

Remote Contract Mentoring Attorney: Afghan Asylum Project

The Erie County Bar Association Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP) is seeking a Contract Pro Bono Mentoring Attorney to lead our Afghan Asylum Project, mentoring pro bono attorneys in immigration cases. **This position will be 100% remote** from anywhere in the United States; however, the work on this project must take place during Eastern Time Zone working hours. This 1099 contract position will run up to one (1) year.



Beginning in the fall of 2021, the Buffalo metropolitan region received over 600 evacuees from Afghanistan. Four area refugee resettlement agencies that make up the WNY Refugee & Asylee Consortium (WNYRAC) resettled these evacuees, almost all of whom were granted Humanitarian Parole status by the U.S. government. Now, all these evacuees need to be screened for immigration relief and placed with pro bono attorneys to represent them on their immigration matters before USCIS. We estimate that there are about 200 cases within the evacuee population; most of these clients will be applying for asylum although there may be some eligibility for SIV, SIJS, or family sponsorship. VLP is teaming up with WNYRAC to engage pro bono attorneys to handle these cases.

This newly created position will be responsible for coordinating our pro bono work on this project. This position will liaise with the agency designees from WNYRAC who will be referring Afghan clients to the project and will oversee case prioritization and placement with volunteer attorneys. This position will mentor volunteer attorneys on these cases (by phone or video), will review case packets before they are filed with the government, and will participate in volunteer trainings.

Duties/Responsibilities:

- Train/supervise/mentor pro bono attorneys handling immigration matters for Afghan clients;
- Train/supervise/mentor student interns and community volunteers;
- Work with WNYRAC designees to create and maintain a network of interpreters and translators;
- Triage questions and issues with individual cases raised by pro bono attorneys (by phone, video office hours, email, etc.);
- Host office hour zoom mentoring windows to expand Q&A access for volunteers on VLP's expert panel;
- Seek technical assistance from VLP and other immigration law resources where needed;
- Manage/stay abreast of the status of cases that are referred to pro bono attorneys to ensure that filing deadlines are met;
- Ensure proper usage and maintenance of VLP's case management system and volunteer databases as it relates to the agency's pro bono work;
- Perform other related duties as required;
- Represent VLP and engage with a diverse group of stakeholders including large law firms, bar associations, etc.;
- Variety of other duties and projects.

Requirements/Skills - Required:

- Admitted to practice law in any state in the United States;
- 3-5 years of experience providing direct representation immigration legal services;
- Litigation experience and experience in various areas of humanitarian immigration law including asylum, VAWA, U/T Visa, adjustment of status and naturalization, SIJ and TPS applications preferred but not essential;

- Ability to represent VLP and engage with a diverse group of stakeholders including large law firms, bar associations, etc.;
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills;
- Organizational skills to track and report required data about the work in a timely and accurate manner;
- Ability to work cooperatively with staff and community partners;
- Strong oral and written advocacy skills;
- Previous experience delivering CLE trainings;
- Willingness to work independently while also taking direction and operating as part of a team;
- Organizational ability required to juggle many cases efficiently;
- Flexibility to handle other tasks which may be required by the project.

Requirements/Skills – Preferred:

- Demonstrated commitment to representing low-income immigrants;
- Experience mentoring attorneys, students, or volunteers.

TO APPLY: Please send: (1) cover letter clearly explaining your interest and qualifications; (2) resume; (3) 3-page writing sample; and (4) contact information for 3 references to: Gretchen Gonzalez, CEO/Executive Director, ECBA Volunteer Lawyers Project, Inc. at ggonzalez@ecbavlp.com. **We will be accepting applications until the position is filled.**

BENEFITS: This is a 1099 contract position; benefits are not provided. Compensation for this position is **\$6,250 per month, up to a maximum of \$75,000.00 for twelve (12) months.** The work atmosphere is congenial, respectful, and flexible. **This position is 100% remote.**

Proof of COVID-19 vaccination is required unless the individual qualifies for a reasonable accommodation as required under the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the New York State Human Rights Law and/or guidance from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. VLP may grant requests for reasonable accommodations to this requirement on the basis of disability or sincerely held religious beliefs.