

PDSLCL Executive Director

Public Defender Services of Lane County is seeking an attorney with vision, integrity and empathy to lead our talented team of attorneys and support staff. This is a job for someone with demonstrated passion for public defense, and a proven track record of client-centered representation. Our office, a non-profit founded in 1977 and located in downtown Eugene, is the second largest public defense provider in Oregon, and the largest law firm in Lane County. We have 33 attorneys and represent more than 4,000 clients a year, including criminal cases, treatment courts, mental health matters, juvenile and delinquency cases, legal clinic work and municipal appeals. Our work centers around our mission statement: We treat our clients with dignity, empower them to make informed choices and fight to defend their rights.

PDSLCL's executive director is the public face of the office, and represents us in advocacy in our community and statewide. This role requires the ability to build and maintain connections with community partners throughout our public safety system, as well as the Oregon Legislature and the statewide agency in charge of public defense, OPDC.

Our office has thrived and grown in the last decade. As the state has made investments in public defense, we've reduced our caseload and increased our supervisor staffing to mentor and train our lawyers and support professionals. The executive director manages our team supervisors, communicates regularly with the entire office, and reports to our 9-member board of trustees. In addition, the executive director is responsible for a small caseload of complex and challenging cases.

Essential Duties of the Executive Director

- Center PDSLCL's Mission Statement and Goals
- Meet regularly with senior management team and team supervisors.
- Respond to changes in the court system and system requirements in a manner which promotes the interests of our clients.
- Build relationships with community partners while maintaining a balance given the adversarial role of a public defender in the criminal punishment system.
- Coordinate with the business manager and other supervisors on human resource issues, including hiring and supervising employees, structuring performance improvement plans when required, and ensuring the staff who work here are client centered and the right people for the job.
- Maintain availability to other staff members for consultation and education; participate in training programs; maintain current knowledge of programs pertinent to clients.
- Maintain a professional demeanor within and outside the office.
- Train backup personnel, as assigned.
- Ethics requests – in conjunction with the assistant director, serve as a first-responder for ethics question; ensure that every ethical withdrawal filed by any attorney has been reviewed first.

- Other duties as assigned.

Routine Management/supervision responsibilities

- Participate actively in management meetings, including formulation and implementation of goals and objectives. Keeps team members informed about changes and important events.
- Effectively handle a small caseload and maintain the ability to cover all types of court appearances.
- Demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct. Protect information considered to be personal or confidential.
- Assist other managers and supervisors in evaluating alternatives before making decisions. Follow through to ensure actions are accomplished.
- Solicit input for and prepare performance evaluations for attorneys within the small group, and other supervisees as assigned.

Requirements to apply:

- A Juris Doctor degree, membership in good standing with the Oregon State Bar or another bar organization + the ability to practice law in Oregon through the comity process.
- At least 6 years of legal experience.
- Demonstrated experience managing a diverse workforce consisting of attorneys, investigators, and administrative staff.
- Strong leadership, management, and communications skills.
- Knowledge and understanding of public defense cases, including adult criminal, civil commitment, and juvenile delinquency and dependency cases.

Compensation:

The annual salary for this position is \$140,000 to \$190,000, depending on experience. PDSLCL provides a generous compensation package, including health care and retirement plans, health savings reimbursement, long-term disability insurance, paid family leave, professional liability insurance, 3 to 5 weeks paid vacation, and other employee benefits.

Equity Statement

PDSLCL is committed to advance equity and diversity in our workplace, in our hiring, and in the way we represent our clients. We are an equal opportunity employer, and encourage applications from members of historically underrepresented groups to apply.

How to Apply

To apply, submit your resume and cover letter, describing how you meet the job requirements and mission statement. Email the application to Bryan Lessley, President of the Board of Trustees, at bryan@jeslaw.com, and cc his assistant emily@jeslaw.com. Email submissions are strongly preferred, but written applications may be sent to 298 Pearl Street, Eugene, 97401. All applications will be confidential. For questions, call Bryan at 541-225-8780. Please include the names and contact information of three references who can speak to your background and qualifications. The deadline for all submissions is close of business on September 3, 2024, but we will begin evaluating applications and scheduling interviews on an ongoing basis.

PDSLCL Mission Statement and Goals

PDSLCL Mission Statement: We treat our clients with dignity, empower them to make informed choices and fight to defend their rights.

PDSLCL Goals – How We Fulfill Our Mission Statement:

1. We deliver outstanding legal services.
2. We uphold the presumption of innocence without regard to the accusations against our clients.
3. We deal ethically with our clients, witnesses, the courts, and all other representatives of the criminal justice system.
4. We strive to lead by example in the criminal justice community.
5. We provide a supportive environment where employees and clients are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, economic and cultural background, religion, age or disability.