



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

POSTING #: 2025-18	ISSUE DATE: 5/2/2025	CLOSING DATE: 5/30/2025
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TITLE: Program Specialist, Policy, Research & Planning (Legal & Legislative Liaison)	TITLE CODE: 80135	RANGE: R27
UNIT: Legal & Governmental Affairs	AVAILABLE VACANCIES:	
LOCATION: Quakerbridge Plaza, Trenton, NJ	SALARY RANGE: \$81,688 - \$116,313	

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Under the general direction of the Director Legal & Governmental Affairs, or other supervisory officer at the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA), the Program Specialist, Policy, Research & Planning (Legal & Legislative Liaison) is responsible for supervising functional programs and supporting the Authority's legal, regulatory, and administrative processes, ensuring operational compliance with State procurement laws. This position supports the Legal & Governmental Affairs Unit as it expands to meet increasing administrative and regulatory demands, and plays a key role in maintaining the effectiveness and independence of HESAA's financial aid program operations by drafting legal and contractual documents, overseeing procurement processes, and supporting regulatory policy and legislative engagement.

The role participates in the development and evaluation of internal policies and procedures, supports strategic planning, and contributes to ongoing research and assessment of programs impacting higher education access. The role includes evaluating and tracking State contracts and purchases, supporting the execution of procurement procedures, and collaborating closely with the Finance and Technology units to ensure timely and accurate financial processing. The individual is expected to maintain a strong working knowledge of State procurement policy, legal terminology, and documentation requirements, and to contribute to organizational planning and evaluation through report preparation, compliance monitoring, and internal coordination.

The position also requires regular engagement with stakeholders, including legislative staff and external partners, and may involve contributing to public presentations, Board meetings, and strategic communications.

Key Responsibilities:

- Draft legal documents, including, but not limited to, contracts, memorandums of understanding, requests for proposals (RFPs), and justification memoranda.
- Coordinate purchasing processes for goods and services in accordance with State and HESAA procurement requirements and procedures.
- Participate in the development and refinement of internal procurement, contracting and other organizational policies and procedures.

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- Evaluate vendors and contract terms; negotiates modifications and improvements when appropriate.
- Collaborate with the Finance and Technology units to monitor expenditures and track purchasing activities.
- Establish and maintain essential records, reports, and files related to contracting, budgeting, and compliance, and planning activities; prepare summaries and reports for management and external stakeholders.
- Assist in navigating the regulatory landscape, including State and federal requirements related to financial aid and agency operations.
- Conduct legal and administrative research as needed to support program goals.
- Communicate regularly with legislative staff, external vendors, and internal leadership regarding procurement and compliance-related matters.
- Make presentations at HESAA Board meetings or legislative briefings, as assigned.
- May supervise or provide guidance to other staff involved in contract tracking or procurement processing.
- Evaluate existing literature, trends, and studies to inform planning and assess agency and institutional performance in alignment with State goals.
- Participate in cross-agency efforts to analyze and recommend improvements to planning, programming, and budgeting systems affecting higher education delivery and support.
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS:

Education:

- Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's or Master's degree in public administration, higher education administration, social sciences, or a related field; JD preferred
- Applicants who do not possess the required education may substitute experience as indicated on a year-for-year basis. One (1) year of applicable experience considered equivalent to one (1) academic year.

Note: This substitution applies only to the education requirement. All applicants must also meet the minimum required relevant professional experience listed below.

Required Experience:

- Four (4) years of progressively responsible professional experience in research and planning, procurement, supply chain, legal services, or administrative oversight in a public, legal, or compliance-focused environment, is highly desirable.
- Experience should demonstrate the ability to draft legal documents, manage complex processes, coordinate with multiple units, and interpret laws, regulations, or procedures.
- Experience with New Jersey State procurement process is a plus.

Knowledge and Skills:

- Strong working knowledge of State procurement laws and contract management practices
- Strong working knowledge of legal terminology, concepts, research parameters, and public sector regulatory frameworks
- Excellent analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills,
- Ability to draft and interpret legal documents, policy materials, and technical reports
- Experience preparing presentations, official correspondence, and board or legislative briefings

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- Strong organizational skills with attention to detail, accuracy, and discretion; must be able to prioritize and manage varied workloads and deadlines
- Professionalism, discretion, and the ability to handle confidential matters appropriately
- Ability to work both independently and collaboratively in a fast-paced environment
- Experience using Microsoft Office Suite and relevant data management systems
- Ability to prepare clear, technically sound, accurate and informative statistical and planning reports containing findings, conclusions, and recommendations

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Interested candidates must e-mail careers@hesaa.org with **Job Posting #2025-18** referenced in the e-mail subject line. Applicants must include a cover letter and resume with their submission. If applying for multiple positions at HESAA, candidates must submit separate applications for each Vacancy Announcement, ensuring that the individual Job Posting Number is included in the subject line of each email.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

Remote Work Eligibility: This position may be eligible for up to two remote workdays per calendar week after completing a four (4) month in-office working period following the start date.

SAME Applicants: If applying under the NJ “SAME” program, you must submit supporting documents (Schedule A or B letter), along with your cover letter and resume by the closing date indicated above. For more information, visit the [SAME Program Website](#), email Civil Service Commission (CSC) at: CSC-SAME@csc.nj.gov, or call CSC at (609) 292-4144, option 3

Foreign Degrees: Degrees and transcripts issued by a college or university outside of the United States must be evaluated for accreditation by a reputable evaluation service at your expense. The evaluation must be included with your application submission. Failure to submit the required evaluation may result in an ineligibility determination.

Residency Requirement: Under N.J.S.A. 52:14-7, the “New Jersey First Act”, all new employees must reside in the State of New Jersey, unless exempted under the law. If you do not currently live in New Jersey, you have one year from your employment start date to relocate or secure to New Jersey, or secure an exemption. For more information, please visit: [Civil Service Commission | NJ First Act](#)

Work Authorization: Applicants must possess acceptable work authorization in accordance with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) regulations. HESAA does not sponsor work status or accept student visas, including F1 or H1B work authorization visas.

Driver’s License Requirement: A valid New Jersey driver’s license is required only if the operation of a vehicle, rather than employee mobility, is necessary to perform essential duties of the position.

Background Check: All newly hired employees must agree to undergo a comprehensive background check.

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