



# Center for Appellate Litigation

## Executive Director

New York, NY

## Background

The Center for Appellate Litigation (CAL) is the preeminent appellate public defender in New York. Since the founding in 1998, the mission of CAL has been the pursuit of equal justice under the law for indigent New Yorkers in their criminal appeals and other post-conviction proceedings. CAL believes all people deserve dignity, respect, and the right to be heard and treated fairly when their liberty has been taken from them or threatened, regardless of their ability to pay for an attorney. But in the complex lives of CAL clients, there are opportunities for service beyond the crucial matter of the appeal.

## Position

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director (ED) is the senior-most executive at the Center for Appellate Litigation. The ED is CAL's chief strategist and is responsible for innovating CAL's work to build on its record as a leader in appellate public defense. The ED will be responsible for positioning the Center for Appellate Litigation as New York State's premier appellate legal services provider; generating new sources of revenue for sustainable, long-term growth; collaboratively defining a DEI vision and agenda for CAL; and for setting organization-wide strategy to strengthen CAL's work. An integral component of the ED's role is building relationships with union leadership to foster a constructive partnership and a collaborative and positive work culture.

The ED will lead and empower more than 50 employees, overseeing all aspects of the organization, collaborating closely with the professional staff and Board to create and fund programs and projects, manage the organization's finances, increase its influence and impact, and strengthen the organization's mission-driven culture. The ED will inspire staff to perform at the highest standards of practice in service of its clients throughout the Bronx and Manhattan as assigned by the New York Supreme Court, Appellate Division.

The ideal ED will be a visionary leader who sees the big picture while also knowing how all decisions affect the dedicated CAL staff and CAL clients. The ED will continue to build out the talented team of attorneys, client advocates, social workers and administrative professionals. The ED will guide the organization through an exciting period of transformation, exploring new and creative approaches to addressing the critical needs of the communities CAL serves as it makes the transition from a founder-led organization. To do so, the ED must build trust with all internal and external stakeholders from interns to city officials, have a deep understanding of organizational design and workflow management that recognizes the intense nature of CAL's impactful work and the importance of balancing growth, clients, and capacity.

## Responsibilities

### Executive Leadership and Management

- Provide strategic vision, direction, and leadership in service of CAL's mission, building a bold, innovative strategy that imagines new possibilities for ever-more effective delivery of legal services and more expansive policy advocacy
- Lead CAL on its journey to demonstrate its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion values and strive to be an anti-racist and anti-oppressive organization for CAL clients and staff
- Provide inspirational leadership and direction to the senior team and ensure the continued development and management of a professional and efficient organization
- Advocate for resources to promote and support the expansion of high-quality legal services across all communities and practices
- Expand and elevate CAL's state and local advocacy work in collaboration with community partners and coalitions
- Represent the organization externally to bolster its relationships with partners, organizations with symbiotic goals, and to develop new relationships to increase its visibility and influence
- Establish effective decision-making processes that will enable CAL to achieve its long- and short-term goals and objectives
- Build and develop trusting, productive relationships with union leadership
- Support, develop and manage the senior leadership team, including conducting annual reviews and setting annual goals with direct reports

### Communications

- Serve as a primary CAL spokesperson for government agencies, media, private funders, stakeholders, and partners
- Collaborate with members of CAL's staff to build out CAL's strategy and communicate ideas, plans, and vision to the team and external stakeholders for feedback and buy-in
- Elevate CAL's profile, highlighting the outstanding client representation and advocacy work of the organization and vision for the future
- Advocate for the interests of CAL and its clients before City, State, and Federal officials
- In conjunction with the CAL Board of Directors, build relationships with key stakeholders to promote and strengthen the organization's ability to serve the people of New York City

### Fundraising & Financial Management

- Build upon strong relationship with CAL's current government funding agencies
- Diversify and expand funding streams
- Develop relationships with external stakeholders to foster meaningful partnerships, and generate opportunities to speak to a wide and diverse audience about CAL's work
- Ensure sound financial systems and practices that support efficient cost management

## Operations

- Set the tone for the importance of advancing internal policies, procedures, and systems that will ensure a safe, equitable, and healthy work environment
- Create and promote a positive, productive, enjoyable work environment with clear, equitable, and compassionate HR policies and practices
- Ensure commitment to and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations across the organization
- Streamline operations and create uniformity and efficiency across the organization
- In conjunction with the leadership team, place the highest priority on developing robust retention and recruitment strategies for all CAL current and prospective team members with an emphasis on increasing and promoting diversity
- Champion the strategic use of data and technology for effective decision-making across CAL and to surface and tell compelling client stories
- Facilitate cross-departmental collaboration and increased internal communications among staff members throughout the organization
- Ensure programmatic excellence and consistent quality of fiscal management, administration, fundraising, strategic communications, and work systems
- Ensure the delivery of high-quality services while managing for current and future growth

## Culture

- Build a community of extraordinary professionals and passionately advocate for their continued growth and development
- Promote a culture of inclusion and belonging across the workplace and in its external relations work as embodied in CAL's mission and values
- Reinforce CAL's values and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in its recruitment, hiring, learning and development, advancement and retention of staff, and operations work, internally and in external relations
- Strive for CAL to be an anti-racist and anti-oppressive workplace where all employees can thrive
- Model an understanding, sensitivity, and responsiveness to the social, economic, and cultural differences between staff and clients
- Develop strong relationships with CAL employees across the organization and all stakeholder groups, including union members, to seek input, problem solve, inform, and ensure all voices are heard

## Board Governance

- Identify, develop, and expand the board to include additional expertise, financial support, and relationships
- Cultivate a transparent and effective working relationship with the Board of Directors and ensure open communication about the measurement of financial, programmatic, and impact performance against stated milestones and goals

- Support the building of a diverse and inclusive Board of Directors representative of the community that is highly engaged and willing to leverage and secure resources

## Qualifications

- Relevant work experience and JD required; public interest law experience preferred, and indigent defense experience preferred
- Substantial nonprofit managerial experience with proven readiness to lead an organization of professionals that perform at the highest level of their profession
- Enthusiastic commitment to CAL's mission of equal justice under the law and deep alignment with CAL's service of indigent clients
- Demonstrated ability to develop and implement strategic plans, manage organizational finances, and undertake successful fundraising
- Demonstrated commitment to fighting for racial and social equality and against institutionalized racism within organizations
- Experience working with or on behalf of members of low-income communities, communities of color, or other groups that are disproportionately impacted by the criminal legal system
- Exceptionally strong writing skills and superb oral communication capabilities
- Proven ability to serve as a spokesperson to a wide variety of partners and audiences
- History of success in managing organizational change and systemic culture shifts in consultation with internal stakeholders, including unions
- Demonstrated experience in building and collaborating with a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and multi-cultural community
- Proven fundraiser from public and private sources
- Exceptional team building and management skills; outstanding communicator and avid listener
- Ability to set clear priorities and has sound decision-making skills
- Excellent coalition building skills with an ability to communicate and work effectively with all internal and external stakeholders

**Compensation and Benefits:** The salary range for this position is \$240-\$260K. CAL offers all full-time employees competitive benefits package including:

- Generous health insurance options
- No cost dental, vision, disability insurance
- 403b, FSA, HSA and transit programs
- 27 paid vacation days; unlimited sick days

This position description is based upon material provided by the Center for Appellate Litigation, an equal opportunity employer.

To apply to this position, please click [HERE](#).

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