



CHILDHOOD LEAD ACTION PROJECT

JOB OPENING: COMMUNITY ORGANIZER - LEAD POISONING (PROVIDENCE, CENTRAL FALLS)

FULL TIME (35 hrs/wk)

SALARY: \$36,000-\$40,000/yr, depending on experience

The Childhood Lead Action Project is looking for a full-time Community Organizer to coordinate grassroots advocacy campaigns aimed at eliminating lead poisoning in Rhode Island. The new organizer will take primary responsibility for staffing our existing activist coalition based in Providence and assisting with related community education and outreach activities. They will also play a supporting role with similar work in Central Falls and other areas of the state.

This is an exciting job for someone who believes that it is possible to change deeply entrenched social problems when groups of people directly affected by injustice come together to hold those in power accountable and demand meaningful reforms. The Childhood Lead Action Project is a great fit for someone who cares deeply about social justice, believes in sharing power and responsibility with others, and who wants to work on system change that will bring wide-reaching benefits to local families.

The Childhood Lead Action Project believes that every child deserves a safe place to play, learn, and grow, and that includes safety from lead. Although our state has made tremendous progress reducing childhood lead poisoning rates over the last few decades, far too many children are still at risk of exposure. Low-income families, people of color, and refugees unfairly face a higher risk of lead exposure, on top of other challenges and forms of discrimination. Lead is all around us - in paint on old houses, contaminated soil, and pipes scattered throughout the drinking water delivery system. However, lead poisoning can be prevented if these sources are removed or covered up properly. We believe this can happen for our whole community if people have access to information, technical training, and financial assistance - and if landlords are required to keep homes lead safe.

In the past, we have won significant victories in all four of these areas. We are proud of these accomplishments, but know this is not enough. We are now working to make the most of current laws and resources and shine a light on the gaps that still remain, such as the clearly unmet needs of undocumented immigrants and others fearful of interaction with the legal system. In general, we are working to increase the supply of safe, affordable housing and build the political and social power of families affected by lead poisoning.

Specific campaign goals currently include:

- Systematic, fair, and effective enforcement of lead safety requirements for rental housing, with steps taken to support tenants in the process and protect them from landlord retaliation, and to ensure that lower-income landlords receive extra help. General landlord accountability to tenants, especially in cases where tenants are uncomfortable requesting or accepting help from government agencies is important. (Campaign steps could include: working w/ tenants to investigate and expose serious cases of retaliation and negligence to the media)
- More financial resources to help low-income homeowners (including landlords) afford repair work needed to keep their properties safe (state and federal policy)
- Systems and practices that will connect existing lead safety resources (e.g., homeowner grants, legal consultation for tenants, free lead safety training for painters and others) to people and communities who need help the most have faced an unfair proportion of the problem in the past
- Regular coordination and stronger partnerships between agencies with enforcement responsibilities and those providing lead abatement assistance (and related services), and systems that will connect these agencies' resources

The organizer will be responsible for a variety of activities to support campaign and organizational goals. Major advocacy campaign decisions will be made together by coalition members and staff.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Recruit and provide initial orientation and training to volunteer activists, with special effort made to engage families affected by lead poisoning/lead hazards
- Drive campaign momentum by providing staff support for coalition meetings and activities (scheduling, reminders/turnout, agenda prep, facilitation, etc.)
- Provide structure for focused, inclusive, and fun process as coalition members work to set goals, choose effective organizing tactics, and evaluate/celebrate progress as a group
- Arrange for formal and informal educational opportunities for coalition members, as needs arise (for example, skill-sharing among group members, presentations/Q&A sessions by staff members, etc.)
- Communicate effectively with decision-makers and partner agencies on behalf of the organization, and support coalition members in doing the same
- Participate in meetings, protests, hearings, and other activities planned by coalition, and help coalition members prepare, participate, and reflect on their experiences
- Participate in community outreach and education regarding tenants' rights, financial assistance for lead abatement for homeowners, and other specific topics related to lead poisoning prevention and safe, affordable housing access (could include: door knocking, house parties, community group presentations, more)
- Maintain organized, accurate records and assist supervisor with reporting on activities and accomplishments to various audiences
- Other tasks, as needed, interested, and assigned by Executive Director

TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

We value learning and growth highly at the Childhood Lead Action Project. The Community Organizer will receive ongoing training and supervision from our Executive Director, with additional support from coworkers. Initial training will include assigned readings, discussions, in-person classes, online tutorials, research assignments, and opportunities to shadow or interview a variety of lead professionals and other contacts. Ongoing training will include occasional opportunities to attend conferences and workshops. Depending on the new staff member's experience, training topics will include: Childhood Lead Action Project resources, rules, culture, and history; causes and effects of lead poisoning; organizing tactics and strategy; environmental justice/health equity; history of lead poisoning policy and activism; state and local government; short and long-term lead poisoning prevention methods; lead poisoning prevention law and policy; and relevant research methods. We encourage all staff to reflect on their own personal learning styles and goals and share this with the Executive Director so that assignments can be tailored to needs and strengths.

BENEFITS

Generous benefits package, reflecting our strong commitment to providing a sustainable work/life balance, includes:

- Health and dental insurance (premiums covered 100% by employer for full-time employees)
- Paid vacation, holiday, sick, and personal days after 3-month trial period, with vacation time increase after 2 and 4 years employment
- Opportunity to participate in a retirement plan, with employer contribution after 2 years employment
- Reimbursement for miles driven for required work activities at standard (federal) rate

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Our office is in a beautiful restored Victorian in the West End of Providence, right on several bus lines. Each staff member has a desk, computer, phone, and office supplies. We share a mini kitchen w/ refrigerator, microwave, and toaster. There are also several tasty, reasonably affordable places to grab lunch within walking distance (diner, coffee shop, Guyanese restaurant, Guatemalan restaurant, fruit stand, pizza). Staff are not required to set identical schedules, but we do plan our time so that everyone will be here together on as regular a basis as possible within general office hours. This gives us the opportunity to teach and learn from each other, build trust and community, and work together towards shared goals. It makes it possible for a small staff to be widely accessible and responsive to community members and organizational partners, as a group. Of our 5 current staff members, 3 have worked for the Childhood Lead Action Project for over 10 years.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Community organizing experience (paid or unpaid) strongly preferred
- Bilingual (Spanish/English) fluency strongly preferred
- Excellent verbal and interpersonal skills
- Highly organized and dependable
- Able and willing to work nights and weekends to accommodate community member schedules and needs
- Driver's license and regular access to a car (for meeting families in different areas of the state, providing rides to

meetings, actions, etc.)

- Able to help others identify and address patterns of racism, classism, and similar problems
- Able to facilitate respectful and genuine community-building and decision-making within diverse groups
- Comfortable with public speaking, media interviews, door-to-door canvassing, and meeting lots of new people on a regular basis
- Computer skills (ability to use common office programs, troubleshoot typical office hardware and software problems, and learn to use technology that is new to you)
- Basic research skills, including the ability to identify the most important questions to be answered for a project and evaluate quality of information sources
- Experience teaching adults (in any context) preferred
- Familiarity with Rhode Island/Rhode Island communities very helpful, especially Providence and Central Falls
- Knowledge of the following topics helpful (gained from school, work, or other life experiences):
 - Environmental justice/environmental health/health equity
 - Housing safety, tenants' rights
 - RI state and municipal government
 - Lead poisoning/lead poisoning prevention law & policy
 - Refugee resettlement and immigration system in U.S.
 - Health and social services available to low-income families in RI

HOW TO APPLY

The Childhood Lead Action Project is an equal opportunity employer. **People of color, women, and LGBT individuals are strongly encouraged to apply.**

Send cover letter and resume to laura@leadsafekids.org. Application period open until position is filled.

2/11/20