Advocates for Children of New York, Inc. (AFC) seeks a Staff Attorney for our child welfare project, called Project Achieve, which fights for the educational rights of students in or at-risk for placement in foster care. Many students in foster care face tremendous barriers to educational success, due to frequent school changes, high rates of disability, and trauma associated with their placement in foster care. The attorney in this position will work closely with our partner foster care agency and the Project Achieve team to support individual students, improve agency education practices, and advocate for systemic reforms that benefit all students in the City’s foster care system.

AFC is a not-for-profit organization that strives to ensure a high-quality education for all New York students, focusing on students from low-income backgrounds. AFC works on behalf of children and youth who are at greatest risk of academic failure due to poverty, race, ethnicity, disability, homelessness, immigration status, limited English proficiency, or involvement in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems. We use uniquely integrated strategies to advance systemic reform, empower families and communities, and advocate for the educational rights of individual students.

**Job Responsibilities**

The Staff Attorney will be primarily responsible, along with the Project’s Senior Education Specialist, for our collaboration with our current partner agency, Good Shepherd Services. They will also support the overall work of our team, which is comprised of the Specialist, a Supervising Attorney, the Senior Staff Attorney and Collaborative Coordinator, and the Project Associate. Key responsibilities include:

- Traveling on-site to our partner foster care agency once or twice per week
- Providing ongoing technical assistance and consultation to foster care agency staff
- Advocating on behalf of individual students and families experiencing school-related difficulties involving special education, school discipline, enrollment or other issues
- Representing students at mediation and administrative hearings
- Developing resources and conducting workshops for child welfare professionals, students, and families involved with the child welfare system
- Collecting and recording data and assisting the Supervising Attorney with grant reporting
- Engaging in collective advocacy for changes in city policies that affect large numbers of students in foster care
Qualifications

- J.D. degree required
- Experience in education advocacy and/or child welfare required
- Excellent written and oral communication skills, including experience presenting to groups
- Strong interpersonal skills; ability to negotiate effectively in collaborative and adversarial contexts
- Ability to set priorities, meet deadlines, and work both independently and as a member of a team
- A commitment and ability to empower the families that are the focus of AFC’s mission
- Spanish language fluency preferred

How to apply

Please send an email with “Project Achieve Staff Attorney” in the subject line with a resume and cover letter to PAattorney@advocatesforchildren.org. Candidates should highlight any personal or professional experience that demonstrates their connection to the populations that AFC serves. Only candidates being scheduled for interviews will be contacted.

The position is available immediately, and applicants will be considered on a rolling basis. For more information on AFC, see www.advocatesforchildren.org.

Compensation

Salary is commensurate with experience. In addition to a competitive salary, AFC offers generous benefits.

AFC is an affirmative action employer that actively seeks to recruit and retain a diverse staff and encourages applications from a broad spectrum of people, including people of color, with disabilities, and of diverse religions, national origins, gender identities, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic backgrounds.