

# NATIONAL LAW CENTER ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

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## Fellowship Opportunities

The **National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty** (NLCHP) is a 501(c) 3 organization based in Washington, D.C. that serves as the legal arm of the national movement to end and prevent homelessness. Through policy advocacy, public education, and impact litigation, NLCHP works for systemic reform that addresses the root causes of homelessness, and seeks to meet both the immediate and long-term needs of homeless and poor people. The Law Center's work focuses on three major areas: 1) Housing and Income, 2) Children and Youth, and 3) Civil Rights. Within these areas, particular focus areas include Human Rights and Domestic Violence.

Interested fellowship candidates should send a resume, cover letter, and short writing sample to [morhant@nlchp.org](mailto:morhant@nlchp.org) with "Law Firm Fellowship" as the subject line. For additional information about NLCHP, please go to: [www.nlchp.org](http://www.nlchp.org)

NLCHP is interested in hosting a law firm associate for a fellowship. Fellows would concentrate on advocacy in one of the following areas, but would likely work on several different issues during the fellowship period.

### **Fellowship to Protect the Rights of Homeless Children**

An estimated 1.5 million children are homeless across the U.S. Often, these homeless children face significant barriers in enrolling and remaining in school due to the temporary nature of their housing or shelter situations, adding educational instability to the challenge of homelessness. The Children & Youth fellow will work with NLCHP's Children & Youth Staff Attorney to provide technical assistance to school personnel, attorneys, service providers and homeless families to help ensure that homeless children have access to school; conduct legal research; draft educational materials on the law, assist in conducting trainings, and help develop litigation where necessary.

### **Fellowship to Protect Renters in Foreclosure**

The current mortgage foreclosure crisis is putting many people at risk of homelessness. Many renters in foreclosed properties are increasingly being evicted, often without warning and even though they had been paying rent in a timely manner. Many low-income renters who lose their apartments in this way are not given enough advance notice to allow them to find a new place to live or find resources to afford a new security deposit. According to reports from shelters, food banks, and other

providers across the country, requests for help are surging, as homeowners lose their homes and as renters in foreclosed buildings are evicted. The Foreclosure Fellow will work with our Legal Director and Executive Director on education and outreach on the issue of homelessness caused by foreclosures to promote the legal rights of renters and development of programs that prevent homelessness. The Fellow will assist in providing technical legal assistance and training to enable local advocates and attorneys to protect the legal rights of renters facing homelessness due to foreclosures. Additionally s/he will work with the Policy Director in educating policymakers at the federal, state and local levels about the impact of the foreclosure crisis and encourage federal legislative and policy responses to this problem.

### **Fellowship to Protect the Rights of Domestic Violence Survivors**

Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness for women. The Domestic Violence fellow will work with our Domestic Violence Staff Attorney to promote housing rights for domestic violence survivors and ensure compliance with federal the *Violence Against Women Act* and related local legislation. This position will involve helping to develop possible test case litigation; conducting legal research into state and local laws; conducting outreach to shelter and community service providers and others; drafting model legislation; and advocating with administrative agencies and legislators.

### **Fellowship to Increase Homeless Persons' Access to Disability Benefits**

Recent research has shown that homeless people are not able to access Supplemental Security Income benefits as readily or easily as housed individuals. The Benefits Fellow will work with our Policy Director and Legal Director to address the lack of access to public benefits for people with disabilities who are homeless. The Fellow will help to develop possible test case litigation, conduct outreach to community service providers, shelters, local government agencies and others; and engage in administrative and legislative advocacy, including potentially drafting model legislation and helping advocate for it passage at the state and local level.

### **Fellowship to Advance the Right to Affordable and Supportive Housing**

The shortage of affordable housing is a leading cause of homelessness. However, various obstacles often prevent low-income persons from accessing available resources. The Housing Fellow will work with our Policy Director and Legal Director to maximize the use of existing laws to increase access to available housing resources for low-income persons. Such laws include anti-discrimination laws that can be used to reduce barriers to the siting of affordable housing and shelter that result from “Not In My Back Yard” (NIMBY) opposition; federal laws that require that the needs of local homeless persons be taken into account when authorities are determining how to redevelop vacant federal properties that are no longer needed by the federal government; and others.

### **Fellowship to Promote the Human Right to Housing**

NLCHP advocates for increased housing resources at the local, state, and national levels using standards developed in the context of international human rights law. The Human Rights fellow will work in conjunction with our Human Rights Staff Attorney to provide legal assistance to organizations promoting a human rights approach to housing policy. This work may involve conducting research on international and domestic human rights laws; drafting policy documents; supporting litigation by helping incorporate a human rights framework; producing outreach materials and conducting trainings; and advocating before international human rights bodies.