



Shelter Client Advocate

The Eviction Defense Collaborative (EDC) seeks an enthusiastic Shelter Client Advocate for its Shelter Client Advocate Program (SCA). The SCA Advocate is responsible for representing homeless shelter residents at administrative hearings relating to their shelter residence. We especially encourage those who have lived experience with homelessness to apply.

At present, and until further notice, EDC is operating remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. EDC provides employees with the necessary IT equipment and remote access to work from home. EDC's COVID-19 Safety Plan adheres to the CDC's health and safety guidelines and the federal OSHA requirements for workplace safety.

The Organization

Eviction Defense Collaborative (EDC) is the only legal services organization in San Francisco solely focused on eviction prevention. EDC's goal is to prevent displacement, stabilize communities, and ensure housing equity in San Francisco. Formed in 1996 as the primary clearinghouse for tenants filing initial responses to unlawful detainers (UD), EDC has developed an effective, client-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally sensitive triage clinic model to process the high volume of clients through our daily, open door clinic model. We offer legal services in response to an eviction, tenant rights education, rental assistance, and advocacy for clients in shelter, all under one organizational umbrella. In 2019, EDC provided legal services to over 4,800 individuals (326 of which included full scope legal representation in an eviction proceeding - with a 100% rate of positive outcomes, successfully preventing displacement and homelessness). EDC disbursed \$816,318 in loans and grants to low-income tenants, and represented 267 shelter clients at hearings with an 87% success rate, keeping these clients housed at local shelters and off the streets. The Shelter Client Advocate program follows an empowerment model that incorporates a harm reduction approach. It utilizes restorative justice practices and provides skill building, improving relationships with shelter providers.

Our unique, comprehensive approach allows clients to receive the services critically needed to remain housed, while limiting their visits to multiple agencies (especially critical in a crisis, where every moment counts to prevent eviction). EDC prides itself on being the safety net for San Francisco tenants, serving tenants regardless of income, immigration status, or neighborhood.

Job purpose

The Shelter Client Advocate (Advocate) is primarily tasked with representing homeless shelter residents at administrative hearings relating to their shelter residence. Because we strive to be barrier-free and client-centered, the position requires individuals who truly enjoy working with people, have the skills and capacity to respond in an empathetic and respectful way to clients who are often in crisis, and can work effectively in a collegial and fast paced environment.

Qualifications

First and foremost, the applicant must profoundly share EDC's mission and vision of social justice and be able to manage stressful situations with empathy and calm. Below are additional qualifications.

- Experience working with the very low income communities and possess comprehensive cultural competency.
- Punctual.
- Excellent customer service skills (professional demeanor, sound judgment, communication, de-escalation, client-management, etc.) and proven ability to handle confidential information with discretion.
- Possess ability to make quick decisions and exercise good judgment.
- Possess ability to work on several projects simultaneously and handle a high volume of activity and be able to work efficiently and effectively under pressure.
- Have excellent written and oral communication skills. Facility in Spanish preferred.
- Must be comfortable working in community settings.
- Willingness to work collaboratively, but with the capacity to work independently.
- Though not a requirement, an ideal candidate will have some lived experience with homelessness.

Duties and responsibilities

Advocacy and Outreach Duties (75%)

- Represent shelter clients at administrative hearings and arbitrations.
- Provide clients information on SCA and any additional appropriate resources.
- In coordination with other Advocates and the Manager, assist in managing the client consultation and administrative hearings calendars.
- Explain the Shelter Client Grievance Policy to clients, and provide advice on the nature of the allegations made by the shelter providers.
- Act as a liaison between SCA and the Coalition on Homeless.

Administrative Duties (25%)

- Attend weekly program meetings, monthly agency staff meetings, and relevant supervision meetings.
- Enter all data on time and correctly to support program evaluation and outcomes tracking.
- In coordination with the Manager, manage the call logs and arbitration records and statistics.
- Represent EDC at community meetings/events as required.
- Perform other duties as assigned in furtherance of EDC's mission.

Salary

Salary commensurate with experience. This is a non-exempt, full-time position (Monday – Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm).

Union

EDC staff are represented by the National Organization of Legal Services Workers (NOLSW, UAW Local 2320, AFL-CIO). This position is an uncontested union position.

Working conditions

The position requires working with individuals during moments of extreme stress and instability. The position also requires the provision of culturally-sensitive and empathetic services. Some evening and weekend work may be required. Furthermore, because of the nature of the intake work, the employee is expected to be out of the office for the majority of the business day and to communicate regularly with other members of the team and their Manager throughout the day. Additionally, the employee is expected to be reachable by email, phone and video conference as needed during normal business hours, Monday – Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm.

Physical requirements

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

- Walking at least 0.5 miles at a time and two or more miles a day.
- Use public transportation throughout the city.
- Climb multiple flights of stairs.
- Spend 60-80% of the day alone in the field, at shelter sites, or traveling to/from shelters and/or other advocacy sites.
- Carry materials on their person. (Weight may vary, but can generally be expected to be at least 15 lbs.)
- Extensive typing/data entry.
- Periodic lifting/carrying/transporting of materials in excess of 40 lbs.
- Close visual acuity to prepare and analyze data, text, and figures.
- Prolonged computer use.

Direct reports

The employee does not supervise anyone.

Application Process

Email cover letter as attachments to jobs@evictiondefense.org with “SCA Advocate” in the subject line.

We are reviewing applications on a rolling basis. Applicants who do not meet all of the qualifications above are encouraged to apply with a cover letter detailing how their relevant experience qualifies them for the position.

Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

EDC is committed to continually building a diverse and inclusive workplace. We do so because it is the right thing to do, and because we know it makes our work stronger and more effective. We encourage applications from people of all backgrounds. EDC understands and values a workplace with staff from diverse educational backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities, races, sex, gender identity and expression, national origin, ages, languages spoken, veteran’s status, skin color, religion, disability, sexual orientation and beliefs. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment. The Eviction Defense Collaborative believes that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity and does not discriminate on any basis prohibited by applicable law.