



## Director of Litigation Location: New York City

# About The Sylvia Rivera Law Project

## PROVIDING EQUAL ACCESS TO SOCIAL, HEALTH, AND LEGAL SERVICES

**The Sylvia Rivera Law Project (SRLP)** works to guarantee that all people are free to self-determine their gender identity and expression, regardless of income or race, and without facing harassment, discrimination, or violence. SRLP is a collective organization founded on the understanding that gender self-determination is inextricably intertwined with racial, social, and economic justice. SRLP seeks to increase the political voice and visibility of low-income people and people of color who are transgender, intersex, or gender non-conforming. SRLP works to improve access to respectful and affirming social, health, and legal services for our communities. SRLP believes that in order to create meaningful political participation and leadership, we must have access to basic means of survival and safety from violence.

SRLP functions as a **multi-racial, inter-generational** collective of people committed to a broad understanding of gender self-determination. As a collective, they recognize that creating structures that model their vision of a more just society is essential. They believe that in the struggle for social justice, change is often perceived as a product and not a process. SRLP seeks to use a non-hierarchical structure to support work that redistributes power and wealth for a more just society.

## AREAS OF FOCUS

- 1 To provide access to free, quality, respectful, affirming legal services for low-income transgender, intersex, and gender non-conforming people.
- 2 To use training, public education, policy reform, and precedent-setting lawsuits to end state-sanctioned and institutional discrimination, violence, and coercion on the basis of gender identity and expression, which we understand as inextricably related to race and class.
- 3 To build a non-hierarchical collective organization that internally practices what we're struggling for by developing the leadership of low-income transgender, intersex, and gender non-conforming people of color.
- 4 To participate in the larger movement for racial, social, and economic justice that includes gender liberation and prioritizes the issues of those most affected by the systems of oppression under which we live.



## The Opportunity

**The Director of Litigation** will be responsible for providing impact litigation, advocacy, and membership outreach and education. The Director of Litigation will report to all members of the Direct Services Team, Staff, and Collective. The Director of Litigation will direct and be in charge of all impact litigation at SRLP which will cover all aspects of SRLP's work, including Survival and Self Determination, the Immigrant Justice Project, and the Prisoner's Justice Project. In addition, the Director of Litigation will be expected to provide direct legal services to a limited number of clients in our Prisoner's Justice Project.

### Responsibilities include:

#### Legal:

- ❖ Provide direct legal services to a caseload of 10 low-income TGNC clients per fiscal year as part of our Prisoner's Justice work which includes representation in a number of courts and administrative fora, mainly in grievance hearings, Supreme Court, and the City and State Commission on Human Rights.
- ❖ Prepare all aspects of your client's cases, assess the viability of the case, prepare and file court pleadings and responsive papers, prepare clients for court appearances, appear with your client and advocate during trial, interview or motion practice.
- ❖ Regularly meet clients in their homes or, when necessary, in hospitals, jails and prisons.
- ❖ Advocate with agencies to change policies impacting our low-income, people of color, immigrant and/or incarcerated TGNC community members.
- ❖ Drafting "Know Your Rights" materials and conduct training for community members and service providers.
- ❖ Develop litigation strategies by following the lead of directly impacted people and organizers.

#### Collective:

- ❖ Attend weekly co-supervision meetings with staff.
- ❖ Attend weekly case-list meetings with the Direct Services Team.
- ❖ Participate in anti-oppression work.
- ❖ Attend weekly all staff meetings.
- ❖ Co-create and participate in DST and organizational budgeting and work plans.
- ❖ Joining two of our collective teams.
- ❖ Attend monthly collective meetings and quarterly retreats.



## The Opportunity (continued)

### DST-Related:

- ❖ Co-direct robust internship, pro bono projects, and advocacy campaigns with Movement Building Team.
- ❖ Co-supervise the Director of Legal Services, Director of Client Services, and the Movement Building Team to brainstorm and develop impact litigation strategies to remove barriers to TGNC liberation.
- ❖ Work directly with our Director of Client Services to conduct intake clinics as well as return calls, emails, and other inquiries from community members.

### Collaborative Projects:

- ❖ Draft “Know Your Rights” materials and conduct trainings for community members and service providers.
- ❖ Provide legal observation at various SRLP events and actions.

### Skills and Experience

- ❖ Law degree and admission to the New York State Bar.
- ❖ At least six years as an attorney or legal advocate working within immigration law, prisoner’s rights, civil litigation, and/or administrative law.
- ❖ A demonstrated commitment to gender self-determination, transformative justice, abolition, movement litigation, racial, economic, and disability justice.
- ❖ Extensive experience working with low-income TGNC communities of color.
- ❖ Experience and commitment working with organizers and within movements.
- ❖ Excellent legal research and writing skills.
- ❖ Ability to create public education materials centered in SRLP’s values and mission.
- ❖ Strong verbal communications skills and experience in working in collaborative environments.
- ❖ Strong interest in implementing creative litigation strategies.
- ❖ Excellent time management skills and the ability to manage complex cases and competing deadlines. Must be able to communicate boundaries effectively and clearly.
- ❖ The ability to communicate effectively and compassionately with individuals from diverse backgrounds—including transgender and gender non-conforming people, people living with HIV/AIDS, people with mental illness, and people who have experienced significant trauma.
- ❖ Strong supervision skills.

**The Director of Litigation** will be responsible for executing this special project:

## Prisoner Justice Project

The Prisoner Justice Project at SRLP supports low income transgender people and transgender people of color involuntarily held in prison and jail obtain life-sustaining services. Because transgender and gender non-conforming individuals are disproportionately profiled and targeted by police for arrest, our communities are overrepresented in the criminal system. While detained, transgender and gender non-conforming individuals are targeted for sexual assault, repeated and unlawful searches, and prolonged segregation. The Project provides direct legal services to improve conditions of confinement and decrease the number of individuals held in prison and jail as well as providing systemic advocacy and education sharing to incarcerated individuals and support to attorneys, advocates, and loved ones on the outside.

## People Served

The Prisoner Justice Project offers direct legal services to people in New York City jails and in New York State prisons. Due to the small size of SRLP, they are unable to offer assistance to people in jails outside of New York City or in federal prisons in New York State.

**The Prisoner Justice Project provides assistance in civil matters and provides the following services:**

- ❖ Name changes to incarcerated individuals
- ❖ Assistance with changing names on government documents while incarcerated
- ❖ Assistance obtaining hormones
- ❖ Assistance obtaining gender appropriate undergarments
- ❖ Assistance preparing for parole appearances
- ❖ Advocacy and support around sexual violence and violations of the Prison Rape Elimination Act
- ❖ Advocacy and support around transfers and requests for alternate housing
- ❖ Advocacy and support around conditions of solitary
- ❖ Advocacy and support around mental health care needs and assessments
- ❖ Obtaining correct sentence calculations
- ❖ Review and appeal of disciplinary solitary confinement (Tier IIIs)
- ❖ Other civil matters concerning conditions of confinement



## The Candidate (continued)

### Preferred Qualifications:

- ❖ Fluency in Spanish;
- ❖ Bar admission in the Southern and/or Eastern District of New York;
- ❖ Experience in drafting and filing on a state or federal level;
- ❖ Experience in criminal defense;
- ❖ Experience with legal strategic planning;
- ❖ Experience working in non-hierarchical settings;
- ❖ Knowledge and practice in collective decision making processes.

### Hours and Compensation:

This position is a full-time, salaried position with medical, dental and optical benefits as well as three weeks paid vacation and a monthly healthcare affirming reimbursement stipend. 40 hours/week, some evenings and weekends.

Salary: \$100,000/year.

Consistent with our values as a collective, all staff receive salaries based on the same hourly rate. An increased salary is possible based on need, such as for people supporting family members.





Applications should be submitted at

<https://driwaterstonehc.com/position/director-of-litigation-sylvia-rivera-law-project>

All first-round interviews for this position will take place via video conference with DRiWaterstoneHC.

DRiWaterstone is a women founded and led executive search firm recognized by Forbes magazine as one of the leading executive recruiting firms in the U.S. With a focus on purpose and mission-driven organizations, we provide executive search and strategic consulting services to help regional, national, and international clients grow, thrive, and excel.

**The Sylvia Rivera Law Project is an equal-opportunity employer:**

*SRLP is an equal opportunity employer. Trans, gender non-conforming and intersex people and people of color, people with disabilities, formerly incarcerated people, and people from low-income backgrounds are strongly encouraged to apply.*