



Tenants Union of Washington State

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www.tenantsunion.org • Tenant Hotline: 206-723-0500

Job Opening: Spanish-speaking Tenant Advocate and Community Organizer

Job Title: Tenant Advocate and Community Organizer

Reports To: Executive Director

Position Type: Full-time exempt, 35 hours/week

Salary: \$50,000 annually

Benefits: Reimbursement for health and dental premiums, vacation & sick paid time off, flexible hours, and generous holiday schedule (see bottom for full details).

Application Deadline: Open until filled but applications will begin to be reviewed on March 29, 2021. We hope that the selected candidate will start at the **end of April 2021**.

About Us

The Tenants Union of Washington State is the only statewide, grassroots, membership based housing justice organization in Washington. We are committed to working toward safe, healthy, and affordable housing for everyone. Our goals are to help all tenants, especially low income tenants, solve their rental housing problems by learning and asserting their rights as renters; support tenants organizing within their buildings and neighborhoods to maintain and preserve safe and affordable rental housing; and mobilize for stronger tenant protections and greater accountability from the systems and institutions affecting their housing stability. As a membership organization, the TU is grounded in the strong conviction that tenants must be the leaders of efforts to transform housing conditions and communities.

TU staff represent low-income community leaders of color, people with disabilities, and LGBTQI renters, and we are committed to continued growth in practicing racial justice and anti-oppression across the TU's work. The organization is governed by a tenant-led board, focused on stewarding the organization and ensuring the long-term sustainability of our work. We strive to cultivate a culture of camaraderie, support, and care for one another and ourselves, believing this is critical for sustaining our movements and building alternatives to capitalistic white supremacy culture.

Job Summary

The Tenant Advocate and Community Organizer will be responsible for providing high-quality, sustained, and accountable education, advocacy, and support to low-income tenants as they navigate problems in their rental housing, with a particular focus on providing community education in Spanish and on building power among Latino renters. Working collaboratively with staff and tenant leaders, the advocate and community organizer will help the Tenants Union strengthen and integrate our language justice practices into all areas of our work and ensure that the leadership and struggles of Latino tenants are central to our organizing. We welcome

applications from anywhere in the state but are particularly interested in expanding access to services for tenants in Yakima, the Tri-Cities area, Tacoma, Vancouver or Aberdeen.

The Tenants Union of Washington State continues to actively and intentionally create a diverse and inclusive work environment and is proud to be an affirmative action and equal opportunity employer. We are seeking candidates who have lived experiences with housing instability, homelessness, incarceration, and/or other issues we are working on. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), women, immigrants and refugees, LGBTQI individuals, and people with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, familial status, sexual orientation, national origin, ability, age, or veteran status.

Essential Responsibilities

Tenant Advocacy and Case Management (40%)

- Help renters understand and enforce their rights under WA landlord/tenant law via one-on-one education and advocacy.
- Support tenants in navigating the processes outlined in the law for repair requests, deposit return, and holding landlords accountable.
- Support tenants in reporting and resisting retaliation.
- Mediate between tenants and landlords.
- Connect tenants with resources available in the community.
- Follow up with cases to ensure good outcomes for tenants.

Tenant Counseling and Community Outreach (30%)

- Provide empowering and compassionate tenants' rights counseling.
- Create Spanish-language informational materials for renters about housing issues, tenants' rights, and local and statewide campaigns.
- Represent the Tenants Union at community events and help establish a strong TU presence including presentations to community groups; tabling at events; tenant rights workshops and pop-up clinics.
- Actively seek out workshop and presentation opportunities and community partnerships.
- Build relationships with local reporters, editors, and media outlets and seek out community-based outreach opportunities, esp. In Spanish-language media (community radio, local news stations, etc.).

Leadership Development and Community Organizing (30%)

- Engage in individualized outreach to affected tenants including flyering, phone banking, and door-to-door outreach (when safe to do so).
- Provide one-on-one training, support, and leadership development to tenant leaders organizing in their building or neighborhood.
- Train tenants in organizing skills, tenant rights, and housing policies impacting low-income people and people of color.
- Support tenants in developing strategies to achieve their goals through collective action, including power-mapping, campaign planning, and direct action and demonstrations.

- Support the formation of new tenant associations; train tenant groups on best practices in tenant association governance and decision making; and provide ongoing counseling to newly created tenant associations to sustain the longevity of the group.
- Build relationships with existing and emerging housing justice organizations, and link organized tenant groups to larger campaigns for housing justice.
- With training and support, assist tenant leaders in advocating for stronger tenant protections at the local and state level.

Other

- Collaborate with the Executive Director, staff, and board in organizational development and strategic planning efforts.
- Attend regular weekly staff meetings, staff retreats as scheduled, and board meetings as necessary and/or desired.
- In addition to these core responsibilities, additional work and duties may be negotiated.

Essential Qualifications

- A strong commitment to housing justice, racial justice, and to creating multilingual spaces in our movement building work.
- Experience with authentic and open relationship-building with BIPOC communities, low-income communities, and other people targeted by oppression.
- Demonstrated ability and commitment to challenge oneself and others to undo racism, homophobia, xenophobia, ableism, and all forms of oppression.
- Fluency in Spanish is required.
- Rooted in community and in authentic relationships of trust, collaboration, and support.

Desired Qualities

- Lived experience with substandard housing, displacement, low-income housing and/or other housing challenges.
- Fluency in an Indigenous language spoken by immigrant and farmworker communities in our state, ie Purupecha, Mixteco, Maya K'iche, etc.
- Experience (formal or informal; paid or unpaid) with grassroots and/or community organizing.
- Ability to work well both independently and as a part of a diverse team.
- Willingness to practice joy and celebration in movement-building work together, in collaboration with a rad team of co-workers.

Work Location and Schedule

- Weekly schedule is Monday through Friday, but hours can vary. Organizing staff occasionally work evenings and weekends to accommodate the needs of the working people we are organizing alongside; and staff are expected and encouraged to comp time appropriately.
- Weekly staff meetings occur every Thursday from 1:00-3:00pm PT over Zoom.
- The Tenants Union has offices in both Seattle and Spokane, however both offices are currently closed due to COVID-19, in compliance with all CDC and Washington State COVID health & safety requirements. All staff are working remotely.

- We are accepting applications from candidates anywhere in Washington State. The TU will work to support the future telework needs of a candidate located outside the areas of our Spokane or Seattle offices.

Compensation & Benefits

- **Salary:** Salary is \$50,000 annually (payroll is twice a month on the 15th and last day of the month). This is a full time, exempt salaried position, working 35 hours per week.
- **PTO & Vacation:** 18 days of PTO during 1st year of employment, 23 days in 2nd & 3rd years, and 28 days in 4th year. 15 paid holidays, including your birthday.
- **Benefits:** We offer 100% reimbursement (which is currently taxed) on premiums for medical & dental plans selected through the Washington Health Benefit Exchange, a \$50/month cell phone stipend, and a training budget to support staff professional development. **Note: The Tenants Union is currently undergoing a review of employee benefits, with the anticipation of implementing changes to make our benefits more equitable and to better meet the needs of our staff.*

Hiring Process & Timeline

To apply, submit cover letter, resume and any additional material to info@tenantsunion.org with “Job Application – Tenant Advocate and Community Organizer” in the subject line, or mail to:

Tenants Union of Washington State
ATTN: Hiring Committee
5425 Rainier Avenue South Ste B
Seattle, WA 98118-2455

- This position is open until filled but applications will begin to be reviewed on **March 29th, 2021**.
- Prospective candidates will be invited to a **virtual interview in mid-April**. A second interview may be requested, as needed.
- We hope that the selected candidate will start at the **end of April 2021**.

If you have questions about this position or the application process, please email Violet Lavatai at info@tenantsunion.org.

We look forward to receiving your application!