



Disability Rights Connecticut Seeks an Executive Director

Established in 2017, Disability Rights Connecticut (DRCT) is the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy (P&A) system for persons with disabilities in Connecticut. We are seeking an Executive Director to lead this independent nonprofit agency in providing legally based protection and advocacy services, to be an actively engaged and trusted representative of DRCT in the Connecticut disability community, and to provide strong and creative leadership to protect the safety and enforce the civil, legal and human rights of our Connecticut residents.

As Connecticut's P&A, DRCT is designated by the Governor to administer nine federally funded programs that authorize it to represent people with a variety of intellectual, psychiatric and physical impairments across a broad range of disability. DRCT advocates, educates, investigates and pursues legal, administrative, policy and other appropriate remedies to ensure people with disabilities can participate equally and fully in all facets of community life. Issues DRCT addresses include investigations of abuse or neglect, access to and quality of chosen treatment and support services, accessibility and reasonable accommodations, assistive technology, employment, housing, education and voting.

With an annual budget of approximately \$1.9 million, DRCT consists of 18 staff members, including attorneys, advocates, intake specialists, investigators, administrators and support personnel.

DRCT is a member of the National Disability Rights Network, the nonprofit membership organization that represents the interests of the 57 P&As across the country and provides training and support for members. Collectively, the Network is the largest provider of legally based advocacy services to people with disabilities in the U.S.

About the Position

The Executive Director of DRCT is the primary champion and voice for DRCT's mission, vision, values and programs locally and nationally. The Executive Director is responsible for leadership and management of DRCT's human resources, financial and administrative operations, fundraising, programs, strategic plans, work plans and supervision of leadership staff.

Essential Functions and Principal Accountabilities

- Provide policy and advocacy leadership to DRCT's staff and oversee DRCT's administrative, human resources and financial operations.
- Provide strategic guidance and oversight of DRCT's team of attorneys in developing and executing effective legal strategies.
- Be an integral partner with Connecticut's disability communities. Provide guidance and support with community organizing and advocacy initiatives.
- Prioritize areas in which DRCT can optimize impact for individual clients served and Connecticut's disability communities.
- Pursue creative strategies to anticipate and address future challenges to people with disabilities and DRCT.
- Cultivate a productive working relationship with the DRCT Board of Directors and Advisory Councils through effective and responsive engagement with all members, both at and between scheduled meetings.
- Enhance the organization's capacity to identify, evaluate and address client needs and service priorities.
- In partnership with the Board of Directors and staff, develop, implement, and communicate DRCT's strategic vision among stakeholders, legislators and key partners.
- Oversee investigations and related reports / press releases to support awareness of DRCT's work.
- Raise DRCT's visibility and public profile by identifying, cultivating and strengthening strategic relationships with cross-sector partners, key decision makers, and other relevant local, statewide and national organizations.
- Explore and identify opportunities to broaden DRCT's funding base beyond current federal support including fundraising cultivation, fee generation and non-federal grants.
- Ensure compliance with funder expectations and contractual and grant requirements.
- Support and encourage overall staff development.
- Directly supervise and mentor leadership staff to promote teamwork, creative problem solving and issue-focused outcomes.
- Serve as an ambassador for DRCT inspiring others to take bold action to address systemic issues facing the disability community and promote inclusion.

Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Masters degree with five (5) to seven (7) years of related experience or an equivalent combination of education and experience preferred.

- Substantial management experience in a nonprofit organization with comparable or larger budget.
- Advanced knowledge of public policy issues including federal and state laws and regulations applicable to persons with disabilities.
- Demonstrable experience in using legal remedies and systemic advocacy in achieving social change.
- Strategic thinking, problem solving, planning and organizational skills.
- Excellent management, stakeholder relationship and leadership abilities.
- Public relations and negotiation skills, political sense and awareness.
- Legislative analysis and drafting skills.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate with and advocate for persons with disabilities.
- Integrity and fairness in working in a dynamic environment.
- Ability to work effectively and cooperatively within a team framework.
- Demonstrated experience working with and in diverse populations, which include race, nationality, gender, sexuality, disability and other identities.

Desired Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

- Energy and enthusiasm for policy and advocacy work.
- Ability to listen well to a variety of perspectives, including board, staff, funders, outside stakeholders and the public at large.
- Grant writing and fundraising experience.

Applications

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. However, candidates are urged to submit their materials as soon as possible. Please include a letter expressing in detail your interest in the position; your qualifications and what you hope to contribute to the organization's future; a current resume; and the names and contact information for three professional references.

Materials should be submitted electronically to maryjane.keane@disrightsct.org in Microsoft Word or pdf format. Candidates with questions about the position or process are encouraged to contact us through that e-mail address.

DRCT will offer a competitive salary commensurate with your experience. The benefits package for this position includes employer-contributed health, employee-paid dental and vision, and employer-paid life and disability insurances, and generous paid time off.

The Executive Director is an at-will employee and serves at the pleasure of the DRCT Board of Directors. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.