

PAIR Team Advocate

Position Purpose

This position serves as an advocate with the Georgia Advocacy Office (GAO), and more specifically with the Protection and Advocacy for Individual Rights (PAIR), Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS), Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT), Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury (PATBI), and the Protection and Advocacy for Voting Access (PAVA) programs, collectively called the PAIR Team. The GAO is the federally mandated protection and advocacy system for individuals with disabilities in Georgia pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §15041 et seq and 42 U.S.C. §10801 et seq. Protection and advocacy (P&A) systems are mandated under federal law to protect people with disabilities from abuse and neglect and to advocate for the human and legal rights of people with disabilities. The priorities of GAO's programs are (1) to protect individuals with disabilities in Georgia from abuse and neglect; (2) to respond to allegations of discrimination and legal rights violations of persons with disabilities; and (3) to promote self-advocacy and self-determination of persons with disabilities in the community.

The Advocate will engage in individual and systemic advocacy with and on behalf of people with disabilities who are subject to abuse or neglect, or who are institutionalized or at risk of institutionalization. The ideal candidate will also have demonstrated a deep sense of identification with people with disabilities and will have advocacy experience, with a strong emphasis on supporting people with disabilities to remove barriers to competitive, integrated employment. This position reports to the Program Director.

Major tasks and responsibilities

1. Provide individual relevant and potent advocacy to people with disabilities. This includes meeting with the person, identifying issues, determining – with the person – a course of action, developing appropriate advocacy strategies, and encouraging self-advocacy, when appropriate.
2. Investigate abuse and neglect in institutional and community-based settings.
3. Monitor state and private facilities such as nursing facilities, institutions, group homes, personal care homes, day programs, sheltered workshops, and others for compliance with federal and state laws protecting the rights of people with disabilities.
4. Assist people with disabilities in their community with their self-advocacy and systems change efforts.
5. Support organizational projects and initiatives that foster self-determination and self-advocacy and that support ordinary citizens to stand by and with people with disabilities.
6. Participate on task forces, coalitions, and committees.
7. Maintain accurate, confidential files documenting advocacy services provided.
8. Assist in preparing reports to funding sources.
9. Perform related tasks consistent with skills, abilities, and general responsibilities as required.

Skills

1. Effective and professional communication skills, including demonstrated writing skills.
2. Interpersonal skills to maintain productive working relationships with all staff and to work in interdisciplinary teams with other professionals.
3. Organizational skills to successfully complete multiple priorities and tasks and meet self-imposed and externally set deadlines.

Minimum Qualifications

1. A sense of identification with people with disabilities.
2. A Bachelor's degree in a related field or a combination of life experience and education demonstrating a likely capacity to perform the requirements of the position.
3. Experience advocating with and for people with disabilities, including advocating to remove barriers to competitive, integrated employment.
4. A strong commitment to the improvement of quality of life and protection of rights for people with disabilities in Georgia.
5. Ability and willingness to travel throughout the state of Georgia.
6. Ability to pass a background check.

Preferred Qualifications

1. Background in Social Role Valorization and related training.
2. Specialized knowledge in disability or related field.
3. Proficiency in Microsoft Office applications including Word, Outlook, Excel, web-based report creation, and generic database management.
4. Reliable transportation, insurance, and valid driver's license or access to transportation.
5. Experience providing training to diverse groups of people.

PLEASE SUBMIT a cover letter addressing your identification with people with disabilities as well as your experience advocating to remove barriers to competitive, integrated employment and resume by Monday, December 16, 2024, to:

Email: info@thegao.org

Or Mail:

Advocate Search
Georgia Advocacy Office
One West Court Square
Suite 625
Decatur, GA 30030

FAXED APPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS WITHOUT A COVER LETTER WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Salary is commensurate with qualifications and experience. GAO provides excellent benefits, such as health insurance, 403B plan, and paid vacation and holidays. Information about the Georgia Advocacy Office can be found on our Facebook page at bit.ly/fbthegao. We are an equal opportunity employer committed to having a diverse workforce. Applicants with disabilities and members of other minority groups are encouraged to apply. We are a busy office and a rewarding place to work.