ADVOCATE/INVESTIGATOR – MENTAL HEALTH
POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

DRM seeks a passionate, civil rights-oriented, full-time Advocate/Investigator to work with DRM’s Mental Health Team, defending people with psychiatric and behavioral health disabilities from abuse, neglect and rights violations, working with our PAIMI Council, and providing advocacy to victims of crime with mental illness. The Advocate/Investigator will review reports of abuse and neglect, interview individuals in hospitals and facilities who allege abuse or neglect or rights violations, request and review medical treatment records, and write up investigative reports of their findings.

We encourage personalized cover letters that explain the candidate’s interest and passion for working in solidarity with the disability community to advance the civil and human rights of DRM’s clients. Candidates should specifically and fully describe any experience advocating with and for individuals with disabilities, including those with mental and behavioral health disabilities.

About Us:

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM), a private, non-profit law firm, is a recognized leader in disability rights and the Congressionally-mandated Protection and Advocacy organization for individuals with disabilities in Maryland. We provide free legal services and advocacy to persons with disabilities in Maryland. We help people with disabilities pursue opportunities to participate fully in all aspects of community life, and champion their rights to self-determination, dignity, equality, opportunity, and freedom from discrimination and harm.

Reports to: Managing Attorney

Responsibilities Include:

- Identify possible victims of crime through reports received through the reporting system and DRM’s intake process.
• Investigate potential victimization of people with mental illness, provide information to ensure the person’s safety, and identify other appropriate interventions or service changes, such as victim remediation services, trauma counseling, or changes in living arrangements.
• Support the work and advocacy of the Maryland PAIMI Council, the volunteer advocacy council that directs DRM’s mental health work. Coordinate meetings and special events; organize advocacy activities and attend quarterly meetings.
• In consultation with the Mental Health Team, identify systemic issues for further investigation, draft reports and request intervention from state oversight agencies.
• Prepare and disseminate informational brochures for victims of crime as well as families, advocates and professionals. Advocate for reasonable accommodations and modifications as necessary.
• Travel throughout the State of Maryland.

**Minimum Qualifications:**

• Ability to relate respectfully to people with disabilities. Experience working with and/or sensitivity to persons with disabilities and from diverse communities.
• Ability to conduct and execute a variety of advocacy strategies.
• Strong writing skills and demonstrated attention to detail in work product.
• Ability to work independently, successfully manage multiple work priorities and work under deadlines.
• Strong interpersonal skills. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships and collaborate with DRM staff and colleagues in a team environment.
• Ability to maintain confidentiality and exercise sound judgment in the handling of all advocacy activities.
• Computer literacy and proficiency with software utilized to carry out job functions.
• Access to reliable transportation for travel within State of Maryland.
• Strong commitment to DRM’s core mission of ensuring the rights of people with disabilities to self-determination, freedom from harm, due process protections, and to participate fully in community life with meaningful choices and opportunities.

**Preferred Qualifications:**

• College degree.
• Relevant experience is strongly preferred, particularly experience with people who have mental illness, psychiatric hospitals, community-based services, experience with systemic public policy advocacy with state agencies and working in coalitions.
• Graduate students are encouraged to apply. Academic experience in a relevant field is preferable, including but not limited to social work, public health, and legal studies.
• Experience working directly with persons with disabilities;
• A demonstrated interest or background in public interest work, particularly related to disability rights issues;
• Life experience with a disability; and
• Fluency in American Sign Language or Spanish.
Salary and Benefits:

Competitive, depending on experience. The salary range for an advocate/paralegal with 0-5 years' experience is between $34,887 and $44,866 annually, depending on education level, experience, and special skills. DRM offers a generous benefits package that includes excellent medical insurance, employer-paid dental, prescription, vision, life, and disability insurance, as well as pre-tax savings plans, a retirement savings opportunity with generous employer contributions, and a telecommuting policy. DRM offers employee reimbursement for some or all of the cost of spouse or partner-paid health insurance premiums, up to an established maximum amount. DRM also offers generous paid time off, including vacation, holidays, sick time, and more.

Full time position, currently 35 hours per week. While DRM can offer some flexibility in hours and days of work, generally work hours will be Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm. Occasional evenings and weekend work are required.

Description of position can also be found at https://disabilityrightsmd.org/careers/

To Apply:

E-MAIL resume, cover letter, a writing sample to jobs@DisabilityRightsMD.org with “Advocate/Investigator – Mental Health Position” in the subject line. This position remains open until filled. Priority will be given to applications received prior to September 7, 2021. We are looking for thoughtful, personalized cover letters that demonstrate the applicant’s qualifications, work style and interest in being part of a team working to advance the civil rights of persons with disabilities in Maryland.

DRM is an equal opportunity employer. DRM values diversity. People of color, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ individuals are especially encouraged to apply.