

EAST BAY CHILDREN’S LAW OFFICES
JOB ANNOUNCEMENT FOR
PROBATE GUARDIANSHIP ATTORNEY

ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

East Bay Children’s Law Offices, Inc. (EBCLO) provides court-appointed legal representation to children and youth who are parties in Alameda County Juvenile Dependency Court proceedings and guardianship cases in Alameda County Probate Court. Formerly a division of the Alameda County Public Defender’s Office, we became a stand-alone non-profit in 2009 establishing a holistic practice advocating for children both in and out of court. As a multi-disciplinary team of attorneys and social workers, we believe that children should be seen *and* heard.

At EBCLO we also understand that laws are not colorblind. We recognize that we must work to dismantle structural racism and implicit and explicit bias that leads to disproportionality and disparate legal outcomes for BIPOC and LBGTQ+ children in Alameda County. We work to remedy these structural inequities, and to ensure that each client is treated with the respect and care they deserve. We honor our client’s stories, heritage, culture, and traditions and ensure they are seen and heard throughout the process. We value diverse lived experiences, backgrounds and perspectives. EBCLO strives to reflect the East Bay community in its staff, leadership and Board of Directors.

Mission Statement:

Our mission is to protect and defend the rights of children and youth through effective, vigorous and compassionate legal advocacy. EBCLO strives to provide a voice for children in the juvenile dependency system and to promote positive outcomes for them.

JOB DESCRIPTION

We are looking for a full-time attorney committed to serving children and families in marginalized communities to join our dynamic team working in a fast-paced client driven environment. The probate guardianship attorney will be responsible for a caseload representing children to whom EBCLO has been appointed to represent pursuant to Probate Code section 1470. The position requires court appearances, trial work, regular client contact and collaboration with EBCLO’s probate guardianship social worker. Representation includes client interviews in a variety of settings including but not limited to office, home and school; providing ongoing evaluation and investigation of the cases; preparing for and participating in all hearings, including producing a written report for most hearings; working with the Court Investigators and Examiners offices; and participating in mediations and other alternative dispute resolution efforts. EBCLO provides frequent trainings to build legal knowledge, strengthen courtroom skills and develop a deeper understanding of relevant issues affecting children and families and also provides an annual stipend for outside trainings.

Primary Duties:

- Represent clients in probate guardianship proceedings when EBCLO appointed by the Probate Court pursuant to Probate Code section 1470.
- Interview clients in their homes/communities, advise clients on legal rights, legal proceedings, and appropriate decisions regarding guardianship or custody issues; make preliminary evaluation of conflict.

- Take appropriate legal steps to best represent clients; advise clients on the proper course of action; represent clients at all phases of probate guardianship proceedings, engage in client, lay witness and expert witness contact.
- Investigation and prepare cases and subpoena witnesses determined to be helpful to the case; analyze facts in light of relevant legal considerations; conduct legal research; prepare litigation strategy, prepare legal memoranda, motions and briefs, and argue specific legal motions and pleadings; litigate evidentiary hearings; examine and cross-examine witnesses and challenge their qualifications; argue cases.
- Conduct contested and non-contested appearances, hearings, and trials for parties in probate guardianship proceedings, and potentially seek appropriate appellate relief from decision of the probate court by preparing and arguing writs and appeals.
- Visit homes and other placements for children, evaluating and reporting on the same subject to attorney-client privilege and as required; correspond and communicate with interested parties such as relatives, parents, court investigators and social services personnel with regard to placements, the status and legal rights of clients; and handle all legal steps needed to protect client's interests.
- Together with the EBCLO social worker, identify service needs of guardianship clients and their proposed guardians including making referrals to community resources, engaging the family with Social Services Agencies, and more.
- Assume administrative responsibility for securing attorney's fees at the conclusion of each matter, working with the Court, County Counsel and any other relevant parties.
- Participate in regular meetings with EBCLO staff and participate in general office upkeep duties, including computer data entry of case information and time keeping.
- Appear before public and private groups, as requested, to make presentations and answer questions on the functions of EBCLO.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Active Member in good standing of the State Bar of California
- Strong written and verbal skills.
- Demonstrated interest and ability in working with children and youth, and with low-income diverse ethnic communities. Minimum of five years representing children in dependency or probate court preferred.
- Ability to work independently and be self-motivated.
- Ability to drive with valid driver's license, auto insurance, and access to use of an automobile as needed.

Knowledge and Abilities:

EBCLO prefers attorneys who meet the qualifications of Rule of Court 7.1102(a) with experience in probate, juvenile dependency or family law custody experience. Alternatively, EBCLO provides the requisite supervision and professional consultation to attorneys who cannot satisfy 7.1102(a) but would be eligible under 7.1102(b). Knowledge of the principles of indigent defense and California statutory and constitutional law as well as knowledge of related areas including forensics, psychology, substance abuse and child development is appreciated.

Ability to:

- Communicate effectively with clients, lay witnesses, expert witnesses, co-workers, and other lawyers and Judges.
- Present legal arguments clearly, logically and effectively in oral and written form.
- Maintain accurate records, logs, and case files including daily time keeping.
- Use good judgment and make appropriate decisions even in a stressful environment.
- Exercise interpersonal sensitivity and flexibility.
- Support and maintain a collegial and cooperative office culture which promotes equity and the passionate representation of clients.
- Establish working relationships with clients of diverse racial, cultural, socio-economic, SOGIE and age backgrounds and inspire their confidence.

SALARY: Commensurate with experience and ranging from \$85,169 to \$124,345 annually. EBCLO also provides full health, dental, vision and acupuncture benefits for employees and pays 25% of dependent coverage and provides life insurance and a 403(b) retirement plan. Our modern office space across the street from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline is surrounded by windows, with high ceilings, and outdoor balcony access with a view of San Francisco. There is also a free gym and shower in the building open before and after work M-F.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Review of candidates will begin immediately and continue until position is filled.

TO APPLY: Send cover letter, resume, and a list of three references to: jobs@ebclo.org Please specify “Probate Staff Attorney” in subject line. The majority of EBCLO’s clients are youth of color impacted by or living in poverty. To best serve our clients, we are constantly striving for a workplace which supports diversity, inclusion and equity and in which differences are acknowledged and valued. **In your cover letter, please explain how your perspective, background, culture and/or lived experience contributes to your ability to promote equitable practices in our advocacy for clients and within our organization.**

The East Bay Children’s Law Offices is an equal opportunity employer and an ADA accessible facility. The East Bay Children’s Law Offices values and promotes diversity. Applications encouraged regardless of race, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, age or disability.