



## **Job Description**

### ***Executive Director***

### ***Children's Defense Fund – California (Location: Los Angeles)***

Children's Defense Fund seeks an experienced executive leader to drive its policies, advocacy, and programs for California's children. Candidates should have an aptitude for leading multiple streams of complex work, extensive direct management, fundraising, policy and advocacy experience, and a passion for leveling the playing field for California's children.

**Organizational Summary:** In 1973, civil rights leader Marian Wright Edelman founded The Children's Defense Fund with the Leave No Child Behind® mission: to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. CDF provides a strong, effective, and independent voice for all of the children in America who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves. We pay particular attention to the needs of poor children, children of color and those with disabilities. CDF educates the nation about the needs of children and encourages preventive investments before they get sick or into trouble, drop out of school, or suffer family breakdown. CDF is a private, nonprofit organization supported by foundation and corporate grants and individual donations. The Children's Defense Fund – California (CDF-CA) office was founded in 1998 to meet the needs of underserved children in the state of California. With primary offices in Los Angeles and Oakland, and staff members working in Sacramento and Long Beach, CDF-CA advocates for policies and programs that lift children out of poverty; ensure all children have access to health coverage, healthcare, and a quality education; invest in justice-involved youth and youth in the child-welfare system.

**Primary Duties and Responsibilities:** The Executive Director of CDF-CA is responsible for developing and executing a strategic vision to ensure a level playing field for California's children; guiding the development and implementation of CDF-CA programs; supervising employees; leading CDF-CA's fundraising efforts; building and maintaining cooperative working relationships with a broad and diverse array of key stakeholders including child advocacy groups, community-based organizations, legislators and policy makers, the faith community and other key allies; and serving as the primary spokesperson for CDF-CA. The Executive Director will report to the CDF's National Director of State Offices and Field Operations.

**Specific job responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:**

- Provide creative vision and strong leadership in developing, implementing and evaluating strategies that reflect the mission of CDF while setting programmatic priorities and operational planning for CDF-CA that are consistent with an overall strategic plan, complement the organization's mission and are economically viable;
- Work in partnership with CDF's national management, board members and the executive leadership in other state offices to develop and implement CDF's national child policy priorities;
- Lead the development and implementation of CDF-CA's annual legislative and budget advocacy agenda in partnership with the CDF- CA Staff;

- Work with the CDF-CA team to evaluate existing work-streams and effectively integrate CDF-CA's policy and advocacy work and programs to identify areas of overlap where staff could increase collaboration on strategy; Implement new programs or expand existing programs as deemed necessary and feasible to achieve CDF's mission;
- Act as a liaison between the community-at-large and the media. Create pro-active media opportunities to advance CDF-CA's agenda and respond to media inquiries;
- Provide direction on grassroots organizing, create and foster linkages with current partner and/or new organizations and coalitions to build the children's movement in California and nationally;
- Supervise CDF-CA's 15+ staff members in all aspects of work and actively manage, engage in, participate in, support and encourage the professional development of staff members; create a positive and engaging organizational culture with the support of a Deputy Executive Director and CDF-CA Leadership team;
- Maintain ongoing communication with CDF national staff and ensure that all programmatic reports are completed and submitted in a timely manner;
- Work closely with the CDF national development staff and CDF-CA Regional Development Officer to plan and implement an effective, integrated development program for CDF-CA and directly raise support for the office's operating budget (\$2.5 million annually);
- Actively seek new revenue sources – corporate, foundation, grant funding, and major donors – to meet operating budget;
- Oversee fiscal and administrative procedures to assure programs and accounting systems are fiscally sound. Prepare annual budget; supervise the preparation of financial reports and grants administration throughout the year;
- Perform all other administrative and programmatic tasks as deemed necessary by the CDF President and national leadership team.

#### **Qualifications:**

- Demonstrated commitment to issues impacting children and families;
- Evidence of significant leadership capacity to manage a large team of 15 or more staff primarily located in Los Angeles and Oakland with 5 years (minimum) of senior management experience;
- Engaging presence and ability to effectively partner in child advocacy, policy, and philanthropic communities in California;
- Experience in non-profit fundraising and/or an entrepreneurial spirit a plus;
- Superb organizational and interpersonal skills combined with the ability to set and manage priorities and competing demands;
- Demonstrated ability to inspire, motivate, and organize people into effective teams and monitor progress toward goals;
- Proven ability to design and implement multiple projects and programs;
- Experience developing organizational budgets and providing fiscal oversight;
- Experience with city and state-level legislative and budget advocacy
- Understanding of the principles of community mobilizing and organizing;
- Excellent communications skills with the ability to effectively convey CDF's mission to a variety of constituencies and creatively engage key partners in the programs, activities, and advocacy work of CDF on the local, state and national level.

**Salary:** Commensurate with experience. This is a full-time salaried position with a generous benefits package including vacation, medical, dental and retirement plans. Please be prepared to share your minimum salary requirement.

**To apply, please submit a detailed cover letter, which can exceed one page (detailing your interest and management, fundraising, policy/advocacy experience) and resume online at:**

[www.childrensdefense.org/jobs](http://www.childrensdefense.org/jobs)

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