

**TITLE: Staff Attorney**

**THE NEIGHBORHOOD DEFENDER SERVICE** is building a community-based, client-centered, holistic public defense office in Wayne County and we invite you to join our team as we represent our clients with excellence. Building on 30 years of experience of providing high quality representation, we are expanding our efforts to bring the same caliber of representation to the communities of Wayne County. We are seeking a team of highly organized, self-driven, and resilient individuals dedicated to our mission. The Criminal Defense Practice at NDS Detroit will represent residents of Wayne County who are charged with felony crimes and cannot afford to hire a lawyer. Clients are represented by teams composed of lawyers, investigators, social workers, client advocates, and team administrators. NDS adheres to a client-centered approach to representation that emphasizes a heightened responsiveness to clients' needs prior to arrest, while a case is pending, and after the case concludes. NDS is committed to addressing the comprehensive legal and social service needs of clients while treating each client with dignity and respect.

The Staff Attorney demonstrates a commitment to serving marginalized persons and communities and an enthusiasm for holistic defense. The ideal Staff Attorney is an experienced attorney who demonstrates a commitment to serving marginalized persons and communities, preferably with experience in a public defender office, in a public interest organization, or in the indigent criminal defense context. As a member of the inaugural staff at the organization, the Staff Attorney will help shape our present and future—contributing to a collaborative environment and culture of excellence in alignment with our values. At NDS Detroit, how we represent our clients is as important as individual case outcomes and our ideal Staff Attorney approaches the cultivation of a positive office culture and the representation of indigent clients with equal rigor and commitment.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Embrace NDS' philosophy of client-centered, community-based, holistic representation and commitment to excellence by providing vigorous representation with energy and enthusiasm to the residents of Wayne County.
2. Engage in frequent court appearances and litigation, including arraignments, preliminary conferences & examinations, legal arguments, hearings & trials, and sentencings.
3. Interview clients and their families in the office or local jails, conduct legal research and write pre-pleading letters, motions and pre-sentencing memoranda on behalf of clients.
4. Coordinate work performed by team members (investigators, social workers, client advocates, and team administrators).
5. Work with cross-practice colleagues (immigration defense/civil defense/family defense) to obtain comprehensive legal outcomes for clients.
6. File motions, briefs and other related documents on a frequent, timely basis.
7. Provide effective oral advocacy in negotiations, hearings, and trials in criminal cases.
8. Work primarily at NDS' main office when not in Court.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** The ideal candidate will bring:

1. A demonstrated commitment to criminal justice, indigent defense, racial equity and social justice issues and the Wayne County communities.
2. Experience representing clients in criminal cases and knowledge of criminal procedure from arraignments to appeals (preferred but not required). Candidates with trial experience, particularly as lead counsel in the most serious felony cases, are encouraged to apply.
3. A track record of strategically guiding casework, projects and/or relationships; applying good and practiced judgment; and routinely pushing through roadblocks to achieve your goals.

4. Management skills and a coaching mindset.
5. Doggedness and resilience combined with people and situation smarts.
6. An ability to quickly build relationships across varying identities, income levels, races and ethnicities.
7. A high level of organizational and administrative skills to handle a high caseload.
8. Clear and effective communication skills, both orally and in writing.
9. A license to practice law in Michigan or in another state; and/or the capability of becoming licensed to practice law in the State of Michigan within six months. Attorneys admitted to the Michigan Bar with experience in the criminal courts of Wayne County (and Michigan generally) are strongly encouraged to apply.
10. Bi-lingual (Spanish or Arabic) attorneys are encouraged to apply.

**Compensation:** Compensation is commensurate with experience. Full medical and dental benefits, as well as retirement plan with company match, robust time off perks, paid parental leave and other benefits, are provided. The salary range for this position is \$57,000 – 109,000.

**How to Apply:**

Interested applicants should email a cover letter, resume, and writing sample to [DetroitHiring@ndsdetroit.org](mailto:DetroitHiring@ndsdetroit.org) with the subject line, "Detroit Staff Attorney." Please send your application as one document, preferably PDF. For more information about NDS, please visit our website at <http://www.ndsdetroit.org>.

The Neighborhood Defender Service is committed to creating a diverse environment that reflects the community we serve. NDS is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply and will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status. NDS encourages people with incarcerated loved ones, formerly incarcerated people, people of color, women, queer, transgender, gender non-conforming, and gender fluid people to apply.