

MONTANA INNOCENCE PROJECT

Title: Post-Conviction Relief Legal Fellow

Position Type: Full-time, Two-year fellowship

Salary: \$70,000 - \$75,000

Benefits: Generous paid time off; individual health insurance coverage (medical); a defined contribution (SIMPLE IRA) retirement plan; and professional development opportunities. Flexible schedule and remote (must be located in Montana) and hybrid work options available.

SUMMARY: It is the mission of the Montana Innocence Project (MTIP) to free the innocent and unjustly incarcerated, and advocate for systems of Justice that are accurate, accountable, and fair for all. Reporting to the Legal Director, the PCR Legal Fellow investigates and litigates cases of wrongful and unjust convictions, working with a wide range of experts and investigators across the state and especially in rural and tribal communities.

PRIMARY DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Manage a docket of individuals seeking relief from wrongful or unjust conviction
- Craft litigation strategy
- At the discretion of the Legal Director, lead litigation teams, including with pro-bono partners, local counsel, and law students
- Conduct in-person interviews of applicants, witnesses, and community members as needed (up to 25% travel)
- Author motions & briefs in connection with client representation
- Conduct evidentiary hearings
- Represent clients facing retrial after vacatur of conviction
- Conduct oral argument before trial and appellate courts
- Assist with clinical responsibilities and supervise law students as needed
- Assist Social Services Advocate with post-release planning for freed clients as needed

Other related duties include:

- Interface with DOC staff to build informational presence in prison law libraries
- Assist in identifying appropriate applicant referral resources
- Support coalition building and other strategic partnerships within community

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE:

- Passion for and understanding of MTIP's mission and work
- A Juris Doctorate from an accredited law school
- Must be licensed to practice law in the state of Montana within 90 days of start date

MONTANA INNOCENCE PROJECT

- Clinical or other experience advocating on behalf of indigent defendants or others accused/convicted of crimes preferred, (strong preference for post-conviction, habeas corpus, and/or federal civil rights experience)
- Working knowledge of DNA and/or other forensic disciplines preferred
- A demonstrated and abiding commitment to social justice and public interest law
- Experience with complex records and presenting compelling, fact-driven narratives
- Experienced in trauma-informed approaches and outreach methods preferred
- Experience building and sustaining relationships in rural and tribal communities strongly preferred

KEY COMPETENCIES:

- Client-centered approach to legal representation
- Strong research, writing, analytic, and advocacy skills
- Excellent interpersonal and verbal communication skills
- Must be able to work with people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives in respectful, equitable, and inclusive ways
- Shares values of equity, excellence, collaboration, humanity, integrity, respect, and accountability

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT:

The Montana Innocence Project considers the diversity of its workforce to be vital to our organization's success in meeting its mission.

We strongly encourage applicants from all cultures, races, educational backgrounds, life experiences, socioeconomic classes, sexual orientations, ages, gender, and physical abilities to apply. Individuals with personal connections to the criminal legal system are strongly encouraged to apply.

The Montana Innocence Project is an equal opportunity employer.

HOW TO APPLY:

Interested applicants should email the following in PDF format: two short examples of your work; cover letter; resume; and three references to info@mtinnocenceproject.org. Include "PCR Legal Fellow" in the subject line of your email.

Priority deadline 11/15/2023. Position will remain open until filled.