

## ***The PG Indigenous Justice Centre is looking for a Staff Lawyer – Criminal / Child Protection***

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We are hiring! The PG Indigenous Justice Centre (“**PG-IJC**”) is seeking a full-time staff lawyer who is passionate about using their legal skills to reduce the over-representation of Indigenous children and youth in care, and reduce the number of Indigenous peoples who are systemically and unnecessarily incarcerated. Working with the PG-IJC is an opportunity to build effective alliances with Indigenous peoples and work with them to reverse the negative impacts of colonisation on their communities.

### **Remuneration:**

\$70K - \$95K, depending on year of call

### **About Us:**

The PG-IJC is a partnership between the BC First Nations Justice Council (“**FNJC**”) and the Prince George Urban Aboriginal Justice Society (“**PGUAJS**”). The PG-IJC mandate comes from the BC Assembly First Nations, Union of BC Indian Chiefs and First Nations Summit, as well as from the leadership in those Indigenous communities we serve. We work with Indigenous communities and clients to identify their priorities and develop solutions to child protection and criminal law matters that affect them. It is our goal to ensure Indigenous peoples have a culturally safe space where they can access legal representation and advice, achieve early resolution of their legal matters and work together to divert their legal matters from the mainstream justice system to Indigenous systems of justice.

### **About You:**

To be the successful candidate, you will be familiar with the history of Indigenous peoples in British Columbia, as well as the specific state of child welfare and criminal justice matters relating to Indigenous peoples. You have significant knowledge and experience in child protection and/or criminal law matters, and you are either a practicing member of the Law Society of BC or you are immediately eligible to become a practicing member of the Law Society of BC. While we recognize the value of diversity in the workplace and welcome applications from people of all backgrounds, preference may be provided to Indigenous applicants in accordance with section 41 of the *BC Human Rights Code*.

### **About the Role:**

You will work as Staff Lawyer - Criminal / Child Protection on a team that strives to ensure Indigenous peoples who face the child protection and criminal law systems do not fall through the systemic cracks that exist within those systems. You will provide direct legal representation to Indigenous persons who have active child protection and criminal law matters. As part of the PG-IJC team, you will work closely with Indigenous clients to help them access the legal, social, housing, transportation and health and wellness supports they need to address challenges in dealing with the mainstream child protection and justice systems. You will also work closely with Indigenous communities to support their members who are before the courts and design services that divert people to specialized and Indigenous justice models.

### **How to Apply:**

Please provide us with a C.V. and cover letter setting out how you meet the requirements of the attached job description. Applications can be sent to [sonya@bcfnjc.com](mailto:sonya@bcfnjc.com) with “Staff Counsel” in the subject line. ***While we are aiming to hire immediately, it is more important to us that we find the right person for this position so we will accept all applications until the position is filled.***

**Job Title:** Staff Lawyer - Criminal / Child Protection  
**Pay Range:** \$75K - \$95K (F/T Annual Salary)  
**Reporting:** Reports to the Provincial Director – Indigenous Justice Centres  
**Hours:** Full Time Contract to March 31, 2020 with extension on a year-to-year basis

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### **Job Summary:**

The Staff Lawyer - Criminal / Child Protection's primary responsibility is to assist in reducing the disproportionate number of Indigenous children in government care and of Indigenous peoples within the criminal justice system by (a) representing Indigenous clients in family and criminal court who would not otherwise have access to legal representation and assisting those clients both in their criminal and family matters and in addressing any other legal matters that impact directly on the outcomes of their criminal and family matters.

*\*Note: References to Indigenous in this job description include all Indigenous persons, including status and non-status persons, as well as Metis and Inuit persons.*

### **Qualifications & Work Experience:**

- Must be a member of the Law Society of British Columbia in good standing
- Must have a J.D. / LL.B.; Advanced Degrees and/or Joint J.D./J.I.D. are considered an asset
- Must have at least 2 years (ideally 5+ years) experience in litigation, preferably in the practice of child protection and/or criminal law
- Must have knowledge of local and urban Indigenous cultures;
- Must be able to provide a culturally safe environment for clients;
- Must have knowledge of the structure and procedures of Canada's Criminal Justice System, including knowledge of the criminal law, *Criminal Code*, *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, Crown Counsel Policy Manual (in particular charge assessment guidelines), Gladue principles and case law;
- Must have knowledge of the structure and procedures of British Columbia's child protection system, including the *Child Family and Community Services Act*, and *Bill C-92 – An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families*;
- Must have knowledge of local agencies that offer indigenous / restorative justice services, and support services to offenders, and to children, youth and families;
- Knowledge of the following documents is an asset: *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child*, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action;
- Must be a self-motivated individual with the ability to work with minimal supervision in a team-oriented setting;
- Must possess strong organizational, case and file management skills, stress management and time management skills;
- Must have the ability to engage people to build trust and rapport; have effective verbal and listening communication skills;
- Must be able to maintain confidentiality, problem solve and take initiative;
- Must have a valid Driver's License, the use of a vehicle and ability to travel
- A clear criminal reference check (CPIC) and Vulnerable Sector Clearance will be a condition of employment.

## **Job Duties and Responsibilities:**

Staff Lawyer - Criminal / Child Protection will, in a culturally safe manner:

- assist clients who are facing serious charges but who are denied legal aid with making *Rowbotham* applications to obtain funding for legal representation;
- provide clients legal representation for child protection and criminal matters who would otherwise not have legal representation;
- advocate on behalf of clients for the diversion of their legal matters from the formal court system to less intrusive measures, including: Indigenous intervention protocols, First Nations Courts, Indigenous justice processes, alternative dispute resolution processes, mediation and restorative justice processes where appropriate in consultation with officers of the court and local protocols
- work with the community outreach coordinator to ensure Indigenous communities and service providers are aware of the Staff Lawyer - Criminal / Child Protection role and availability to assist Indigenous parents' whose children are at risk of being taken into care of the government or whose children are temporarily in care of the government, as well as Indigenous peoples who are being charged with criminal offences but do not otherwise have access to legal representation;
- develop working relationships with local Indigenous communities, child protection, police diversion and crown counsel teams;
- work with the diversion and early resolution coordinator to support Indigenous communities in identifying and implementing their legal orders with regard to the protection of their children and criminal justice matters;
- advocate on behalf of clients for crown Counsel to consider non-approval of charges or stays of proceedings to allow criminal matters to be resolved through an indigenous criminal justice approach / Indigenous alternative measure;
- advocate for all clients whose criminal matters make it to the sentencing stages have Gladue reports put before the judge prior to sentencing;
- work with clients in child protection matters, their Indigenous community and support team to develop and propose alternative care plans that will keep their children safe and within their family / community;
- collaborate with Indigenous, local, provincial and federal government program and service providers to ensure clients have access to the culturally safe and Indigenous programs and services they need to support them in keeping their children out of care and their members out of the criminal justice system;
- maintain documentation, comprehensive and up-to-date client files;
- on a monthly basis, compile and submit statistical data with regard to clients served and services delivered, in accordance with the BCFNJC's Data Collection Framework; and
- regularly update the Provincial Director – Indigenous Justice Centres of activities being undertaken and any resources required for completion of job duties.