SUMMARY

The American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee (ACLU-TN) seeks a creative, strategic champion of civil rights and liberties to join our team as a policy strategist. The policy strategist reports to the policy director and will work collaboratively across the organization and alongside allied organizations and community partners to use tactical policy advocacy to advance bold and impactful change in areas including free speech and censorship, racial justice, trans justice, democracy and voting rights, and reproductive justice. The ideal candidate has strong policy research and analysis skills, a deep understanding of advocacy tactics to influence policymakers and elected officials, and a commitment to advancing civil rights and liberties for all Tennesseans.

The policy strategist role is based in Nashville, TN, a rapidly growing city with a rich history in social justice and a fantastic music, arts, culture, and food scene. The staff works in a hybrid environment, and candidates from outside Tennessee will be considered for this position. However, it is essential to note that relocation to the state and working out of the Nashville office are critical parts of the role.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Job responsibilities include but are not limited to:

Advance ACLU-TN priorities through research, analysis, and direct engagement with elected officials and government stakeholders.

- Work on implementing ACLU-TN’s legislative and public policy agenda at the state, city, and county levels.
- Research and analyze local, state, and national laws and policies affecting Tennessee communities.
- Help develop and implement strategies to lobby the Tennessee General Assembly and governor’s office to support bills and policies that advance ACLU-TN’s strategic priorities.
- Assist with lobbying work during legislative sessions (typically Jan-April) and any special sessions, including tracking and analyzing legislation, preparing, and delivering testimony and supporting material, and creating meaningful bipartisan relationships with lawmakers, agency and department heads, and government staff.
- Gather, analyze, and report on quantitative and qualitative data related to policy goals and priorities.
- Draft written materials and advocacy tools, including legislative testimony, memoranda, policy papers and reports, talking points and fact sheets, advocacy letters, know-your-rights guides, and public commentary, collaborating with other departments as appropriate.
Relationship building and community partnerships.

- Forge and maintain relationships with government officials, community leaders, allied organizations, legislative staff, agency decision-makers, and lobbyists.
- Represent the ACLU-TN in various community settings, working groups, and stakeholder groups; attend and help facilitate coalitions with diverse stakeholders to advance shared policy goals and work in partnership with other organizations.
- Strategically work with the community engagement department to engage ACLU-TN members and volunteers in legislative advocacy.

Communications and external relations.

- Assist ACLU-TN communications staff on their weekly communications with supporters regarding the status of priority legislation during the session, including social media and website updates, action emails to supporters, bill summaries and talking points, and explainer videos.
- Work with ACLU-TN communications staff to occasionally serve as the organization’s spokesperson, including through media interviews, op-eds, and articles, and provide support and guidance on communications strategies related to policy issues.
- Represent ACLU-TN at public forums, conferences, meetings, and with other external stakeholders.

Reporting and administrative duties

Maintain well-organized and up-to-date files and records. During legislative sessions, track the status of priority legislation, keep detailed calendars for committee hearings and floor sessions, and provide timely, clear reports on policy advocacy or other organizational activities.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Be an active contributor to the organization and policy department’s efforts to think creatively, ambitiously, and openly about how our program can better integrate equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging into our day-to-day operations as well as our goals, plans and work with volunteers, leaders, and partners.

QUALIFICATIONS

The successful candidate will possess many of the following qualifications and attributes. If you are excited about the position but unsure that you are qualified, we encourage you to apply.

- At least two years of experience in public policy advocacy and research at state or local levels is preferred.
- Demonstrated commitment to civil rights and civil liberties consistent with the mission and goals of ACLU-TN.
- Excellent policy analysis and research skills and written and oral advocacy skills, including the ability to articulate complex issues and communicate them effectively to various audiences.
• J.D. or graduate degree in public policy is preferred but not required.
• Experience with legislative procedures, bill drafting, policy development, and analysis.
• Ability to proactively build and cultivate effective relationships across the political spectrum.
• Familiarity with the Tennessee political landscape, state and local government issues, and legislative process.
• Experience working in coalition, including developing shared plans, coordinating communications, and managing dynamics among partner groups.
• Demonstrated commitment to centering the voices and leadership of directly impacted people and communities.
• Ability to stay organized in a fast-paced environment, manage several projects simultaneously, and adjust to frequently changing demands while maintaining strong attention to detail.
• Ability to work independently and in a team environment with support and collaboration from the supervisor.
• Willingness and ability to work irregular hours, especially during the legislative session, and attend occasional evening and weekend meetings.
• Experience using relevant technical tools and knowledge-sharing resources, e.g., legislative tracking tools, databases, etc.
• Feels comfortable with producing qualitative and quantitative data analytics.

COMPENSATION

The policy strategist will receive a starting salary of $60,000. New team members also receive excellent benefits, including a $5k wellness adjustment, 100% employer premium-paid medical, dental, vision, life, and long-term disability insurance; a 401(k)-plan including up to 5.5% employer contribution; and paid sick, vacation, and holiday leave. ACLU-TN reserves the right to alter or eliminate employee benefit plans and programs. This position is full-time, salaried, and overtime-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act and applicable Tennessee law.

APPLY

If you’re excited about devoting your talents and skills to the ACLU of Tennessee, please submit your resume, a short writing sample, letter of interest, and where you learned of this opportunity. All applications are processed through the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee Career Page (JazzHR); see their privacy policy.

Tentative Hiring Timeline

- **Friday, June 21**: Post Job Description
- **Friday, July 12**: Deadline to Apply
- **Tuesday, July 16**: Phone Screens Invitations
- **Monday, August 5**: Interviews Start
- **Late-September**: Approximate Start Date

Phone calls will not be accepted. Priority will be given to completed applications received by the July 12 deadline.

ACLU Tennessee
ABOUT

The ACLU of Tennessee uses integrated advocacy – including litigation, legislative lobbying, strategic communications and narrative change, and people-centered engagement and mobilization -- to pursue strategic campaigns that expand civil liberties and civil rights in Tennessee while building the long-term power of the ACLU and the civil liberties movement in our state.

ACLU-TN is an equal-opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU of Tennessee encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion/creed, national origin, ancestry, alienage, or citizenship status, sex, disability, age (18 and over), uniformed service member status, veteran status, personal appearance (including style of dress and personal grooming), sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity, gender expression, or status as a transgender person), marital status, membership in a domestic partnership, caregiver status, familial status or responsibilities (including being the subject of proceedings for child support payments), matriculation (e.g., being enrolled in a college or university or in a business, nursing, professional, secretarial, technical or vocational school), political affiliation, genetic information (including family medical history), lawful use of tobacco products, unemployment status, and status as a victim or survivor or the family member of a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence or stalking, and any other protected characteristic under applicable federal, state and local laws.

ACLU-TN strives to ensure that its recruitment and employment practices are fair and equitable for all individuals, including those with disabilities. We are committed to providing reasonable accommodation for applicants with disabilities, ensuring accessibility for everyone. If you need accommodations during the application or interview process, please do not hesitate to contact us at aclutn@aclu-tn.org.