



## Staff Attorney Job Description

**Position:** Staff Attorney

**Position Type:** Part-time (32 or 24 hours per week)

**Reporting:** President & CEO

**Location:** Charleston, SC

### Application Instructions:

To apply, please email a cover letter, resume and three references in one PDF addressed to Ellen Blake, Operations Manager, to [careers@lowcountrylandtrust.org](mailto:careers@lowcountrylandtrust.org) by February 25, 2022. This is a part-time position—please specify whether 32 or 24 hours per week is preferred. Initial screening interviews will be conducted on a rolling basis.

### POSITION SUMMARY

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The Staff Attorney is a member of the multidisciplinary team at Lowcountry Land Trust (LLT) dedicated to permanent land protection across South Carolina's Coastal Plain. A primary function of the Staff Attorney will be ensuring the permanence of LLT's protected lands portfolio by effectively analyzing and resolving conservation easement compliance issues. The Staff Attorney is a resourceful, analytical, strategic, and organized individual with a legal background and a passion for land conservation. In concert with the Chief Conservation Officer, the Staff Attorney advises on the technical and legal aspects of LLT's conservation program, with a primary focus on overseeing, coordinating, and managing conservation easement compliance and enforcement. Other conservation duties include assisting with transactional work, and compliance with policies and procedures. In concert with the President & CEO, the Board of Directors, and outside legal counsel as necessary, the Staff Attorney provides operational oversight and manages LLT's general legal needs.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

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#### Land Stewardship Compliance & Monitoring:

- Oversee the resolution of conservation easement stewardship issues in accordance with accepted land trust community practice and LLT policies and procedures.
- Effectively and diplomatically resolve major conservation easement stewardship issues—including but not limited to potential or actual violations, easement interpretations, boundary disputes, and condemnation—through direct interaction and negotiation with landowners and third parties.

- Manage the organization’s external consultations on legal matters related to easement or fee lands stewardship; communicate with other staff, board members, outside counsel, and experts to assess the situation and recommend courses of action.
- Assist the Stewardship Program Manager as necessary in resolving routine conservation easement stewardship issues and landowner requests.
- Assist the Stewardship Program Manager in ensuring that conservation easement stewards and other staff correctly and consistently interpret easement language.
- Monitor and steward a small portfolio of conservation interests, building and maintaining landowner relationships.
- Track the status of all active conservation easement stewardship issues.
- Lead or co-lead the presentation and discussion of stewardship matters at Board and committee meetings.

### **Land Transactions:**

- As requested by land protection staff, coordinate the successful completion of any technical items necessary to close conservation easement or fee simple acquisition projects, including associated due diligence and post-closing documentation such as IRS Forms 8283; coordinate review by outside legal counsel as necessary.
- Assist project managers when and as requested in negotiation of conservation easement terms with landowners and their advisors and representatives (accountants, lawyers, appraisers, etc.).
- Participate in decision-making and manage the drafting and completion of conservation easement amendments, in cooperation with other LLT staff, the Board Conservation Committee, and outside counsel.

### **Conservation Programs Administration**

- Stay abreast of national trends, case law, and IRS recommendations through the Land Trust Alliance (LTA), South Carolina Bar Association, and other outlets.
- Periodically oversee LLT’s review and update of legal templates, legal agreements, and policies and procedures to ensure that documents are accurate and compliant with current recommendations and the LTA Standards and Practices.
- Ensure that LLT follows the Land Trust Alliance Accreditation Program mandates and is prepared for LLT’s renewal.
- Assist staff in adhering to and revising as necessary LLT’s policies and procedures, in accordance with accepted practices and the Land Trust Alliance Accreditation Program.
- Supervise any legal interns or externs; indirectly supervise and support other conservation staff as needed.
- Actively participate in LLT’s regular cross-function staff Conservation Team meetings.
- Represent LLT in relevant initiatives, functions, and meetings, including occasional presentations to external audiences.

**General Legal:**

- Review as necessary all general contracts, employment agreements, and similar documents.
- Ensure that legal and compliance requirements, risk management measures, and best-practices are meaningfully integrated in LLT's decision-making and organizational functions.
- Advise on nonprofit governance and compliance to meet legal and organizational needs.

**Other Duties as Required**

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by an employee assigned to this position. They are not to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required. All staff members may be required to perform duties outside of their normal responsibilities from time to time, as needed.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

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- Passion for and commitment to LLT's mission and conservation goals.
- Juris Doctor (J.D.) from an accredited law school, and a member in good standing of a state bar (preferably the South Carolina Bar).
- Legal experience in some or all of the following: real property transactions; nonprofit governance, operation and compliance; land use and management issues; intellectual property; conservation transaction tools such as fee acquisition and conservation easements.
- Effective communicator with strong interpersonal skills; demonstrated ability to work in a non-adversarial, professional, and diplomatic manner.
- Demonstrated experience in designing, implementing, and directing strategic, legal, business, and risk management aspects of complex and diverse projects and transactions.
- Possesses a flexible, creative and time-efficient approach to problem solving.
- Excellent attention to detail and demonstrated ability to coordinate and work on multiple projects simultaneously.
- Excellent writing, research, and organization skills.
- Adept at working in team environments, both as a leader and member.
- Management experience preferred, including ability to motivate, lead, set objectives, and manage performance of a multidisciplinary team.
- Proficiency with MS Office, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Google's G-Suite, and willingness to learn the use of online databases, web-mapping and field technology such as iPads and GPS, and incorporate it into daily work.

Lowcountry Land Trust is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees. All applicants will be

considered for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, veteran or disability status.