

PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCATE – EDUCATION

Organization:

The Arc of Texas promotes, protects and advocates for the human rights and self-determination of Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Founded in 1950 by a group of parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, The Arc has been instrumental in the creation of virtually every program, service, right, and benefit that is now available to more than half a million Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Today, The Arc continues to advocate for including people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in all aspects of society. The Arc of Texas envisions a world where Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities are included in their communities where quality supports and services are available to meet their needs and choices. The Arc of Texas is the statewide Chapter of The Arc. There are 31 Local Chapters of The Arc of Texas.

Description:

The Arc of Texas, a statewide nonprofit organization, has an immediate opening for a full time Public Policy Advocate – Education.

Overview of Job:

The Arc of Texas' Public Policy Advocate for Public Education Initiatives (Policy Advocate) leads, develops and advocates for education policies that positively impact students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The Policy Advocate will be a critical member of The Arc of Texas' Public Policy and Advocacy Department. Under the supervision of the Chief Government and Community Relations Officer, the Policy Advocate will work to advance The Arc of Texas public education policy priorities.

Overarching Duties:

- Increase knowledge and awareness of issues at the intersection of public education, special education and the advancement of disability rights.
- Expand the availability of resources to support students and families.
- Promote fair access to a free and appropriate public education.
- Assist The Local Chapters of The Arc of Texas to become the go-to resources in their communities on public education issues.

Role and Responsibilities:

1. Assist in providing accurate information, referral and technical assistance to people with IDD, their family members, disability professionals, and education professionals about public education services and rights for students with IDD.
2. Research policies, rules, best practices and statutes in Texas and other states, to identify barriers for Texans with IDD in the public education system and explore potential solutions.
3. Identify current issues that negatively impact Texans with IDD and lead public policy efforts at the state and local levels that improve the educational outcomes for Texans with IDD.

4. Work with state agency personnel, decision makers and elected officials to educate them about solutions and best practices that will advance effective public education policies and reforms for Texans with IDD.
5. Provide support to individuals with IDD, family members, Local Chapters of The Arc of Texas and coalition partners to participate in the decision-making/legislative process. This includes assisting with public testimony, developing written comments, meetings with elected officials, advocating with an individual's providers and participating on committees or workgroups.
6. Represent The Arc of Texas on committees, round tables, workgroups and councils to ensure policies that protect students with IDD are promoted and protected.
7. Provide public testimony at hearings relevant to The Arc of Texas policy priorities and develop written comments in response to agency rules, handbook changes, public hearings and more.
8. Work closely with The Arc of Texas' Public Policy and Advocacy team, Public Policy and Advocacy Committee, Local Chapters of The Arc of Texas, individuals with IDD, family members and coalition partners on issues related to public education for students with IDD.
9. Partner with internal departments at The Arc of Texas to collect individuals' stories, recommend program advancements, help with The Arc of Texas Inclusion Works! Conference and serve as a subject matter expert for the staff.
10. Assist in developing resources, fact sheets, toolkits, and other educational and advocacy materials.

Educational Requirements:

Degree in public education, public administration, special education, human services, or other relevant field(s) from an accredited college or university or equivalent policy experience. Two to three years of experience recommended. Bilingual candidate a preferred.

Qualifications:

1. Embrace The Arc of Texas mission, vision and guiding principles
2. Ability to analyze and inform bills, policies, rules and other related materials
3. Knowledge of IDEA, 504, transition, WIOA and Texas education laws and policies
4. Personal or professional experience living with or working with people with IDD and related disabilities
5. Understanding of intersectionality issues that impact people with disabilities in the public education system
6. Excellent oral and written communication skills
7. Well-developed public speaking, training, presentation and facilitation skills
8. Understanding of public policy change and systems advocacy
9. Strong interpersonal skills, team building, and management skills
10. Creative, self-motivated, and able to work as part of a team
11. Ability to multi-task and meet tight timelines, along with disciplined time management skills to coordinate and prioritize activities, evaluate progress, and listen to feedback

12. Must possess integrity and can be relied upon to act ethically
13. Ability to attend after hours and weekend meetings/events is required
14. Must have reliable transportation

Needed Attributes:

1. Honesty
2. Integrity
3. Strong work ethic
4. Commitment to excellence
5. Spirit of teamwork
6. Belief in self-determination and community inclusion
7. Flexibility
8. Positive attitude

The Arc of Texas is an equal opportunity employer committed to diversity in the workplace, including people with disabilities.

Benefits:

The Arc of Texas offers a competitive benefits package including 403B retirement plan, employer paid health, life and ADD. In addition, The Arc of Texas offers generous leave and holiday time off to all employees. Salary range is \$44,000 to \$46,000 annually.

The Arc of Texas provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetics, gender identity or any other characteristics protected by applicable federal, state or local laws. The Arc of Texas encourages individuals with disabilities to apply. Contact the Director of Finance with any questions or requests for accommodation during the application process or during the course of employment.

To Apply:

Please send your resume, cover letter, and salary requirements to: accounting@thearcoftexas.org.

NO phone calls & NO recruiter solicitations.