



# Legal and Policy Director

*Job posted by SIKH AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND (SALDEF)*

## **DESCRIPTION**

**Job Title:** Legal and Policy Director

**Location:** Washington, DC

**Department:** Legal & Policy

**Reports to:** Executive Director

**Salary Range:** \$110 - \$130K

The Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF) is a national civil rights and advocacy organization dedicated to protecting the civil rights of Sikh Americans and promoting a greater understanding of Sikhism in the United States. Through litigation, policy advocacy, community education, and coalition building, SALDEF works to ensure equal opportunity and full participation for Sikh Americans across all aspects of public life.

SALDEF seeks a dynamic, strategic, and experienced Legal & Policy Director to lead the organization's legal strategy, public policy advocacy, and community response efforts. This senior leadership role will oversee community intake and case management, drive federal and state policy initiatives, guide litigation and amicus strategy, and provide organizational thought leadership on issues impacting Sikh Americans.

The Legal & Policy Director will supervise legal and policy staff, cultivate external partnerships, represent SALDEF before government agencies and coalitions, and serve as a key advisor to the Executive Director and Board of Directors. The ideal candidate combines deep civil rights expertise with strong management skills and a demonstrated commitment to racial, religious, and immigrant justice.

## **Roles/Responsibilities**

### Strategic Legal Leadership

- Develop and implement SALDEF's national legal strategy in alignment with organizational priorities, strategic objectives, and mission.
- Oversee litigation, impact cases, administrative complaints, and amicus briefs.
- Provide legal analysis on emerging civil rights issues affecting Sikh Americans, including religious accommodation, employment discrimination, school bullying, hate crimes, immigration, and public safety.
- Serve as principal legal spokesperson when appropriate, including media commentary and public education.



## Community Intake & Response

- Design and manage systems for community intake, case triage, and referrals.
- Supervise legal staff and volunteers handling complaints and direct representation.
- Ensure timely, trauma-informed, and culturally competent responses to community members.
- Track trends in discrimination and civil rights violations to inform advocacy and litigation priorities.

## Policy Development & Advocacy

- Lead development of SALDEF's federal and state legislative and regulatory agenda.
- Draft policy briefs, legislative proposals, public comments, and regulatory guidance.
- Engage with and brief members of Congress, executive branch agencies, state lawmakers, and local officials.
- Build bipartisan relationships to advance protections for religious freedom and civil rights.
- Represent SALDEF in coalitions addressing hate crimes prevention, anti-discrimination policy, and national security concerns.

## Organizational Leadership & Strategy

- Serve as a member of SALDEF's senior leadership team.
- Provide strategic guidance to the Executive Director and Board on legal and policy matters.
- Manage department budget, staffing plans, and performance goals.
- Support fundraising efforts through grant writing, donor engagement, and program reporting.
- Mentor and develop policy associates and/or legal fellows.

## Public Education & External Affairs

- Present at conferences, community forums, and legal trainings.
- Develop know-your-rights materials and legal resources for Sikh American communities.
- Collaborate with communications staff to translate legal and policy priorities into public-facing messaging.
- Cultivate partnerships with national civil rights organizations, law firms, and pro bono counsel.

## **WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR**

Highly organized, detail-oriented self-starter who can create, manage, and fully drive projects that result in high-quality work in a timely manner. You know how to think ahead, prioritize your workload, and prepare for challenges. You enjoy challenges and having a full plate but also know how to manage up when the workload needs to be reprioritized. Someone who enjoys a respectful, positive, collaborative, and flexible work environment. The team is small but nimble. We celebrate shared successes and empower each other to be impactful in our work.



## **CANDIDATE REQUISITES**

### **Required:**

- J.D. from an accredited law school and active bar membership in good standing.
- Minimum 8 years of relevant legal and/or policy experience (civil rights, constitutional law, nonprofit advocacy, or government service).
- Demonstrated experience in legislative advocacy and/or impact litigation.
- Strong supervisory and team management experience.
- Exceptional legal writing, policy drafting, and public speaking skills.
- Experience working with diverse communities and coalition partners.

## **PREFERRED SKILLS**

- Familiarity with issues impacting Sikh Americans and other religious minority communities.
- Experience engaging with federal agencies (e.g., DOJ, DHS, EEOC) and congressional offices.
- Background in nonprofit leadership or program management.
- Punjabi language fluency is a plus but not required.

## **COMPENSATION**

Salary will be competitive and commensurate with experience. We have a generous vacation policy, and provide health, dental, and vision insurance.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Please email a thoughtful cover letter detailing your relevant experience, resume with 3 references (at least 2 work references), and an unedited writing sample (development, communications, or policy-related writing sample) (maximum 5 pages) as a single PDF document to [careers@saldef.org](mailto:careers@saldef.org), indicating "LEGAL AND POLICY DIRECTOR" in the subject line. We are accepting applications and interviewing candidates on a rolling basis. Only qualified candidates will be contacted.

**SALDEF is an equal opportunity employer. No phone calls, please.**