

JOB POSTING: Pretrial Justice Fellow



ILLINOIS BLACK ADVOCACY INITIATIVE BACKGROUND

In 2021, the Illinois Black Advocacy Initiative (IBAI) was founded due to the current heightened sense of urgency to create and advance a statewide Black Advocacy agenda in Illinois. Although catalyzed by the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Black lives, the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Chicagoan Laquan McDonald and other attacks on the safety, well-being, and quality of life for Black people have driven momentum. This critical body of work acknowledges and builds upon a long pre-existing desire and early efforts to launch a unified agenda.

IBAI is a Black-led, Black-focused, statewide advocacy organization. IBAI provides an important opportunity to align Illinois' assets towards a common agenda, narrative, and strategy. IBAI is deeply committed to working with Illinois' Black-led and centered, grassroots advocacy organizations & advocates.

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The Pretrial Justice Fellow (PJF) is a new and exciting **one-year position** for a strategic and thoughtful individual with a history of building relationships and with experience working on criminal legal system policies. Since 2016, communities across Illinois have worked to end money bond. After years of work by the Coalition to End Money Bond (CEMB) and the Illinois Network for Pretrial Justice (Network), and following a nationwide uprising demanding racial justice in 2020, the Illinois State Legislature passed the Pretrial Fairness Act (PFA) as part of the Illinois Legislative Black Caucus' criminal justice reform bill, HB 3653 SFA2 and the Governor signed it into law. Among other things, **this law overhauls the state's pretrial justice system, ends the use of money bond in its entirety, and makes many people ineligible for pretrial incarceration.** The Pretrial Justice Fellow's primary responsibility at IBAI is to work with the Network and CEMB to preserve and implement the PFA. There is a possibility for employment at IBAI beyond one-year, with a focus on a broad range of advocacy issues important to and impacting Black Illinoisans.

The ideal candidate is passionate about either drastically reforming the criminal legal system

or abolishing the criminal legal system. This individual should be a self-starter with the ability to both work well on their own and with a team. They should be transparent and proactive in communication, collectively oriented and minded, open to growth and feedback, contribute innovative and fresh strategies, flexible, comfortable working within a growing organization, and possess strong interpersonal & relationship building skills. This position reports to the Executive Director.

Job responsibilities include the following:

Working Group and Network/Coalition Representation

- Provide virtual and in-person support throughout the state to counties who are implementing the PFA.
- Supporting CEMB and Network representation in statewide PFA implementation working groups, either by serving on those working groups or providing support for Network/CEMB members who sit on those groups.
- Participate on internal CEMB and Network subcommittees.

Public Education and Communications Support

- Develop and provide educational presentations around issues in the PFA to court stakeholders (judges, public defenders and defense attorneys, State's Attorneys), legislators, community partners and potential endorsers, and the public;
- Develop and provide internal training for coalition members on policy issues surrounding the PFA;
- Provide communications assistance in strategic planning, media/press outreach, data presentations and visualizations, social media, drafting/editing copy and collateral, and similar needs as they arise.

Technical Assistance and Legislative/Data Drafting and Analysis

- Provide technical assistance to help members of the CEMB/Network understand and develop collective positions on various policy issues;
- Provide legislative/policy analysis and drafting of legislative language;
- Conduct data analyses and research for internal use, for CEMB/Network publications, and for working groups as needed;
- Provide data, research, writing, and editing support for internal and public reports for CEMB and the Network;

- Publish data analyses and make data visualizations as needed for CEMB and Network publications;
- Provide quick turnaround, data-driven "debunking" of opponents claims about the PFA.

Relevant skills, knowledge, and experience (there is no expectation that any person possess all of these, so please don't let the following discourage you from applying):

- We are seeking someone with a demonstrated commitment to Black people and communities. This person must be aware and informed of both Black triumph and struggle and the intentional and institutionalized racism within the criminal legal system specifically and beyond, that plagues the Black community;
- Strong belief in the mission of the organization and experience with visioning and imagining a better and more liberated future for Black people (radical imagination);
- At least two years of experience working on criminal legal system reform/abolition or adjacent social movements;
- Experience in policy research and analysis;
- Ability to communicate policies to multiple audiences, particularly grassroots organizers and community members;
- Experience using technology like Google Suite, Microsoft Suite, Mailchimp, etc.
- Strong and compelling oral and written communications skills.

COMPENSATION

Exempt, full-time position. The salary range for the Pretrial Justice Fellow is \$62,000 - 65,000, based on experience. IBAI offers a generous full benefits package including a 4% retirement contribution in addition to up to 4% match.

INQUIRY AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications should be submitted electronically via email to info@ilblackadvocacy.org and include a:

- Cover letter introducing yourself & your values, describing both your interest and experience in the position, and how your lived experiences have prepared you for this position (take care not to share the same exact information that can be found on your resume), and
- Resume.

Please include "Pretrial Justice Fellow" in the subject line of your email. This position

will remain open until filled.

Note: Currently, IBAI is a remote office with access to a co-working space in Chicago, Illinois. The Executive Director is based in Chicago. For this position, the staff person must live in Illinois within 3 months of hiring. If you are invited for an interview, the interview will be held over video conference.

The Illinois Black Advocacy Initiative is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. All qualified persons are encouraged to apply, regardless of race, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, age, height, weight, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, marital or domestic partner status, former incarceration or religious affiliation.