

## Staff Attorney/MLPI Fellow, General Legal Practice Team Medical-Legal Partnership for Immigrants (MLPI)

*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/MLPI Fellow** with our General Legal Practice (GLP) team who will be dedicated to our trailblazing **Medical-Legal Partnership for Immigrants (MLPI)**. This is a two-year fellowship with the possibility of extension. The Staff Attorney/MLPI Fellow will primarily serve immigrant clients referred by our MLPI provider partners. Additionally, the Staff Attorney/MLPI Fellow will play a key role in further building and developing this cutting-edge initiative.

*This is a rare opportunity at HLA, because we are inviting 2022 and recent law school graduates to apply. The start date of this position will be in the late summer or fall, after the July 2022 Bar Exam, with the specific date to be arranged.*

The Staff Attorney/MLPI Fellow 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 immigrant clients facing challenges accessing health care or other professional experience with the health care system or immigrants' access to public benefits. They will thrive providing individualized representation to clients with high needs 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 HLA staff is pursuing racial and ethnic equity in health care.

The Medical-Legal Partnership for Immigrants (MLPI) endeavors to address immigration as a social determinant of health for patients referred by hospitals and community health centers. An innovative partnership between HLA and the Rian Immigrant Center, a non-profit that provides pro bono immigration legal services, the MLPI improves access to care for immigrant patients by helping them access improved health care benefits and, where possible, file immigration petitions with U.S. government.

## Organizational Overview

Health Law Advocates (HLA) is a 501(c)(3) public interest law firm with the mission of providing pro bono legal representation to Massachusetts residents with low incomes who are facing barriers to 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 experiencing difficulties with accessing or paying for health care. HLA represents and litigates for individuals and in impact cases. HLA's 20 attorneys, supported by six paralegals, currently specialize in:

- Challenging obstacles to physical and mental health care created by denials of payment for services by third-party payors, including health insurance, schools, and state agencies.
- Fighting denials of eligibility for state agency services, special education, and enrollment in public and private health coverage.
- Protecting patients from illegal medical billing and collection practices.

**Community Education and Outreach:** HLA builds knowledge in communities about how to access physical and mental health services 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 access to care and coverage.

**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 collaborate in creating a robust advocacy ecosystem that advances access to health care for everyone, but especially people in the most vulnerable circumstances.

## Duties and Responsibilities

Represent/advise income-qualified clients who primarily rely on state-sponsored health insurance to access health care. Most clients will be immigrant patients referred through our MLPI. (70%)

- Matters typically involve immigrant clients unjustly denied enrollment in comprehensive health insurance coverage. Other matters may include denials of coverage for specific medical services and unaffordable medical bills.
- Strategies usually involve representing clients in communications, including negotiations, with MassHealth/Health Connector officials, health care providers, and 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.

Engage in project development for the MLPI. (10%)

- Participate in regular meetings with our MLPI medical provider partners to build relationships and facilitate case referrals.
- Consult with our MLPI medical provider partners regarding immigrant patients' access to care.
- Communicate and coordinate our cases and services with HLA's key MLPI partner, the Rian Immigrant Center.
- Develop and deliver trainings for our MLPI provider partners regarding access to health care benefits for immigrant patients.

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. (10%)

- Typical advocacy activities include attending 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 broader 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/MLPI Fellow 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, openness, and 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:

- JD degree from an accredited law school and 0-3 years of experience as a lawyer.
- A license to practice law in Massachusetts, or, when beginning with HLA in the late summer or fall of 2022, have a pending Petition for Submission to the Massachusetts Bar (e.g., took the July 2022 Bar Exam).
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Strong advocacy skills.

Other preferred qualifications:

- Experience working in direct legal services, particularly with immigrant clients.
- 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.
- Bi- or multi-lingual proficiency, specifically in Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, and/or Cape Verdean Creole, but other languages are welcome, as well.

## Compensation

The salary range for this position is \$60,000 - \$70,000. 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 or we will not consider your application.

**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. People of color, women, people living with disabilities, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, and people who speak English as a second language are strongly encouraged to apply.**