

NEIGHBORHOOD DEFENDER SERVICE OF HARLEM
Social Worker, Civil Defense Practice

The Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem (NDS) is a community-based, client-centered, holistic public defense office located in Harlem, providing criminal, civil, and family representation. NDS Clients are represented by multidisciplinary teams including attorneys, advocates and social workers. NDS is now accepting applications for a bilingual English- and Spanish-speaking Social Worker for the Civil Defense Practice.

OVERVIEW

The Civil Defense Practice plays an integral role in NDS's fulfillment of its holistic mission. Our practice, consisting of immigration and civil practitioners, seeks to address the harsh collateral consequences stemming from interaction with the criminal legal and child welfare systems and to realize the right to counsel in civil proceedings. The Civil Defense Practice represents clients facing immigration proceedings, eviction, benefits revocation, employment barriers, property forfeiture, and reentry needs. The Social Worker will play an integral role in supporting clients and their legal cases through assessing social needs and connecting clients with crucial services as well as advocating for clients in various court and administrative forums.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The social worker will be part of an interdisciplinary team, including attorneys and other non-attorney advocates, to determine case strategies for clients. Additionally, the social worker will:

- Demonstrate energy, enthusiasm and ingenuity in working on challenging cases with court-involved clients experiencing an array of mental health needs;
- Conduct client interviews to assess social service needs, competency, crisis intervention and/or short term counseling;
- Work closely with team members to submit written advocacy and assessments to court for mitigation purposes as necessitated by case needs;
- Gather information to contribute to mitigation through conducting client interviews and obtaining and analyzing records;
- Work closely with clients to identify and secure placement of clients in programs to address problems such as mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, educational and vocational training needs;
- Communicate effectively with clients, their families, and agency case workers;
- Provide crisis intervention management;
- Conduct home visits when necessitated by client's needs; and
- At times, appear with attorneys and advocates to advocate on behalf of clients through testimony in Immigration and Housing Court as well as administrative proceedings.

QUALIFICATIONS

NDS is looking for a social worker with a demonstrated commitment to civil and immigration defense and social justice issues. In addition, the job requires energy, enthusiasm, a commitment to excellence and an unwavering commitment to clients. Applicants must:

- Demonstrate a desired commitment to indigent defense and social justice issues;
- Have a Master's Degree in Social Work;
- Have experience and interest in working with clients who have a wide range of mental health needs and/or cognitive abilities;

- Have Spanish-speaking ability and are comfortable working with clients in both English and Spanish;
- Possess strong organizational skills in order to navigate a fast-paced environment; and
- Be comfortable in a court environment.

COMPENSATION

Compensation is commensurate with experience and is in adherence to the NDS compensation scale. Full medical and dental benefits, as well as other benefits, are provided. The salary, benefits, and employment policies relevant to this position are governed by the CBA between NDS and the NDS Union, part of ALAA UAW 2325.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested applicants should email a cover letter and resume in a single PDF with the subject line, “Social Worker, Civil Defense Practice” to: eponder@ndsny.org. Due to the volume of applicants, only those selected for an interview will be contacted. For more information about NDS, please visit our website at www.neighborhooddefender.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.