



Position: Tenant Advocate

The Organization:

Chhaya CDC is a non-profit community development corporation based in the neighborhoods of Jackson Heights and Richmond Hill in Queens, New York. Founded in 2000, the organization is committed to addressing the housing and economic needs for low-income South Asian and Indo-Caribbean New Yorkers.

Chhaya's approach begins with providing direct services that meet critical needs within our community, while providing the tools and opportunities that allow individuals to shape their own futures and be resilient in the face of challenges. Core to the Chhaya's strategy is organizing and advocating for systemic changes that remove the barriers to well-being, housing stability, and economic mobility for South Asian and Indo-caribbean communities. For over 20 years, Chhaya has served tens of thousands of individuals and led the charge on key policy issues such as basement legalization, language access, tenants rights, and more.

The Position:

Chhaya CDC seeks an energetic and dynamic tenant advocate to spearhead and lead its tenant organizing, counseling, and advocacy efforts around tenant rights and affordable housing in New York City. This role will be a critical part of the Housing Justice team and will report to the Director of Housing Justice.

The role will focus on organizing and counseling tenants across multiple communities in the city (with a primary focus in Queens), help coach and train future tenant leaders, and participate and represent Chhaya in city and statewide campaigns. The organizer will have the opportunity to work with the Bangladeshi Tenant Union, the first South Asian Tenant Union in the country launched by Chhaya in 2019.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Counseling

- Provide one-on-one counseling to tenants facing harassment, eviction, illegal rent increases, arrears, or other related issues
- Advocate for tenants' rights by communicating with landlords and management companies to address issues and violations
- Accompany tenants to housing court, providing guidance, and interpretation when needed

Organizing

- Organize South Asian, immigrant, low-income, and other marginalized tenants and allies to build power and address issues related to (but not limited to) tenant harassment, poor



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Community Development Corporation

living conditions, predatory equity, rent hikes, and other tactics unscrupulous landlords use to expedite community displacement

- Educate tenants and neighborhood residents on tenants' rights, fair housing, gentrification, and anti-displacement strategies, through community organizing, one-on-one counseling, workshops and legal clinics
- Lead Chhaya's organizing, outreach and advocacy efforts on tenant rights, predatory equity, and other emerging issues in the community
- Participate in coalition efforts on housing rights
- Manage Chhaya's relationships with tenants, partner organizations, coalitions, electeds, and community members

Program Administration

- Prepare and manage reports relevant to Chhaya's housing and tenant organizing work;
- Assist with other related tasks, as needed
- Organize legal clinics in partnership with legal providers and coordinate legal assistance for individual tenants

Core Competencies

To perform the job successfully, an individual should demonstrate the following competencies:

- Highly motivated self-starter and committed to social justice
- Outstanding interpersonal and communication skills
- Must be a team player
- Strong public speaking and writing skills
- Strong analytical skills
- Experience and willingness to work on base building, door knocking, and organizing
- Desire to learn and open to challenges
- Good judgement with strong ethical values
- Reliable and trustworthy
- Critical thinker, problem-solver, creative, open-minded, and flexible
- Comfortable working in diverse, multicultural, and immigrant communities
- Respectful and supportive of multi-ethnic, multi-faith, and multilingual communities

Qualifications:

- Experience in community organizing, with a proven track-record of base-building and campaign management
- Bilingual in English and a South Asian language (Bangla, Punjabi, Urdu, Nepali, Tibetan or Hindi)
- Highly organized with the proven ability to work under tight deadlines, prioritize, and handle multiple priorities simultaneously



- Knowledge of, and familiarity with, South Asian and Indo-Caribbean immigrant communities in New York City
- Experience working with tenants or on housing issues preferred
- Experience with public policy analysis and advocacy preferred

Schedule: This is a full-time position. Must be available to work flexible hours (evening and weekends).

Reports to: Director of Housing Justice

Salary: Commensurate with experience. Excellent benefits including generous vacation, health and dental insurance, 403b Retirement Plan.

How to Apply: Send a CV, cover letter, and three references to careers@chhayacdc.org with the email subject line: "Tenant Advocate - [FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME]".

Chhaya CDC is an equal opportunity employer that celebrates diversity. Chhaya does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or any other basis covered by appropriate law. All employment is decided on the basis of qualifications, merit, and organizational need.