

## **Council of State Governments-Justice Center Project Assistant-Courts Program**

**Location:** New York, NY

**Contact:** Courts Program Director

**Application Deadline:** Open until filled

The Justice Center is a national nonprofit organization that provides practical, nonpartisan advice and consensus-driven strategies, informed by available evidence, to increase public safety and strengthen communities. In general, the Justice Center works closely with legislative leaders, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, victim advocates, and others to develop consensus on various, often highly politicized, criminal justice issues and to translate this consensus into comprehensive reports, policy briefs, state and federal legislation, model policies, and innovative programs. The Justice Center not only develops written and web-based materials, but also provides on-the-ground technical assistance to cross-systems policymakers and practitioners from multiple systems (corrections, mental health, housing, etc.), in state and local jurisdictions.

The Courts Program at the Justice Center works with court-based practitioners and policymakers focused on the judiciary across the Justice Center's different topic areas. Current projects including the development of training materials for judges on how mental illness impacts the criminal justice system, training and technical assistance to courts-based planning and implementation projects at local and state-levels, and analysis of different types of court-ordered financial obligations. Like all Justice Center staff, the Courts Program staff are expected to be enthusiastic about learning and working in new specific sub-topics and media within this content area.

The Policy Assistant will work with a small team and will report to Courts Program Director in the Justice Center's National Initiatives Division. This position offers significant responsibility and could be an ideal position for those considering careers in criminal law or criminal justice policy. The Policy Assistant will work with a wide range of stakeholders focused on the courts, particularly in the areas of mental health and reentry. The Policy Assistant will support the work of the Program Director and other members of the Courts Program by maintaining project details, timelines, and website content, and strategizing with staff and technical consultants on ways of using the web to promote policy goals. The Policy Assistant will have responsibility for discrete aspects of different courts projects, including training and technical assistance areas; developing legislative and administrative policy options based on analysis of local/state criminal justice and behavioral health data; developing relevant, written materials for policymakers and practitioners; and coordinating and participating in politically sensitive meetings with high-ranking local, state, and federal officials, advocates, and other experts across the country. The Policy Associate will also assist with researching new funding opportunities and grant writing and will participate in Courts Program strategic planning sessions. Policy Assistants are

expected to be able to work quickly and accurately in writing, research, and development of presentation materials and to be developing analytical skills in this area.

**PROJECT ASSISTANT DUTIES:**

Specific responsibilities of the Project Assistant include but are not limited to:

- Performing significant research on complex issues, including relevant legislation, policy, and programs, and synthesizing the analysis in clear, concise writing;
- Preparing reports, briefs, memos, talking points, and op-eds on various criminal justice issues that will be submitted to the policymakers, practitioners, the media, the criminal justice field, and Justice Center colleagues;
- Ensuring that senior staff and, where applicable, Justice Center colleagues, consultants, or funders are aware of relevant project developments and that other work in the field is leveraged for the advancement of project goals;
- Actively supporting the planning and participating in policy-focused meetings of high-ranking government officials, advocates, and national experts, initially by developing agendas, providing support for senior policy staff, and describing agreements reached, and eventually by leading such meetings; and
- Developing a knowledge base in the project assistant's area(s) of policy work with room for exploring additional issue areas within criminal justice.

**PROJECT ASSISTANT REQUIREMENTS**

- Strong attention to detail and organizational skills
- Excellent analytical skills, research, writing, and editing skills;
- Strong oral communication skills, including the ability to effectively distill and present complex information in a concise way;
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including maturity, an ability to work independently and in a team setting, and a sense of humor;
- Efficient, organized work style and an ability to prioritize quickly and confidently and manage multiple deadlines;
- Willingness to travel, occasionally several times per month;
- At least one year of work experience, ideally, in the field of criminal justice or policy analysis or consulting
- A college degree (required)

**SALARY RANGE:**

Salary is commensurate with experience, and includes a generous benefits package.

**DEADLINE:**

Open until filled

**HOW TO APPLY:**

Interested individuals must submit the following materials to <https://secured.csg.org/csg/jobs>:

1. Cover letter
2. Résumé
3. Writing sample
4. Names and contact information for references (at least two).

**Applicants who do not submit all of these materials will not be considered.**

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