



## **The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice Seeks Applicants for Post-Graduate Legal Fellows**

The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice seeks dedicated, highly qualified second- and third-year law students to submit applications to the Institute for post-graduate public interest fellowships such as the Skadden Fellowship, Equal Justice Works Fellowship, Soros Justice Fellowship, or fellowships funded by your law school. Please submit all inquiries and applications to LaShawn Warren at [fellowships@njisj.org](mailto:fellowships@njisj.org). Applications should include a resume, writing sample, and cover letter. For project-based fellowships (Skadden, EJW, Soros, etc.), please submit a project proposal instead of a general cover letter.

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### ***Deadline for Applications: Rolling Basis***

### **The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice Legal Program**

The Institute has, in the seventeen years of its existence, developed a substantial record of achievements and a reputation as one of the most effective social justice organizations in the state and region. Called both a “think and do” tank and “an asset to the State,” the Institute employs a unique approach to addressing the challenges confronting New Jersey’s most vulnerable residents.

The Institute is a Newark-based urban research and advocacy organization dedicated to the advancement of New Jersey’s urban areas and residents. We pursue this agenda under three broad programmatic umbrellas: Equal Justice, Urban Asset Protection and Creation, Workforce Development and Education

The Institute advances this non-partisan agenda through policy-related research and analysis, development and implementation of model programs, wide-ranging advocacy efforts, and sustained public education. The Institute’s Legal Program deploys a range of tools in support of the entirety of the Institute’s agenda, including but not limited to litigation.

### **Litigation Activities**

The Institute uses litigation, when appropriate, to further its policy and programmatic goals, focusing on cases that raise significant legal issues and have broad policy implications. Some of our recent efforts include:

- Participating as *amicus curiae* before the New Jersey Supreme Court in a case that protects the parental rights of formerly incarcerated individuals
- Participating as *amicus curiae* before the New Jersey Supreme Court in a case that doubled the number of criminal defendants eligible for the state’s drug court program, an alternative to incarceration with an impressive record of reducing recidivism.
- Participating as *amicus curiae* in a case before the New Jersey Supreme Court seeking a broad reading of New Jersey’s criminal record expungement statute.
- Participating as *amicus curiae* in a case pending before the New Jersey Supreme Court seeking to narrow prosecutors’ discretion to waive children to adult, criminal court.
- Opposing the disenfranchisement of New Jersey parolees and probationers on state equal protection grounds.
- Challenging, on constitutional and Title VII grounds, the preclusion of those with criminal records from holding a certain type of position, based on the preclusion’s disparate racial impact.

## Other Legal Program Activities

The majority of the Institute's Legal Program activities fall outside of the litigation context and include: legislative and regulatory research and advocacy; policy research and advocacy; model program development; judicial process improvement efforts; consulting to government; serving on state and local commissions; collaborating with other state and national advocacy organizations, private law firms, law schools and law students; and serving as in-house counsel to the Institute. Some of our important past and current efforts in these areas include:

- Submitting a rulemaking petition to the Board of Public Utilities to reduce intrastate prison phone rates
- Submitting a rulemaking petition to the Attorney General and subsequently securing via negotiation a reduction in the use of solitary confinement in juvenile facilities.
- Drafting and securing passage of municipal and state "Ban the Box" legislation to improve employment opportunities for individuals with criminal records.
- Drafting and securing passage of a groundbreaking package of legislation in the New Jersey state legislature – called "a model for the nation" by The New York Times – which markedly improved New Jersey's prisoner reentry process.
- Securing an executive pardon from Governor Christie, where the criminal conviction threatened the client's ability to continue working.
- Helping to bring the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative to New Jersey and facilitating its implementation in Essex County, resulting in a 43% reduction in the county's juvenile detention population while maintaining public safety outcomes.
- Completing a groundbreaking analysis of New Jersey's juvenile waiver laws; using that report as momentum for the drafting of statewide juvenile waiver reform legislation.
- Designing an innovative program to use higher education construction to catalyze the hiring and long-term employment of historically excluded groups.

## Joining Us

Given the breadth of the Institute's legal work, attorneys who make for the best fit bring a broad range of interests and a willingness to participate in subject areas and use methodologies both within and beyond their experience. That said, experience in the following areas would be of particular relevance:

- Civil rights
- Government relations
- Housing
- Financial services
- Litigation
- Youth and family matters
- Criminal and juvenile justice
- Health care
- Economic development

When supervised by an attorney at an approved Legal Assistance Organization such as the Institute, New Jersey's Court Rules provide for the practice of law by lawyers who are members in good standing of the bars of states other than New Jersey and by graduates of ABA-approved law schools who have not yet taken the bar exam. Therefore, both deferred associates and practicing attorneys based in New York or other states are able to work with us without taking an additional bar exam.

For individuals who are looking to gain substantive skills and develop their professional networks while advancing social justice, Newark is a great place to be. It is less than 30 minutes by train from Manhattan, Hoboken, Jersey City, and Montclair. Newark itself is galvanized by its young and dynamic local leadership and boasts an admirable and effective spirit of collaboration among nonprofit organizations, law firms and local government officials.