



## **STAFF ATTORNEY – CRIMINAL DEFENSE PRACTICE**

**Queens Defenders is seeking an experienced attorney to join a dedicated team of attorneys, paralegals, legal assistants, and client-support staff to represent clients facing criminal charges in Queens Criminal and Supreme Courts.**

### **ABOUT QUEENS DEFENDERS**

Founded in 1996, Queens Defenders is a leading Public Defender Organization providing high-quality, holistic representation for indigent community members in Queens, NY, New York City's most diverse borough and one of the most diverse locales in the world.

Our mission is to protect our clients from the far-reaching effects of prosecution through zealous advocacy and direct support services. We give life to our mission through our core values: a commitment to fostering an inclusive, diverse, and professional environment; relentless in our pursuit of justice; unwavering in our commitment to excellence in the courtroom and in the community; client-centered and holistic in our representation, advocacy, and support services; respectful of the individuals with whom we interact.

At Queens Defenders, dedicated teams of criminal defense attorneys, immigration lawyers, social workers, investigators, and client-support specialists come together to tirelessly champion justice for each and every client. Our highly skilled staff of 290, serves and positively impacts the lives of thousands of individuals annually through this collaborative and supportive approach.

### **IDEAL CANDIDATE**

The ideal candidate is an attorney with criminal law experience who is admitted to the New York State Bar or can be admitted through reciprocity. The candidate will possess a demonstrable background in criminal justice or public interest work, and a commitment to the mission of Queens Defenders. We are seeking individuals with strong self-motivation, critical thinking abilities, exceptional time management skills, and the ability to collaborate with and mentor co-workers. The ideal candidate will possess the ability to work effectively both independently and as part of a team, while demonstrating excellent communication and interpersonal skills. A commitment to producing high-quality work in a timely manner is essential. Familiarity with relevant criminal litigation practices, as well as previous hearing and trial experience is preferred.

### **STAFF ATTORNEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Represent people facing criminal charges through every stage of the case from arraignment through final disposition, including hearings, trials, and plea negotiations,
- Develop appropriate case strategies through client interviews and continued

communication, analyzing of the facts and relevant law, and collaboration with fellow team members,

- Represent clients at arraignments including client interviews, bail applications at arraignments, assist family members with matters related to posting bail, and follow up with appropriate referrals, file bail writs and further advocacy for client's release,
- Conduct any preliminary hearings, Crawford hearings, suppression hearings, and other pretrial hearings, and trials,
- Research relevant law for effective representation,
- Collaborate on necessary advocacy strategy, facts, and law with supervising attorneys during case reviews,
- Collaborate with fellow staff attorneys on necessary advocacy strategy, facts, and law,
- Collaborate with social workers, immigration attorneys, and others to assist in addressing client needs beyond the criminal case,
- Submit referrals for immigration, investigation, social work services and/or community-based programming as needed,
- Gather necessary information to determine appropriate advocacy and litigation strategy,
- Review discovery materials to challenge certificates of discovery compliance, to contest statements of readiness, to obtain all disclosures under discovery law, and to develop litigation strategy,
- Coordinate the Preparation of mitigation materials to advocate for diversion courts in connection with community-based programs or to advocate for sentencing,
- Addressing any collateral consequences of pleas with clients,
- File appropriate notices of appeal and coordinate with appellate counsel,
- Remain up to date on any changes to the relevant law, and
- Other duties as assigned.

#### **TRAINING**

- Guidance by our Director of Training, supervisors, and senior attorneys with decades of criminal defense experience,
- Focus on areas of practice that require specialized knowledge,
- Continued legal education with CLE credit given by our directors, supervisors, and senior attorneys as well as outside presenters,
- Diversity and inclusion education,
- Professional growth and development trainings and opportunities, and
- In-house trial advocacy skills seminars.

#### **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

- Admission to New York State Bar (or the ability to be admitted through reciprocity)
- 2-5+ years of criminal litigation experience,
- Ability to work in a fast-paced environment and remain calm under pressure,
- Demonstrated commitment to public interest or pro bono work, and

## **SALARY RANGE**

\$81,149 – \$129,042

The posting reflects the range of potential salaries for the role. Salaries are governed by our collective bargaining agreement for unionized roles.

## **BENEFITS**

- Health/Dental/Vision
- 401(k)
- Generous Paid time off
- Parental Leave
- Disability insurance
- FSA and HSA
- Work from home available
- Life insurance

## **HIGHER EDUCATION AND LOAN FORGIVENESS**

Queens Defenders is a qualified employer for the purposes of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness. This position allows an employee to take advantage of PSLF and other State and Federal loan forgiveness programs.

Additionally, employees who are New York residents may be eligible for assistance from New York state to assist with loan repayments, depending on years of practice.

<https://studentaid.gov/>

<https://www.hesc.ny.gov/loan-forgiveness-programs.html>

## **COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

Queens Defenders values diversity and believes that a diverse staff is best placed to represent our borough, which derives its beauty from being one of the most diverse locales in the world. To best serve our clientele, model the place in which we practice, and to cultivate the best environment possible, we welcome applicants of diverse backgrounds, thoughts, perspectives, and experiences. We also provide all staff members with professional development and advancement opportunities because the more diverse and inclusive we are the more collaborative and supportive we are. For more information about our office generally, please visit our website at [www.queensdefenders.org](http://www.queensdefenders.org).

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Please submit a **cover letter** and **resume** via email to Kathleen Rende and Karan Kukreja, Co-Directors of Recruitment and Hiring at [recruitment@queensdefenders.org](mailto:recruitment@queensdefenders.org).