

Staff Attorney, General Legal Practice Team

An exciting opportunity to join the fight for health care access through direct legal services and policy advocacy!

The Opportunity

Health Law Advocates (HLA) is a non-profit, public interest law firm committed to ensuring universal access to quality health care in Massachusetts. HLA seeks a **Staff Attorney** to play a key role as a member of our General Legal Practice (GLP) team.

The Staff Attorney will advance HLA's critical mission by providing legal representation to income-eligible clients, advocating for policy reforms, and engaging in community outreach. This position is a unique opportunity for a lawyer dedicated to the public interest to join a team at the forefront of the movement to achieve health equity through the law.

The ideal candidate will have a demonstrated commitment to public interest law and, preferably, experience representing clients facing challenges accessing health care or other professional experience with the health care system. They will thrive providing individualized representation to high-need clients as well as pursuing health system reforms and educating members of the public.

Our General Legal Practice (GLP) team specializes in addressing health care barriers caused by health insurance and medical billing practices, but is entrepreneurial and consistently seeks out new opportunities for impact. Our GLP team devotes particular attention to the health care problems faced by immigrants, trans and gender diverse people, and patients with long-term care needs. A top priority for all of HLA is pursuing racial and ethnic equity in health care.

Organizational Overview

Health Law Advocates (HLA) is a 501(c)(3) public interest law firm whose mission is to provide pro bono legal representation to low-income residents experiencing difficulty accessing or paying for needed medical services. HLA is committed to ensuring universal access to quality health care in Massachusetts, particularly for those who are most at risk due to such factors as race, gender, disability, age, or geographic location. HLA's services include:

Representing Health Care Consumers: HLA provides high quality, free legal assistance to income-eligible Massachusetts residents having difficulty accessing or paying for health care. HLA represents and litigates for individuals and in impact cases.

HLA's 19 attorneys, supported by six paralegals, currently specialize in:

- Challenging obstacles to health and mental health care created by denials of payment for specific services by third-party payors, including health insurance, schools, and state agencies

- Fighting denials of eligibility for: state agency services, special education, and health insurance enrollment
- Protecting patients from illegal medical billing and collection practices

Community Education and Outreach: HLA builds knowledge in communities on how to access physical and mental health care through well-regarded trainings and presentations throughout Massachusetts and by authoring publications that promote access to health care.

Policy Advocacy: HLA advocates for public policy reforms that help consumers access physical and mental health care. We offer our legal expertise and experience working with consumers to policymakers on the state and federal levels, as well as advocate for policy changes by health care institutions to enhance health care access.

HLA's effectiveness is strengthened by its relationship with its sister organization, Health Care for All (HCFA): HCFA is a leader in mobilizing consumers and engaging in policy advocacy to achieve universal health care access in Massachusetts. The two organizations' headquarters are located together. HLA and HCFA create a robust ecosystem for promoting access to health care.

Duties and Responsibilities

Represent/advise income-qualified clients who primarily rely on state-sponsored health insurance to access health care (70%).

- Matters typically involve clients denied enrollment in state coverage programs, clients denied coverage for specific health services by such programs, and clients with unaffordable medical bills.
- Strategies usually involve representing clients in communications, including negotiations, with MassHealth/Connector officials, health care providers, and MassHealth managed care entities, as well as appearances before the Office of Medicaid Board of Hearings.
- There may be opportunities to participate in litigation; specifically, state court appeals of final MassHealth determinations, medical debt defense cases, and drafting amicus briefs.

Advocate for policies that remove barriers to care or coverage with government leaders at the Office of Medicaid, Health Connector, other relevant public agencies, and state legislators (20%).

- Typical advocacy activities include attending regular advocacy coalition meetings with state officials, participating in internal strategy development and information sharing with HLA staff and partner organizations, drafting and delivering testimony on regulatory proposals and occasionally legislative proposals, and representing HLA in advocacy coalitions.
- Policy advocacy will include being HLA's point person on select MassHealth policy matters.

Conduct outreach to consumers and advocacy groups, including via trainings and presentations (5%).

- Providing trainings to the community is a crucial way of building relationships with partners, generating new case referrals, and educating community members and organizations about current health access issues.

Participate in HLA efforts to improve our organization's internal and external practices and procedures, such as through our diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work (4%).

- Health Law Advocates is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) at the individual, organizational, and systems levels. We make time for all staff to take part in activities designed to identify and dismantle instances of inequity within ourselves, within our organization, within our client community, and within the larger community and Commonwealth.

Assist with drafting/reviewing grant applications and reports or portions thereof (sporadic) (1%).

More specific activities include:

- Working with clients and, where relevant, their families, social services providers, and medical providers to challenge health care obstacles
- Conducting legal research and writing
- Analyzing medical, health insurance, and other relevant records
- Developing and maintaining strong working relationships with advocacy partners
- Developing and maintaining strong working relationships with MassHealth, The Health Connector, and managed care plans
- Managing case files and documenting all activities in our case management software
- Promoting HLA in the community

GLP Staff Attorney Qualifications

All HLA employees are expected to have the skills to:

- Work both independently and as an effective team member
- Collaborate with and support staff at all levels of our organization
- Communicate clearly and professionally
- Maintain confidentiality and, for attorneys, strict adherence to all professional responsibility requirements for the practice of law
- Demonstrate intellectual curiosity and openness, with the desire and ability to listen and learn
- Understand and believe in the mission of the organization
- Embody the values of the organization, including a commitment to decreasing inequity in our health care system and society as a whole

Minimum requirements specific to this position include:

- Juris Doctor degree and license to practice law in Massachusetts
- 4+ years of relevant work experience
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Strong advocacy skills

Other preferred qualifications:

- Experience working in direct legal services

- Experience working with individuals in crisis
- Proven ability to handle a substantial caseload
- Knowledge of and experience working with state and federal health care coverage and consumer protection laws, particularly Medicaid/MassHealth, the Affordable Care Act and M.G.L. c. 93A
- Experience counseling or representing consumers on health insurance coverage issues;
- Public policy development or policy advocacy experience, preferably relating to health care policy
- Demonstrated ability to supervise and foster growth in junior staff
- Demonstrated cultural competence
- Bilingual proficiency, specifically in Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and/or Cape Verdean Creole

Compensation

The salary range for this position is \$70,000 - \$75,000 (based on experience and other qualifications). HLA offers a robust benefits package including comprehensive health insurance and a generous paid leave policy.

To Apply

Applications must be submitted online at <https://hlainc.efficientapply.com/jobs/> and will be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Please include a cover letter.

HLA is committed to diversity in its workforce. A crucial part of HLA's vision is supporting cultural and linguistic competence, as well as ensuring diversity of staff and volunteers, so we can best serve our clients. Women, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQ individuals, people of color, and people who speak English as a second language are encouraged to apply.