



Job Title: Family Law & Child Welfare Staff Attorney

Full-time position in office position

Salary Range: \$80,000-\$90,000

About VPLC

Virginia Poverty Law Center (VPLC) is an organization dedicated to helping low-income Virginians through advocacy, education, and litigation. Since 1978, we have worked with legal aid programs, community organizations, and private attorneys throughout Virginia to educate and support our fellow advocates and attorneys. Much of the work we do occurs at the legislative level, where VPLC's advocates work alongside legislators to make sure Virginia's laws help low-income Virginians.

About the Position

Within the Center for Family Advocacy, the Family Law & Child Welfare Staff Attorney advances VPLC's legislative, policy, education, and access-to-justice work on family law and child welfare issues affecting low-income Virginians. Working collaboratively with the Center Director, colleagues, legal aid partners, and impacted communities, the attorney helps identify and develop VPLC's family law and child welfare policy priorities and leads advocacy strategies to advance them. This includes family law issues such as divorce, child support, spousal support, custody, and access to justice, as well as issues affecting parents, youth, and families involved in Virginia's child welfare system.

Job Responsibilities

Family Law & Child Welfare Policy and Legislative Advocacy

- Serve as the primary staff attorney responsible for day-to-day legislative and policy advocacy related to family law and child welfare, working collaboratively with the Center Director, Family Defense Staff Attorney, VPLC colleagues, legal aid partners, and impacted communities to identify and advance VPLC's priorities.
- Analyze proposed legislation, regulations, case law, and state policies affecting low-income families, including issues related to divorce, child support, spousal support, child custody, child dependency, parent legal representation, and the child welfare system.
- Develop recommendations and short- and long-term advocacy strategies based on legal and policy analysis, organizational priorities, litigation and practice trends, and input from legal aid partners, impacted communities, and other stakeholders.
- Collaborate with the Family Defense Staff Attorney to incorporate child welfare issues identified through parent representation, litigation, family defense initiatives, attorney technical assistance, and impacted communities into VPLC's child welfare policy and legislative advocacy.
- Identify and advance opportunities to strengthen parent legal representation through legislation, administrative policy, funding, and other systemic reforms.

- Lead and facilitate VPLC's Child Welfare Legislative Workgroup and assist the Center Director in supporting the Virginia Legal Aid Family Law and Domestic Violence Task Force.
- Represent VPLC on relevant legislative and administrative workgroups, committees, commissions, coalitions, and stakeholder bodies addressing family law, child welfare, child dependency, and access-to-justice issues.
- Research and remain current on developments in family law and child welfare law, policy, and practice and translate those developments into potential advocacy, education, and access-to-justice strategies.
- Identify intersections between family law and child welfare and other VPLC priorities, including housing, public benefits, health, consumer protection, and other issues affecting low-income families.

Education, Training & Access to Justice

- Provide training, technical assistance, and case consultation to legal aid, pro bono, court-appointed, and other attorneys and advocates on family law and child welfare matters.
- Support technical assistance to attorneys and community organizations to improve parent legal representation and access to justice, in coordination with the Family Defense Staff Attorney.
- Develop and maintain legal information, publications, presentations, and access-to-justice resources related to family law and child welfare, including relevant content on VirginiaLawHelp.org.
- Identify emerging legal and systemic issues through training, consultation, legal aid relationships, and community engagement and use those trends to inform VPLC's advocacy and education work.

Strategic Partnerships & Coalitions

- Develop and maintain relationships with family law and child welfare attorneys, legal aid organizations, parent-focused and community organizations, state agencies, impacted community members, advocates, and other partners.
- Build and participate in statewide coalitions that advance family law, child welfare, and access-to-justice priorities.
- Create opportunities for legal aid partners, community organizations, and impacted communities to inform VPLC's legislative and policy priorities.
- Develop relationships with regional and national organizations and experts that can strengthen VPLC's family law and child welfare advocacy.

Litigation & Legal Support

- Provide legal advice, consultation, and occasional representation on family law and child welfare matters consistent with Center priorities.
- Collaborate with the Family Defense Staff Attorney on coordinated child welfare legal strategies and support litigation when family law, policy, or legislative expertise is relevant.

- Identify legal and systemic issues emerging from consultation, legal aid relationships, and policy work and share those trends with the Family Defense Staff Attorney and Center Director.

Organizational Responsibilities

- Provide input and assistance to the Center Director in developing Center goals, priorities, and strategies.
- Assist with grants, reporting, funding opportunities, and other administrative responsibilities related to Center initiatives.
- Collaborate with VPLC outreach, communications, development, and other Centers to advance organizational priorities.
- Participate in strategic planning, cross-Center initiatives, and other organizational responsibilities as assigned.

Qualifications

Required:

- Member in good standing of the Virginia State Bar, or willingness and ability to waive in or take the Virginia Bar examination.
- Six to ten years of experience in family law practice, policy advocacy, child welfare, or related legal work.
- Demonstrated knowledge of family law and knowledge of, or ability to develop expertise in, child welfare, child dependency, family defense, and related access-to-justice issues.
- Commitment to economic and social justice and improving access to justice for low-income individuals and families.
- Strong legal and policy research, analysis, writing, advocacy, and strategic planning skills, including the ability to analyze legislation, regulations, case law, and administrative policy.
- Demonstrated ability to develop short- and long-term advocacy strategies and build partnerships and coalitions to advance policy priorities.
- Ability to work effectively with legal aid organizations, government stakeholders, community organizations, advocates, and people impacted by systemic inequities.
- Ability to exercise sound judgment, manage competing priorities, work independently within assigned responsibilities, and collaborate effectively as part of a team.
- Strong communication, training, facilitation, presentation, writing, and organizational skills.
- Comfort with digital platforms and tools used for legal information, collaboration, case management, data tracking, and communications.

A Note to Potential Candidates

VPLC is committed to building a diverse and inclusive organization and encourages candidates to apply even if they do not believe they meet every qualification listed above. People with lived experience child welfare system, the juvenile and domestic relations court system, family law issues, economic insecurity, housing insecurity or other public benefits are strongly encouraged to apply.

Salary and Benefits

Salary range: \$80,000 -\$90,000. Placement within the salary range will be based on factors such as relevant experience, budget, and internal equity.

VPLC offers an outstanding benefit package, including:

- Generous paid time off every year.
- 90% employer-paid health, dental, and vision insurance for employees and 80% employer-paid coverage for their families.
- 403(b) retirement plan with a 6% employer contribution with no required employee match.
- Potential eligibility for student loan repayment assistance.
- Strong commitment to professional development.

To Apply

Please email your cover letter and resume to hire@vplc.org. In your cover letter, please share briefly what draws you to VPLC's mission and this position.

Submission Deadline

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled; however, priority review will begin on October 26, 2026.

The Virginia Poverty Law Center provides equal employment opportunities to all applicants and employees and strictly prohibits any type of harassment or discrimination in regard to race, religion, age, color, sex, disability status, national origin, genetics, sexual orientation, protected veteran status, gender expression, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected under federal, state, and/or local laws.