

Maryland Legal Aid
Chief Operating Officer
Position Announcement

Maryland Legal Aid seeks an innovative, experienced **Chief Operating Officer (COO)** who will work with the Executive Director to support its mission to deliver high-quality legal services with high impact to low-income Marylanders. Since 1911, Maryland Legal Aid has provided high-quality legal services to low-income people and communities, and vulnerable individuals – helping to remedy their civil legal issues and become empowered to overcome challenges, achieve stability, independence, and achieve their goals. From deep connections to clients and communities, it identifies and seeks to remedy systemic barriers. Although the position will be based in Maryland Legal Aid’s Baltimore headquarters, the Chief Operating Officer will oversee the operations of this nonprofit legal services law firm with 12 offices throughout the state and more than 270 staff.

POSITION OVERVIEW:

Maryland Legal Aid (MLA) seeks a mission-driven leader to serve as its Chief Operating Officer. First and foremost, the COO must demonstrate a deep commitment to serving low-income Marylanders through high-quality, high-impact services. With oversight for the areas of budget and finance, grants and compliance, human resources, IT, and physical plant for its 12 offices across the state, the COO is an integral part of the leadership team and serves as a thought partner to the Executive Director and key leader of organizational culture. In this role, the COO works with the Executive Director and the Legal Director to help develop MLA’s strategic plan and ensure that all of MLA’s operations work together to support its strategic objectives. With a human-centered focus and an understanding that advocacy and delivery of services to clients is paramount, the COO plays a critical role in the refinement, design, and integration of organization-wide, cross-team systems, processes, and data development to ensure alignment with goals and increase operational efficiency. MLA’s incoming COO will have the business, communication, and relationship skills, and personal confidence to inspire and motivate each member of the Operations team to work collaboratively to support the organization’s important mission. The COO serves as a key member of the leadership team and reports directly to the Executive Director.

ABOUT MARYLAND LEGAL AID:

Maryland Legal Aid is a private, non-profit law firm that provides free, civil legal services to low-income individuals in Baltimore City and Maryland’s 23 counties from 12 full-service offices. The firm provides life-changing legal assistance to clients in a wide range of matters including, but not limited to, family, housing, government benefits, healthcare, employment, and consumer law. MLA also represents children in CINA (Child in Need of Assistance) proceedings in 22 jurisdictions.

Other vulnerable populations, such as homeowners facing foreclosure, migrant and seasonal farm workers, people with developmental and mental health disabilities, nursing home and assisted living residents, veterans seeking benefits and assistance with related legal issues, and individuals with expungable criminal records, also receive representation through specials projects.

MLA is dedicated to preserving the basic human needs and basic human rights of clients, particularly as they navigate the justice system. MLA staff, with the help of pro bono attorneys, its community partners, and general supporters, play an important role in ensuring that the legal playing field is leveled so that those most in need achieve equal access to justice. It is because of this diverse support that MLA ensures that the voices of tens of thousands of economically disadvantaged and vulnerable Marylanders are heard every year. To learn more about Maryland Legal Aid and its impact please visit <https://mdlab.org/>.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Supervise the MLA's financial team.
- Working closely with the ED, Director of Finance, and other key executive team members, ensure operational systems are optimally designed to support the MLA mission and advance the goals of the strategic plan.
- Lead DEI-related activities including initiating and maintaining a diverse, equitable and inclusive (DEI) culture, adopting diverse hiring practices, and promoting cultural competency among staff.
- Work closely with the ED, Legal Director, and other members of the senior management team to create, implement, and roll out plans for operational processes, internal infrastructures, reporting systems, and company policies all designed to foster transparency, clarity, and consistency within the organization.
- Motivate, inspire and encourage employees at all levels to develop and implement programs intended to foster employee morale.
- Affirmatively encourage and seek staff input on operational matters. to foster a supportive and collaborative culture.
- Promote employee professional development for all staff including providing opportunities for growth and development and coaching. Regularly consult with the Legal Director regarding professional development needs for legal staff.
- Partner with the Executive Director, the Legal Director, and other staff to maintain positive relationships with client organizations, funders, peer organizations, government entities and representatives, the legal community, and the public.
- Work with the Legal Director to support the implementation of needs assessments and program quality assessment tools.
- Assure the financial obligations and the fiduciary responsibilities of MLA as a nonprofit are met and ensure agency compliance with all applicable rules, policies, procedures, laws, and regulations.
- Oversee and ensure compliance with funder reporting requirements.

- Work with the Legal Director to develop and use metrics, data dashboards, and other integrated processes to contribute to measuring outcomes, assessing the efficacy of MLA services and operations, and identifying areas for improvement.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Advanced degree required; JD highly preferred.
- 10 years' experience in legal services and/or other nonprofit organizations with management and/or supervisory experience in one or more of the following areas:
 - Management of the delivery of legal services.
 - Process improvement and/or change management to enhance organizational culture and efficiency while ensuring excellent client/customer service.
 - Nonprofit financial management.
 - Grant process oversight from application and budget development to contract requirements to reporting.
- The ability to support a strategic planning process and identify when and how data is important or useful.
- Experience with government funding sources and compliance.
- Highly organized with the ability to work effectively in a multi-site, unionized, mission-driven organization.
- Supervisory experience with the ability to motivate, advise, coach, and give constructive feedback to staff at all levels.
- Excellent oral and written communications skills.
- Superior interpersonal and relationship-building skills; ability to maintain a positive, professional, and service-oriented demeanor toward a variety of stakeholders, working from or located in various geographical locations.

ATTRIBUTES:

- Analytic and decisive decision-maker with the ability to prioritize and communicate to staff
- A commitment to transparency.
- Demonstrates the highest level of professional and ethical conduct.
- Sound judgment and sensitivity to, and preservation of, highly confidential information.
- A self-motivated team player with an energetic, flexible, and creative approach; strong decision-making ability; and attention to detail.
- Ability to inspire and motivate others to achieve common goals.
- Willingness to roll up own sleeves to ensure timely and quality completion of necessary work.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS:

In addition to a competitive base salary of \$165,000 - \$180,000, MLA also provides employees with a generous benefits package that includes health, dental, vision, life insurance, a 401(k)-retirement plan, four weeks of paid time off, paid sick leave, 14 paid holidays and more!

TO APPLY:

Maryland Legal Aid has retained the services of Scion Executive Search, a national executive search firm specializing in mission-driven organization recruitment, to assist in conducting this important search. For immediate consideration, please apply with your resume and cover letter formatted in MS Word via: <https://www.scionstaffing.com/job/8945>

Please address applications to:
Krista Sietsema, Executive Search Principal
Scion Executive Search
(888) 487-8850 x140

Review of applications, nominations, and expressions of interest will begin immediately and continue on a confidential basis until an appointment is made.

MLA is committed to equity, justice, and inclusion. As an equal opportunity employer, MLA seeks to hire employees from diverse backgrounds and perspectives that are reflective of the communities we serve, including people with disabilities, minorities, women, and members of traditionally underrepresented groups.

ABOUT OUR FIRM:

Scion Executive Search (www.scionexecutivesearch.com) is a national award-winning executive search firm! Since 2006, we have had the pleasure of successfully placing hundreds of exceptional leaders to organizations with incredible missions and programs. Through our innovative team building and recruitment solutions, we seamlessly bridge the gap in interim and executive searches. Our track record and recruitment process has made us one of the top recruitment firms in the nation.

We are proud to be part of the **Forbes** lists of the Best Executive Search Firms and the Best Recruitment Firms in America. Additionally, we have been recognized as a recruitment leader by **ClearlyRated**, as well as a top recruitment firm by **The Business Times** for over ten years running. More information about Scion Executive Search can be found online [here](#).



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