

## **The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Florida**

**JOB TITLE:** Executive Director

**JOB SUMMARY:** **The Executive Director serves as the chief executive officer of the ACLU of Florida and is responsible for giving direction and leadership toward achieving the organization's vision, mission, strategies and annual goals and objectives.**

The Executive Director serves as the chief executive officer of the ACLU of Florida and provides leadership and direction to achieve the organization's mission, goals, and strategies. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors and is responsible for ensuring that the organization is dynamic, effective, fiscally sound and an "employer of choice" in pursuit of the ACLU's mission.

The ACLU of Florida is a non-partisan advocacy organization that utilizes litigation, advocacy, communications and organizing to protect and promote civil liberties/civil rights throughout Florida. The ACLU of Florida is headquartered in Miami with staff located across the state.

The ACLU of Florida is one of 54 affiliates of the national ACLU, an organization that has served as the preeminent defender of civil liberties/civil rights in this country since 1920. In addition to partnering with staff members from our National offices and other affiliates on specific issues and projects, the ACLU of Florida frequently joins forces with other organizations to maximize its impact. While the organization undertakes exceptional work out of its headquarters, the ACLU's greatest strength is its network of state affiliates, and the more than 1,500 staff who work out of the state offices, constituting an unparalleled bulwark defending and advancing civil liberties and civil rights. While each of the state affiliates enjoys significant autonomy in determining programs and priorities appropriate to each state, the organization has increasingly operated as one nationwide organization rather than a federation of loosely affiliated organizations.

The ACLU of Florida, with headquarters in Miami, is the state affiliate of the national organization and employs approximately 40 staff members across the state with an annual operating budget of \$X M.

The ACLU of Florida has led our state forward in the long march for democracy, justice, and equality for more than 50 years. Our mission is to protect, defend, strengthen, and promote the constitutional rights and liberties of all people in Florida. We envision a fair and just Florida, where all people are free, equal under the law, and live with dignity. We work with frontline advocates, volunteers, supporters, and partners to address the most pressing civil rights issues in our state to make Florida a more equitable and just place and realize the promise of democracy for all Floridians.

The ACLU of Florida comprises two separate corporate entities, the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida and the ACLU Foundation of Florida in order to engage in a broad range of work to protect civil liberties.

### **Position Overview**

The ACLU of Florida seeks an experienced, strategic, and visionary chief executive to lead the organization's statewide advocacy agenda during this important moment when civil liberties and civil rights are front and center across the nation and in Florida. The Executive Director will possess strong organizational acumen, fundraising and interpersonal skills, outstanding judgment and be a critical thinker. The Executive Director is able to lead the work and assimilate and balance different interests of various constituent groups and individuals. They will understand the importance of centering communities most impacted by civil rights and liberties attacks and champion the organization's mission and values, both internally and externally. The new Executive Director will lead with empathy and the ability to focus on the organization's core priority areas, ensuring that the national office and affiliate together achieve shared goals.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director is adept at balancing internal management with external impact and visibility. The individual must be an outstanding communicator who is able to develop and

maintain relationships that ensure financial health and stability, build important partnerships that maximize the organization's influence, and effectively convey the mission and activities of the ACLU to a variety of constituencies and broader public. The position requires a collaborative and driven leader with a broad range of knowledge and contacts, and significant commitment to the furtherance of civil liberties/civil rights.

### **Key Responsibilities**

The Executive Director provides the leadership, vision, and strategic planning necessary to address civil liberties/civil rights issues in Florida and possesses the leadership skills and vision to ensure that the affiliate is well-positioned to meet the challenges of the future. The Executive Director has a proven track-record as a leader in diverse nonprofit organizations, including expertise in fundraising, management, and external relations.

### **Key elements of the role include:**

#### **Executive Leadership and Vision**

- The Executive Director should have a clear understanding of civil rights and liberties and Florida's landscape
- Lead the organization's lay leaders and staff to a shared vision of goals, strategies that advance the ACLU's mission and program goals. Bring an entrepreneurial mindset to the work.
- Serve as the chief marketer, fundraiser, communicator and spokesperson.
- Grow and expand the ACLU's reputation, developing and maintaining key relationships of influence.
- Exhibit courage and clarity when addressing highly controversial and complex issues.
- Lead collaboratively with a Board of Directors to implement a model of strategic governance.
- Guard the organization's integrity, credibility and non-partisanship; Champion and value diversity, equity and inclusion at every level of the organization to strive towards a culture of belonging.
- Motivate and maintain a cohesive staff, ensuring strong internal communication and collaboration. Foster a supportive team-oriented environment where independent and innovative thinking is encouraged, staff act with clarity of mission and purpose, and model an environment of continuous improvement, learning and effectiveness.

#### **Program**

- Drive the organization's issue priorities with clear vision and strategies that build organizational power and influence, leveraging past successes and adapting effectively to the external environment.
- Ensure disciplined prioritization of the work, clear program goals, and strategies that are scaled to the goals.
- Ensure strong relationships with national program staff that leverage the full weight of the organization.
- Operate strategically in a political and social environment where success depends on the ability to collaborate effectively with individuals and organizations across the political spectrum.

#### **Strategic Financial Management**

- Lead long-term financial planning activities that balance a future vision with financial and legal risk considerations. Oversee fiscal planning and financial oversight, ensuring use of best practices that meet the highest standards.
- Lead a robust fundraising program to protect the affiliate's long-term financial stability; steward key donor relationships and solicit major donations.
- Anticipate funding needs and seek out opportunities to meet those needs.
- Collaborate with national staff to implement the national fundraising model, participate in nationwide convenings, and ensure that fundraising platforms are utilized effectively in the affiliate.
- Ensure that the Board can meet its fiduciary responsibilities by proactively and transparently providing financial reports, conducting regular audits, and engaging the Board in the budgeting process.

#### **Cross-Functional Leadership**

- Model collaboration and communication regardless of role or position.
- Build relationships with stakeholders and foster their participation in cross-functional project work.
- Inspire and achieve a shared vision – think holistically about the organization and elicit executive-level summaries of capacity, performance, resources, and outcomes from leadership teams.
- Lead Board and staff with courage and clarity when addressing highly controversial and complex issues.

#### **External Relations and Communications**

- Represent the affiliate's priorities on key issues, articulating the organization's positions and communicating its mission to increase the organization's visibility and public's understanding of the goals and work.
- Maintain strong relationships with the media, guiding organizational strategy and working effectively with the national communications staff to maximize nationwide messaging and to amplify local priorities.
- Initiate and strengthen relationships and collaborations with organizations and leaders who are connected to ACLU mission and purpose – including staff at ACLU National when appropriate.
- Clearly articulate the organization's positions and work on a broad array of complex issues to a wide variety of audiences
- Convey an inspiring vision and communicate with intention and clarity about decisions and rationale.
- Communicate with a wide range of stakeholders with empathy, emotional intelligence, and respect; work effectively in cross-cultural settings.
- Value, empower and support a diverse set of voices to represent the organization's positions on its work.

#### **Qualifications:**

- Ten years of professional experience and a bachelor's degree are minimum requirements. An advanced degree and prior nonprofit experience are preferred
- Nonprofit leadership experience
- Deep understanding of civil rights/liberties
- Familiar with Florida and its civil rights landscape
- Ability to be primarily located in Miami and travel in the state as needed
- Proven fundraising and fiscal management experience with a solid track-record of success
- Proven managerial, problem-solving, strategic thinking, and human resource experience in the private, not-for-profit, or public sectors
- Ability to see opportunity ahead and lead the organization to a shared vision of its future.
- Ability to distinguish between transactional behaviors and transformational leadership behaviors
- Ability to manage a top tier group of donors and increase their investment in the affiliate
- Embodies an 'equity mindset,' committed to understanding how decisions may reinforce systemic inequities and to being a respectful and responsible player in the larger ecosystem
- Embodies a 'governance and leadership mindset,' committed to creating and maintaining a strong partnership with Board of Directors
- Balances decision-making role with needs of multiple stakeholders
- Practices data-informed decision-making.
- Earns trust through authentic and vulnerable leadership practices
- Ability to see and create financial opportunities that ensure financial stability and growth
- Proven and track record in creating and implementing successful programs; experience cultivating partnerships and collaboration opportunities
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with expertise in public speaking skills for both formal and extemporaneous presentations; ability to represent the ACLU to a broad public
- A record of success working in partnership with a Board and staff of diverse personalities and talents.
- Strong work ethic
- Ability to interact effectively with stakeholders from divergent geographical and socioeconomic

backgrounds.

- Experience working with boards and volunteers and strategic planning
- Ability to work independently and as a member of a team
- Excellent problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Ability to multitask and work in a fast-paced, high-pressure environment
- Proficiency with computers: Windows, Microsoft Office, Google Suites, Zoom, Asana,
- Creative, result-oriented, self-starting, willing to learn, and able to manage an aggressive schedule, working beyond 9-5 as needed.
- Firm commitment to the mission, values and principles of the ACLU.

### **Personal Characteristics**

- Personally committed to advancing the ACLU's values, mission, goals and programs, with an understanding of the range of civil liberties issues and their implications
- A dedicated leader and representative who can translate vision into action. Someone who is passionate about networking and representing the organization to critical constituencies including ACLU members, the public, government, and the media
- A person who is intelligent and inspiring, able to conceptualize, express ideas and anticipate and act on events which may create opportunities for the ACLU
- A leader who prioritizes honesty, transparency, trust-building, conflict resolution, with a track record of leading a diverse team with care and respect.
- Creative, strategic, resourceful and politically astute; someone who understands the value of creating partnerships with other organizations as a way of accomplishing the ACLU's goals
- An energetic person who can manage and prioritize multiple activities and responsibilities; a self-starter and finisher.
- A team-player that inspires collaboration and functions decisively; flexible and well organized.
- Outgoing and straightforward; one who shares information easily, listens as well as gives advice, and respects and enhances the abilities of others
- Emotionally mature and self-confident, with a sense of humor in order to maintain balance and perspective.