federal, State, and Local Enforcement Grants Support (20%)**

* Support strategic planning and development tracking of federal, state, and local enforcement grants, including meeting with jurisdictions to develop and support ongoing grants
* Work with Enforcement Program Manager to draft quarterly and end of year reports on enforcement efforts, and present findings to various jurisdictions and governing bodies
* Provide support as needed to Enforcement Program Manager in their partnership with Grants Manager to ensure efficient systems and tracking mechanism for monitoring progress and providing ongoing reporting to various jurisdictions

**Strategic Development of Enforcement Collaborative, Statewide, & Internal Agency Efforts (20%)**

* Support strategic development of impact litigation and cases based on protected class trends; develop the litigation approach with partnering private attorneys
	+ Recruit and manage pool of private attorneys
	+ Work with administrative and enforcement team to plan and conduct quarterly attorney pool meetings and bi-annual enforcement summits each year
* Monitor ongoing fair housing issues in the state (such as preference policies, Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, and source of income trends) and support research projects, manuals, reports, and internal and external inquiries related to those areas, as grant funding is available
* Help expand organization’s statewide collaborative efforts to build relationship with culturally specific organizations and partner with landlord-tenant legal resources, such as Legal Aid, Oregon State Bar and Oregon Law Center, as well as BOLI & DOJ investigators throughout the state to better address underreporting of fair housing allegations based on race and national origin
* With input from enforcement team managers, update the FHCO Board on ongoing enforcement activities and progress
* Support agency’s development efforts including outreach to legal sponsors

**Other Responsibilities in Organization (10%)**

* Proactively support healthy team dynamics and collaboration, work with entire team to identify opportunities within the department to improve processes and/or procedures and collaboratively strategize improvements, work closely with other department directors and the Executive Director to help create cohesive relationships between departments.
* Meaningfully engage in organization’s equity work, including participating in trainings and follow-up discussions among staff
* Actively and positively participates as a member of the FHCO team, including at bi-monthly staff meetings, occasional board-staff meetings, and in day-to-day interactions with team members
* Serves as a professional and friendly ambassador of the organization when interacting with people outside of the organization
* Proactively communicates with the Executive Director and other directors about what’s working well, where there are challenges, ideas for addressing the challenges, and what’s needed for success
* Proactively, and as otherwise needed, makes recommendations for improving FHCO’s effectiveness and efficiency in all areas of responsibility
* Fulfills other duties as assigned by the Executive Director

**Ideal Candidate Qualifications:**

* Must have current Oregon State Bar licensure. Applicants who are licensed in another state must obtain Oregon State Bar licensure as soon as possible, not to exceed 1 year from start of employment.
* At least three (3) years of experience in civil rights and/or fair housing enforcement
* At least three (3) years of experience supervising and mentoring team members
* Experience in coordinating investigations to support civil rights and fair housing complaints and litigation, this includes testing, witness interviews, property searches, etc.
* A strong understanding of federal, state, and local civil rights and fair housing law, institutionalized racism and other forms of oppression and their impacts on housing
* Understanding of rental housing screening and management practices, real estate sales and homeowner’s insurance practices, mortgage lending, regulatory compliance, and/or servicing practices
* Ability to utilize data and statistical analysis; experience drafting comprehensive reports
* Strong organizational and multi-tasking skills
* Must have superior accuracy, attention to detail, and analytical skills
* Excellent oral, written, and listening skills with clear and open communication style, good people skills, and multicultural competency
* Excellent time management and scheduling skills, the ability to manage multiple investigations, caseloads, and legal cases
* Experience with on-line learning, research technologies, and virtual work
* Familiarity with publicly and privately funded housing systems and legal requirements
* Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite
* Bilingual / Bicultural

**Other Requirements**

* Must pass a criminal background check.

*\*A note to potential candidates: Studies have shown that women, trans, non-binary, and Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) people are less likely to apply for jobs unless they believe they meet every single one of the qualifications as described in a job description.*

*We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive organization, and we are most interested in finding the best candidate for the job. That candidate may be one who comes from a background less traditional to our field of work, and that’s welcome. We would strongly encourage you to apply, even if you don’t believe you meet every one of the qualifications described.*

**Work Environment**

* Setting: Must be physically located in Oregon and some duties of this position will be required to take place in FHCO’s Portland office.
* Schedule: Occasional early morning, weekend, and evening work
* Travel: Occasional travel in the Portland metropolitan area and within the state

**Salary and Benefits Information:**

* Exempt employee salary: Starting at $87,000 - $95,600 depending on experience
* Employee eligible to participate in organization’s medical and dental insurance benefits; spouse and children’s benefits available at employee’s cost
* Access to 401-K retirement plan
* Vacation:
	+ Years 0-5: 6.67 hours/month; 80 hours/year (40 hours can be carried over each year)
	+ Years 5+: 10.0 hours/month; 120 hours/year (40 hours can be carried over each year)
* Paid sick leave: 8.0 hours/month
* 10 paid holidays
* Tri-Met Transit Universal Annual Pass *(note: during current stay-at-home office closure, organization reimburses employees for transportation costs for work performed in Portland office; transit pass program will resume when FHCO Portland office re-opens.)*

**How to Submit an Application:**

To apply: send a cover letter and resume, and provide at least three (3) professional references that we can contact to information@fhco.org (please indicate *Legal Director Application* in the subject line). Applications are due by October 31st, 2022. In the cover letter, please indicate why you want to work in civil rights and specifically in the field of fair housing.

**Equal Opportunity Employer**

The board and staff of the Fair Housing Council of Oregon believe we can meet the organization’s mission only with a diverse board and staff who actively cultivate a culture of equity and inclusion. FHCO is an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We are committed to providing access, equal opportunity and reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities in employment, its services, programs, and activities. If you require reasonable accommodation in responding to this job announcement, interviewing, completing any pre-employment testing, or otherwise participating in the employee selection process, please direct your inquiries to Heather Tatman, Operations Director, at htatman@fhco.org, or (503) 223-8197, ext. 128.