



Executive Director
National Health Law Program
Washington, DC

THE SEARCH

The National Health Law Program (NHeLP), the nationally recognized leader in advancing health rights for low-income and underserved populations, is seeking an energetic, strategic, and collaborative Executive Director to guide the organization through this challenging era for health justice and Medicaid advocacy. NHeLP is seeking a leader with a proven track record in organizational management, fundraising, and relationship building.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will lead a dedicated team of more than 60 staff members located across the United States, including at offices in Washington, DC; Los Angeles, CA; and Chapel Hill, NC. The Executive Director will oversee an annual budget of approximately \$13.7 million and guide NHeLP's strategic, operational, programmatic, and financial functions. This leadership transition follows the planned retirement of Elizabeth G. Taylor, who has successfully led NHeLP and advanced its mission since 2014.

The next Executive Director will inherit a mission-driven and growing organization, supported by a team of deeply committed staff who have enhanced its impact across the nation. NHeLP is an organization that is truly "punching above its weight." The next Executive Director will be charged with advancing NHeLP's external presence by pursuing a bold and compelling vision; leading the development of the organization's next strategic plan; ensuring that resources are aligned with mission-critical priorities; and strengthening existing revenue streams while cultivating new sources of support. Central to this work is a steadfast commitment to health equity and health justice. The next Executive Director must lead with clarity, courage, and compassion, positioning NHeLP and increasing its visibility as an even more powerful national voice for health justice.

The preferred candidate will bring a deep and demonstrated commitment to social justice. This individual will possess a sophisticated understanding of the systemic barriers that impact low-income and underserved populations, communities of color, and other disadvantaged groups, and will champion strategies that center the voices, leadership, and needs of those most affected. NHeLP's next leader will have a proven track record of building inclusive teams, empowering staff, and effectively managing a workforce that primarily engages remotely. Experience in fundraising from foundations and individual donors, as well as expertise in marketing, branding, and board engagement, will be essential.

The National Health Law Program has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist the Board of Directors with this important endeavor. Inquiries, nominations, and applications should be directed in confidence to the firm as indicated at the end of this document. The search committee will begin reviewing applications immediately and will continue until the position has been successfully filled.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL HEALTH LAW PROGRAM

The National Health Law Program, founded in 1969, is the nation's leading legal organization dedicated to protecting and advancing the health rights of low-income and underserved individuals and families. For over 50 years, NHeLP has fought at the intersection of health care and civil rights to ensure equitable access to quality, affordable care for all.

The National Health Law Program is driven by a powerful mission: to protect and improve access to health care for low-income and underserved people and to advance health equity. At the heart of this mission is the belief that everyone should have access to high quality, equitable health care and be able to achieve their own highest attainable standard of health. NHeLP fulfills this mission by enforcing health care and civil rights laws; advocating for better federal and state laws and policies; training, supporting, and partnering with national, state, and local health and civil rights advocates; and using strategic communications to achieve these goals. This comprehensive approach reflects NHeLP's unwavering commitment to justice, equity, and the health and dignity of all people.

NHeLP's [Equity Stance](#) reflects its deep, ongoing commitment to dismantling systemic oppression and advancing health justice. This commitment is embedded in how the organization advocates, litigates, partners, and operates internally. Through intentional strategies that elevate impacted voices and build collective power, NHeLP affirms that health equity is inseparable from the broader pursuit of racial, economic, and social justice.

NHeLP's team of lawyers, policy experts, and other professionals work to challenge barriers to care and discrimination in health systems. They advocate, educate, and litigate at both the federal and state levels, holding governments accountable, empowering communities, and safeguarding the rights of tens of millions of people who face systemic obstacles to health equity. As a trusted advocate in courtrooms and in policy arenas, NHeLP provides critical leadership and expertise on Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act, reproductive health, and emerging health care issues.

Over the past decade, NHeLP has experienced significant growth, increasing its staff from 25 employees to more than 60 employees. NHeLP enjoys a strong financial position, with total annual revenues of approximately \$13.7 million. In addition to robust grant funding, NHeLP benefits from diversified income sources, including court-awarded fees from successful litigation and investment income. The organization reported net assets of approximately \$26 million at the end of 2024, positioning NHeLP well to sustain and grow its impact in the years ahead.

Programming and Focus Areas

NHeLP advances health justice through a broad and strategic portfolio of focus areas. Central to its work is the defense and strengthening of Medicaid, ensuring this vital public health insurance program remains accessible and effective for low-income and underserved individuals and families. NHeLP leverages litigation and enforcement to uphold health rights and challenge systemic barriers, while also driving innovative, equity-focused policy reforms. The organization advocates for inclusive health care for people with disabilities, promotes fair eligibility and enrollment processes, and defends access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care, including abortion and contraception. NHeLP also works to reform health care delivery systems to be more person-centered and equitable, eliminate barriers to care for underserved populations, and shape Medicaid policy at both federal and state levels. Through its civil rights and health equity initiatives, and targeted advocacy for child and adolescent health, NHeLP embeds anti-discrimination principles into health policy and practice, reinforcing its mission to achieve health justice for all.

Staff

The work of NHeLP is driven by an exceptional team, including many nationally recognized attorneys and professionals. The staff include seasoned advocates who provide highly valued information and advocacy to policymakers and other national advocates, and litigators who have been involved in most of the major Medicaid cases in the last 50 years. In addition, core to NHeLP's work are its strong partnerships with attorneys and others working at the state and local levels. Direct reports to the Executive Director currently include: the chief operating officer; legal director; communication director; and two development directors.

In recent years, NHeLP has grown and has developed organizational structures to increase the diversity of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences of its staff and is deeply invested in developing new leaders and elevating new voices in the field. NHeLP has a multicultural and multigenerational staff and is committed to developing an inclusive culture where all staff can fully contribute their talent, excel, and be supported in their professional growth.

ROLE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Executive Director will work closely with the Board of Directors and the staff in setting strategic priorities for NHeLP in an unprecedented and rapidly evolving health policy landscape. This next leader

must bring a sharp awareness of the external threats facing Medicaid and other healthcare programs for low-income and underserved people and be fully prepared to defend the program against ongoing attacks, while also seizing opportunities to strengthen and expand it in alignment with NHeLP's mission to advance health equity and justice.

The Executive Director will serve as NHeLP's chief executive, with overall strategic and operational responsibility for the organization's management, staff, programs, fundraising, and mission execution. In partnership with the Board, the Executive Director will lead efforts to expand resources through fundraising and revenue-generating initiatives. Internally, the Executive Director works closely with the Chief Operating Officer on matters affecting finances, budgeting, operations, and human resource management. The Executive Director also works closely with the Legal Director with respect to the core programs of NHeLP, and with the leaders of the Mission Advancement teams on matters of communications and resource development. As a public-facing leader, the Executive Director will act as a trusted spokesperson and advocate, educating diverse audiences on health policy and its impact on low-income and underserved communities. This role requires a sustained and authentic commitment to social justice, demonstrated through values-driven leadership and a proven track record of focusing on the lives of marginalized populations.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The next Executive Director will step into a significant leadership position at NHeLP during a critical time when Medicaid and other life-saving programs are under attack. This role offers a dynamic platform to shape the organization's future by leveraging a range of strategic, operational, and visionary opportunities, some of which are outlined below. Success in this position will require creativity, adaptability, and a diverse set of leadership skills. The Executive Director's effectiveness will be measured in terms of how well these opportunities are leveraged and their associated challenges are met.

Promote a commitment and action plan to defend existing programs and to advance health justice.

NHeLP is unwavering in its mission to advance health justice for low-income and underserved communities, grounded in the belief that everyone deserves access to high-quality, equitable care, free from systemic barriers and discrimination. The next Executive Director must embody this commitment in both vision and practice, ensuring the organization's work remains deeply informed by the lives of those most impacted. As the organization evolves, its core values will remain central. The Executive Director will be a bold, visible champion of these values, leading with courage and clarity in a challenging political climate, and fostering a culture of inclusion, accountability, and transformative change within and beyond the organization.

Continue the outstanding success of fundraising efforts and diversify the funding portfolio.

The next Executive Director will be a bold and persuasive ambassador for NHeLP, with a clear mandate to elevate the organization's visibility and broaden its philanthropic support. A top priority will be

diversifying and expanding NHeLP's funding portfolio to ensure long-term sustainability. This includes deepening relationships with existing funders, cultivating new philanthropic partnerships, and strategically engaging with foundations, individual donors, and aligned sectors of the health care ecosystem to increase revenue. Success in this role will require a sophisticated understanding of the funding landscape, the ability to navigate complex power dynamics, and the vision to position NHeLP as a top-tier destination for funders committed to equity and systemic change.

Lead NHeLP's strategic plan development to prepare for the organization's future.

NHeLP is currently guided by a [Strategic Framework](#) through 2027 that directs its mission to advance health equity and expand access to care. The next Executive Director will be responsible for carrying forward the current framework while also preparing to lead a new strategic planning process. This comprehensive review will be conducted in close partnership with the Board of Directors, senior leadership, and staff, and will be informed by data, best practices, and insights from allied organizations. The Executive Director will foster an inclusive and participatory approach, ensuring that both internal and external stakeholders have a voice in shaping the organization's future direction.

Serve as a unifying and inspiring staff leader.

The National Health Law Program (NHeLP) is powered by a deeply committed and highly skilled team, including seasoned professionals in legal advocacy, health policy, communications, development, operations and human resources, as well as a vibrant group of early-career advocates and volunteers. United by a shared mission to advance health equity and justice, this diverse team is central to NHeLP's impact. As a national organization working to confront and overcome tremendous, imminent threats to health care access, NHeLP's continued success depends on fostering a unified culture, one that bridges internal divides and ensures all team members feel equally valued, respected, and empowered in their roles.

The next Executive Director must be a unifying and inspiring leader who brings people together around a bold, shared vision of health justice. A servant leader at heart, the Executive Director will lead with humility and inclusiveness, listening deeply and leading collaboratively. A top priority will be supporting a cohesive, high-performing senior leadership team capable of guiding both strategic direction and daily operations. This will require maintaining a culture of trust, transparency, and accountability through inclusive decision-making, clear communication, and organization-wide goals that reflect NHeLP's mission and values.

Leverage the talent, expertise, and commitment of the Board to advance the mission of NHeLP.

NHeLP is governed by a dedicated and distinguished Board of Directors composed of fourteen accomplished attorneys, business, and civic sector leaders who provide strategic guidance and visionary leadership to the organization. The next Executive Director will cultivate a strong, transparent, and collaborative partnership with NHeLP's Board of Directors. By leveraging the Board's diverse expertise and perspectives, the Executive Director will enrich the organization's strategic decision-making and

program development. This leader will provide the Board with regular updates that demonstrate the impact of NHeLP's work and enable Board members to serve as effective ambassadors for NHeLP. The Executive Director will support Board decision-making with recommendations based on thoughtful evaluation of the cost, risk, and benefit. A commitment to open communication and mutual trust will be essential to sustaining a productive and mission-aligned governance relationship.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Executive Director will be a courageous and strategic leader, capable of navigating complex external pressures while remaining firmly grounded in principles of justice, inclusion, and systemic transformation. This individual will bring a proven ability to lead equity-centered work in challenging contexts and will offer a forward-looking vision for deepening and sustaining that work within the current climate.

The successful candidate should possess many of the following qualifications. While no single individual will possess all the desired experiences and preferred characteristics listed below, there are three that are noted as required or essential.

- Significant experience managing and leading a nonprofit organization, a private or corporate business entity, a government agency or function, or in an equivalent leadership role is required.
- A demonstrated record of successful fundraising from foundations, major individual donors, business corporations, and the public at large.
- A J.D. degree and experience practicing law.
- Experience in leading an organization that is evolving and transforming to adapt to both external and internal change.
- A demonstrated commitment to, and a record of partnering with, low-income and underserved communities and communities of color to effectuate change and to advance justice and equity.
- The ability to lead a team of professionals and to work collaboratively with talented, mission-driven staff.
- Ability to work in-person in the Washington, DC office.
- The ability and desire to travel for work-related functions is required.
- Excellent communications skills in all aspects of programmatic work with media, policymakers, funders, staff, Board, and the public.
- A record of successful public interest advocacy.
- Experience in the issues of healthcare access and equity, particularly with Medicaid.

- A track record of working with vulnerable and low-income and underserved populations and engaging in collaboratives and partnerships.
- A demonstrated, strong commitment to social justice and dismantling systemic oppression.
- High energy level, good humor, and contagious optimism that inspires others with a sense of possibility, progress, and hope are essential.

APPLICATIONS, INQUIRIES, AND NOMINATIONS

Screening of complete applications will begin immediately and continue until the completion of the search process. Inquiries, nominations, referrals, and CVs with cover letters should be sent via the Isaacson, Miller website: <https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/national-health-law-program/executive-director>. Electronic submission of materials is strongly encouraged. The anticipated salary range for this position is \$270,000-\$290,000 annually and is commensurate with related experience and qualifications. Position comes with excellent benefits.

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