



Director of Advocacy and Policy
American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA

THE SEARCH

The [American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania](#) (ACLU-PA) seeks a mission-driven, visionary policy and advocacy professional and operations manager to serve as the next Director of Advocacy and Policy (Director). The Director will join the ACLU-PA at a time of increasing threats to liberty and civil rights and will build upon a century of work and success to advance the organization's mission to drive progress toward a more genuine multiracial, multicultural, and just democracy.

The incoming Director will join a team of experts that works diligently to defend the civil liberties of all Pennsylvanians. The breadth of expertise at the ACLU-PA allows the organization to integrate litigation, legislative and policy advocacy, organizing, and communications. The ACLU-PA's staff and volunteers work both independently and in coalition with those most affected by the [issues they address](#), including voting rights, First Amendment rights, privacy and security, racial justice, reproductive freedom, student and youth rights, immigrants' rights, criminal legal reform, and Transgender, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual+ Equality. The work for the ACLU-PA has never been more important, and over the past year, ACLU-PA membership has grown, and fundraising has leaped.

The Director will join at a time of momentum for the organization and set a strategy and vision that support the ACLU-PA's policy and advocacy team in enhancing the scale, coordination, and impact of advocacy and policy efforts across the organization. By fostering productive and trusted relationships throughout the ACLU-PA and partnering with peers on the senior leadership team, the Director will advance a more collaborative, transparent, and integrated organizational culture to empower, support, and develop a talented, mission-oriented staff. The Director will lead by example to nurture, strengthen, and expand partnerships across the Commonwealth to increase visibility of the ACLU-PA's important work and its impact.

The ACLU-PA has engaged Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, for this recruitment effort. All applications, inquiries, and nominations should be directed in confidence to the search team as noted at the end of this document.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF PENNSYLVANIA

The [ACLU-PA](#) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, public-interest organization dedicated to defending and enhancing personal freedoms protected by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, as well as by the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The ACLU-PA is one of the 10 largest among the more than 55 regional affiliates of the century-old national American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU-PA's work to protect freedom and equality is based on a closely coordinated and integrated approach to advocacy that encompasses litigation, organizing, policy and legislative advocacy, and communications. The ACLU-PA is headquartered in Philadelphia and has additional offices in Pittsburgh and Harrisburg, the state's capital. It has a staff of 45, a 25-person Board of Directors, ten volunteer chapters statewide, over 40,000 members and donors, and an \$8.5 million operating budget.

The ACLU-PA is committed to defending the civil liberties of all people, with a particular but not exclusive focus on residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, especially the state's most vulnerable, marginalized, and disenfranchised residents: people of color, people living in poverty, those who espouse unpopular views, TLGBQIA+ individuals, people with disabilities, people harmed by the criminal legal system, immigrants, and others. Integrating litigation, legislative and policy advocacy, organizing, and communications, the ACLU-PA's staff and volunteers work both independently and in coalition with those most affected by the issues the organization addresses to ensure that threats to liberty and the civil rights of all persons in Pennsylvania are met with stark resistance as the state progresses toward a more genuine multiracial, multicultural democracy. The ACLU-PA enjoys an outstanding reputation in the state and nationally for its pioneering work and achievements. To learn more about the ACLU-PA, visit <https://www.aclupa.org/>.

ABOUT THE ADVOCACY AND POLICY DEPARTMENT

The Advocacy and Policy Team is the ACLU-PA's second-largest team and has been hard at work to develop advocacy and policy strategies to protect people's safety, health, and fundamental rights and freedoms. Some examples of recent work include the following:

- **Fighting to protect immigrant communities:** The ACLU of Pennsylvania is helping protect their immigrant neighbors from extreme anti-immigration policies and working to ensure that immigrants receive due process, fair treatment, and protection from unconstitutional detention and deportation. The ACLU-PA will continue to be an advocate for immigrant communities and defend against government abuse and discrimination.
- **Ensuring every vote gets counted:** Nothing is more fundamental to our democracy than the right to vote. The ACLU-PA's Election Protection campaign continues to grow and adapt to emerging threats to free and fair elections. The ACLU-PA is committed to ensuring that all eligible voters can cast their votes and that every vote is counted.

- **Defending equal protection for the TLGBQIA+ community:** Transgender, lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, intersex, and asexual (TLGBQIA+) people continue to face discrimination in many areas of their lives. Neither Pennsylvania law nor federal statutes specifically prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. And TLGBQIA+ students often face discrimination and harassment at school from students, teachers, and administrators. The ACLU of Pennsylvania will continue to work to ensure that TLGBQIA+ individuals enjoy the same rights and protections as everyone else and to create a more inclusive and equitable society.
- **Protecting free expression:** For more than 100 years, the ACLU has defended freedom of expression protections codified by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. As more Pennsylvanians engage in constitutionally protected protest and other dissent, the ACLU-PA continues to ensure that political speech is protected and free from government interference and works to protect a democracy where diverse voices must have a chance to be heard.
- **Safeguarding reproductive freedom:** Since 1920, the ACLU has recognized that personal privacy and reproductive freedom are among our most important constitutional liberties. The ACLU-PA will continue to defend and work to advance reproductive rights, including abortion rights in the Commonwealth. Although abortion is legal in Pennsylvania, it can be very difficult to access – and that’s by design.
- **Criminal legal reform:** The rights guaranteed to the accused, defendants, offenders, and prisoners are fundamental political rights that protect all Americans from governmental abuse of power. These rights include the guarantee against unreasonable search and seizure, the right to reasonable bail, the right to due process of law, and the right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment. They are indispensable to a free society.

Additionally, the ACLU-PA works year-round in Harrisburg to [support legislation that expands or protects civil liberties and fights against bills that infringe on freedoms](#). As one of the few nonprofits with full-time lobbyists, the ACLU-PA works year-round to track legislative activity in the PA House and Senate, hold legislators accountable, and train ACLU-PA members, supporters, and allies to become constituent lobbyists—the most important voices for legislators to hear.

ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY AND POLICY

Reporting to the Executive Director and serving as a member of the senior management team, the Director of Advocacy and Policy will oversee the development and implementation of advocacy and policy strategies and campaigns, utilizing an integrated advocacy framework. The Director will lead a team of about a dozen staff, including the following four direct reports: deputy advocacy and policy director, senior education equity coordinator, legislative director, and engagement and mobilization director.

The Director will provide guidance on public policy advocacy, legislative engagement, and lobbying efforts aligned with the ACLU-PA's organizational priorities and values. The Director will interact with all departments within the organization and be accountable for developing strategies, assessing needs and capacity, leading operational plans, and creating initiatives, metrics, and benchmarks to support the ACLU-PA's priorities.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR THE DIRECTOR

In addition to the work outlined above, the Director will work collaboratively to address the following opportunities and challenges.

Lead and advance a vision for advocacy and policy at the ACLU-PA.

At a time when the ACLU-PA is responding to unprecedented threats to civil liberties and democracy, the Director will be critical in shaping a clear vision and strategy for the advocacy and policy team, enabling them to respond to new threats while also setting a long-term vision and goal. The advocacy and policy department's work is complex; it includes lobbying, policy advocacy, and mobilization, providing the next Director with the opportunity to build upon the ACLU-PA's century of success using multiple tools. The ACLU-PA aspires to be guided by an integrated advocacy framework that strategically connects litigation, legislative and policy advocacy, organizing, and communications. This Director's leadership is essential to bringing this framework to life.

Clarify departmental identity and strengthen operational excellence.

As the ACLU-PA responds to the growing urgent threats to freedom and democracy, the successful Director will bring clarity, focus, and operational discipline to a fast-moving environment by clarifying roles, responsibilities, and expectations, and ensuring that organizational policies support the work. The Director will work closely with colleagues throughout the organization to establish shared expectations around how the department partners with internal stakeholders, communicates priorities, and supports organizational goals to make strides toward an integrated policy framework. By fostering greater clarity regarding responsibilities, decision-making, and collaboration, the Director can help position Advocacy & Policy as a trusted strategic partner known for its expertise, responsiveness, and impact.

Foster a culture of empowerment, collaboration, and trust.

The advocacy and policy team is made up of about a dozen mission-driven employees who are experts in their respective issues and strategies, whether in organizing, lobbying, or policy development and advocacy. The incoming Director will create a culture that allows those experts to shine and build upon their knowledge and success. The Director will foster a culture of trust, collaboration, and accountability, including setting clear goals for the advocacy and policy team, aligned to the department's vision and the ACLU-PA's strategic plan. Additionally, the successful Director will be a thought partner, coach, and strategist for the team in a demanding environment and model a team mentality that enables ongoing

support. Silos slow down work, and the Director will break them down to support the team and empower them to support each other.

Deepen and expand partnerships across the state to increase visibility and impact.

Most importantly, the ACLU-PA and this Director will continue the organization's work to build, diversify, and deepen relationships across the Commonwealth. The Director will cultivate and deepen relationships across Pennsylvania, ensuring that the Commonwealth's geographic and demographic diversity is represented and well served by the ACLU-PA. As one of the largest and oldest civil rights nonprofits in Pennsylvania, the ACLU-PA has an outsized influence on the work happening across the Commonwealth. Led by this Director, the policy and advocacy team will continue to support organizations and coalition partners statewide in ways that are mindful of community needs and enable the ACLU to amplify partners' important work. In addition to coalition work, the Director will serve as an external spokesperson to share the ACLU-PA's impact with various audiences.

QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

While no individual will possess every quality, the successful candidate will bring many of the following qualifications, professional experiences, and personal attributes:

- Minimum 8 years' experience in a senior management position involving political, legislative, or advocacy-related work;
- Understanding of and commitment to advancing the ACLU-PA's values, mission, and goals;
- Understanding of and commitment to advancing the ACLU-PA's Authentic, Belonging, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (ABIDE);
- Ability to productively collaborate across an organization with diverse work and projects to advance shared priorities;
- Record of success as a people-centered leader who recognizes and relies on staff expertise; believes good ideas can come from anywhere; and motivates, engages, and inspires individuals and teams;
- A demonstrated ability to lead high-performing teams, support staff development, prepare team members for increased responsibility and promotion, and effectively address issues of performance improvement;
- Understanding of the legislative process and political strategic planning;
- Exceptional analytical, research, and communication skills;
- Exceptional initiative, vision, and ability to develop and implement short and long-term integrated policy and legislative strategies;
- Ability to work in coalitions, including developing shared plans, coordinating external and internal communications, and understanding political dynamics among partner groups;
- Ability to handle projects independently, keep organized in a fast-paced environment, manage several projects simultaneously, and adjust strategy to frequently changing demands;

- Ability to work collaboratively with colleagues across departments and functions;
- Ability to work effectively and collaboratively with diverse coalitions and community groups, and to work across the political spectrum and value differences of race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and socio-economic circumstance;
- An understanding of basic organizing theory, project management, digital organizing, the criminal justice system, and state politics; and
- Technical skills: typical office skills - word processing, spreadsheets, databases, online tools.

COMPENSATION

Compensation for this position will be \$175,000 annually. Benefits include health, dental, disability, life insurance, retirement plan, paid vacation, holidays, sabbatical, and sick leave.

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/aclu-pa/director-advocacy-and-policy>.

Tiffany Weber (she/her), Managing Associate and Search Lead
Ernest Brooks (he/him), Partner
Janette Martinez (she/her), Senior Associate
Sarah Sweeney (she/her), Senior Search Coordinator
Isaacson, Miller

The ACLU-PA comprises two separate corporate entities, the American Civil Liberties Union (the "Union") of Pennsylvania and the ACLU Foundation (the "Foundation") of Pennsylvania. The Union is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporation, and ACLU membership dues fund its lobbying work. Donations to the Union are not tax-deductible. The ACLU Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Foundation funds support litigation and public education efforts. Donations to the Foundation are tax-deductible. The Director of Advocacy and Policy is an employee of the American Civil Liberties Foundation of Pennsylvania.

The ACLU-PA is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU-PA encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or marital status.

This document has been prepared based on the information provided by the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania. The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and information provided by the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania would supersede any conflicting information in this document.