



CALL FOR FELLOWSHIP CANDIDATES

Centro Legal de la Raza's Immigrants' Rights Practice seeks a third-year law student or recent law school graduate to partner with us on a proposal for fellowship funding through the Equal Justice Works, Skadden, and Justice Catalyst fellowship programs. The fellow will work with our Securing Safety for Youth and Families (SSYF) subteam to fortify and expand our provision of direct legal services to recently arrived, nondetained immigrants (both migrant families and unaccompanied minors) in removal proceedings, the majority of whom have migrated from Central America, South America, and Mexico.

About Centro Legal de la Raza

Since 1969, Centro Legal has worked to protect and advance the rights of low-income, immigrant, Black, and Latinx communities through bilingual legal representation, education, and advocacy. We combine quality legal services with know-your-rights education, affirmative litigation, and youth development, to ensure access to justice for thousands of individuals and families each year throughout Northern and Central California. Our legal practices take on challenging cases and fight for our clients passionately, with the hope that everyone feels heard and represented in the midst of our turbulent justice system.

About the Immigrants' Rights Practice

Centro Legal's Immigrants' Rights Team believes in building people power and creating long-lasting sustainable change by standing in solidarity with our clients, centering their voices and their stories, and advocating for systemic change to fix a broken immigration system. We simultaneously seek to realize this vision internally by building a legal team whose practices reflect the organization's values of empowerment, inclusion, integrity, compassion and justice. Centro's immigration practice includes comprehensive, full-service direct representation before the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the immigration courts, as well as in district court and the Ninth Circuit federal court of appeals. Centro also participates in impact litigation efforts, legal rights education, and local and national advocacy. We focus on serving the needs of our most vulnerable community members, including individuals in removal proceedings, asylum seekers, families living in poverty, unaccompanied minors, long residing undocumented immigrants and families, LGBTQ immigrants, and survivors of violent crimes. Our services range from detained and non-detained removal defense, cases involving the intersection of immigration and criminal law, asylum and other humanitarian relief, as well as family-based immigration and naturalization.

Fellowship Proposal

We invite law students entering their third year and recent law school graduates to propose and

collaboratively develop innovative fellowship proposals for submission to fellowship programs for the 2024 – 2026 cycle. If awarded the fellowship, the fellow will work with SSYF legal staff to provide direct legal representation to recently arrived, non-detained unaccompanied minors and families, most of whom are seeking asylum, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, or both.

Potential fellowship applicants are encouraged to share project ideas that fall within SSYF's primary focus area of direct legal representation to recently arrived migrant families and unaccompanied minors. The fellowship candidate should articulate how their proposal advances Centro Legal's larger mission and harmonizes with the candidate's interests, background, and experiences. Centro Legal is particularly interested in applicants who have a demonstrated commitment to community lawyering, social justice, and advocating for or working with immigrant communities in Northern California. Centro Legal will gladly work with an applicant to develop a project that reflects the applicant's interests and background and responds to community needs.

Responsibilities

If the fellowship proposal is selected, while a comprehensive list of the fellow's responsibilities and job duties will depend on the nature of the fellowship project, the bulk of the project will center around the provision of direct legal services to nondetained, recently arrived immigrants (both migrant families and unaccompanied minors) in removal proceedings. We expect that the fellow will work closely with our partners at East Bay Area school districts and other nonprofit organizations. While the majority of SSYF's clients are monolingual Spanish speakers, a growing number of our clients speak Indigenous Guatemalan languages as their best (and sometimes only) language. Most of our Indigenous clients speak Mayan Mam, and we are fortunate to work with a full-time Spanish-Mam interpreter. For these reasons, fluency in Spanish is required to be considered for this opportunity.

Qualifications

First and foremost, the applicant must profoundly share Centro Legal's mission and vision of social justice. Qualifications include:

- ❖ Third-year law student or recent law school graduate intending to take the California State Bar in February or July 2024; ***or*** recently barred attorney admitted and in good standing with the California State Bar;
- ❖ Exposure to immigration law, including through law school clinics, internships, and/or pre-law school professional or personal experience with the immigration legal system;
- ❖ Fluency in Spanish;
- ❖ Excellent writing, research, analytical, and verbal communication skills;
- ❖ A demonstrated commitment to immigrant justice and public interest law;
- ❖ Demonstrated commitment to diversity within the office and a personal approach that values all individuals and respects differences regarding race, ethnicity, age, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, religion, ability, socio-economic circumstance, immigration status, and record of arrest or conviction, and

- ❖ Ability to work and meet clients in-person at our Fruitvale-based Oakland office, as well as regular travel to school campuses in Hayward, Oakland, and other East Bay Area communities.

Compensation and Benefits

This is a full-time, exempt position, with a salary of \$75,321 (salary increase for each year of post-J.D. experience). Centro Legal proudly is a unionized workplace, and fellows become part of the bargaining unit after six months of employment. We anticipate that this will be a two-year position that will conclude upon expiration of the fellowship term, but the fellow may apply and will be considered for any other available staff attorney positions that align with the conclusion of the fellowship.

We offer a competitive and comprehensive benefits package to include: medical, dental, vision, longterm disability and life insurance.

- ❖ Medical coverage (Kaiser) will be provided at Centro Legal's expense covering 100%, and 50% for dependents, spouses, and partners. Our alternative health plans with United Health Care at an additional premium cost.
- ❖ Additional Benefits include: Health Care FSA, Dependent Care FSA, commuter benefits, pet insurance, and Employee Assistance Plan.
- ❖ PTO: Vacation: 0-1 year 16 days per year, 1-2 year 18 days per year, over 2 years 23 days per year, (1) paid wellness days per month, 12 sick days per year.
- ❖ Office Closure: 12 holidays + Winter break is 8 work days, to include the period from December 24th through January 1st.

COVID 19 Policy

If selected for the fellowship, proof of completed Covid-19 vaccination to include both shots of a two-dose vaccination regimen, or one dose of a single-dose vaccine, will be required (except for reasonable accommodations due to medical and/or religious beliefs). All employees must provide HR with their vaccination QR Code by going to <https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov/>.

Application Process

Centro Legal will accept proposals through **Thursday, July 27, 2023**. Applicants should email application materials to jobs@centrolegal.org with the **subject line "Legal Fellowship Proposal - IR."** Applications should include the following:

- (1) A detailed cover letter that explains your interest in working with Centro Legal and the communities we serve as well as a description of your proposed project or your particular legal services interests in the area of immigrants' rights and immigrant justice;
- (2) Resume;
- (3) List of three references; and
- (4) A short legal writing sample.

Applications without a cover letter or writing sample will not be considered.

A Note On Our Organization's Mission and Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Centro Legal's mission includes advancing social, economic and racial justice. We are committed to fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion within and ensuring a workplace where all staff can flourish and grow professionally and well beyond. Our staff are the most important part of our ability to achieve our mission. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation, sustainability and our organization's success. Centro Legal de la Raza is an equal employment opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, pregnancy), gender, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, medical condition including genetic characteristics, mental or physical disability, military or veteran status, marital status, family responsibilities, caregiver status, sexual orientation, gender identity (including transgender status), gender expression, weight, height, linguistic characteristics (such as accent and limited English proficiency where not substantially job-related), citizenship status, status as a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, HIV/AIDS status, or any other basis prohibited by law. Centro Legal also prohibits discrimination based on a perception that an individual has any of the characteristics of the protected classes listed above, and further prohibits discrimination against an individual who is associated with a person who has, or is perceived to have, any of those characteristics.