



Community Legal Services, Inc. NPLC Energy Unit Paralegal Opening

Community Legal Services, Inc. of Philadelphia is a non-profit public interest agency providing free civil legal services to low-income Philadelphia residents. As the largest provider of free civil legal services in the Philadelphia area, CLS is both locally and nationally renowned as a premier legal services provider dedicated to ensuring access to justice for all low-income individuals and communities. CLS has eight legal units covering a wide range of civil legal services. The Energy Unit works to keep the utilities on for families through direct representation of low-income utility customers to assert their rights to continued service and affordable payment terms, representing group clients on utility rate change cases and other proceedings affecting affordability of utility service, and advocating for programs and policies which provide low income families with affordable, life-essential utility service.

This is a full-time position responsible for interviewing energy applicants at NPLC both in person and over the telephone, providing advice and representation to the unit's clients as well as maintaining a large number of client files, under the supervision of attorneys in the unit. This position may also involve off-site intake and assistance at utility clinics organized by the Energy Unit and colleagues. Energy Unit Paralegals provide a range of service, including: negotiating affordable payment terms and resolution of utility disputes with PWD, PECO, and PGW, including communication with utility liaisons and advocating in writing on behalf of clients; advising and potentially representing clients in informal disputes at the utility level; prepare client cases for hearings before the Philadelphia Water Department, Tax Review Board, Office of Administrative Review, and Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, including helping clients compile convincing evidence and assisting witnesses with the preparation of oral and written testimony; conducting community education and trainings; and attending quarterly utility advisory committee meetings, as needed. The position may also include involvement in policy advocacy.

Excellent oral and written communication skills, attention to detail, ability to use the internet to assist with case investigation, high tolerance for interaction with bureaucracies, and the ability to deal with a high volume of direct client interaction are required. The Energy Unit Paralegal will be expected to strategically evaluate the available legal options/resources to preserve access to utility service for as long as possible. Some substantive experience in Utility law is preferred, but not required. The Energy Unit Paralegal will be expected to review relevant statutes, regulations, and utility tariffs when assessing the merits of clients' disputes. Other responsibilities and qualifications necessary for this position include knowledge of community resources for appropriate referrals, interviewing clients, obtaining the relevant case facts and drafting thorough notes, emails and letters,

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negotiating favorable outcomes for clients, compassion and understanding for clients who are often dealing with significant levels of stress, and giving clients advice under the supervision of attorneys. **Fluency in writing and speaking a language other than English, preferably Spanish, is strongly preferred, but not required.**

Required Qualifications:

- High School Diploma or GED.
- Strong writing skills
- Computer literacy and the ability to learn a large volume of complex material quickly,
- Initiative, strong interpersonal skills and ability to interact well in a multi-cultural environment.
- Willingness and motivation to assist on substantive cases and administrative matters.

To Apply: CLS will accept applications on a rolling basis until the position has been filled. You can submit your application on CLS's website online at:

<https://clsphila.org/about-cls/available-positions/> OR

<https://clsphiladelphia.applytojob.com/apply/uqjlwMXUoZ/NPLC-Energy-Unit-Paralegal>

What to Include in your application:

Please include a cover letter, resume, three professional references and one brief writing sample (10 pages or less). Community Legal Services values a diverse work environment and strongly encourages women, people of color, people who identify as LGBTQ, people with disabilities, people who have experienced poverty or homelessness and people who have had prior contact with the juvenile, criminal, or child welfare systems to apply. **CLS invites all applicants to include in their cover letter a statement about how your unique background and/or experiences might contribute to the diversity, cultural vitality, and perspective of our staff and legal services practice.**

This is a full-time position covered by the collective bargaining agreement between Community Legal Services, Inc. (CLS) and the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, AFL-CIO and its affiliate District 1199C. The **current minimum starting salary is \$32,500 for entry-level applicants** but that salary is subject to change or adjustment if an applicant has relevant years of experience and according to the provisions of the current collective bargaining agreement. Raises and benefits are also governed by that agreement.

Community Legal Services, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer. CLS, Inc. does not discriminate in the selection of employees on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, genetics, age, national origin, disability, or veteran status. In addition to federal law requirements, CLS complies with all applicable state and local laws governing

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nondiscrimination in employment. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training.