



National Alliance Against Racist & Political Repression/Chicago Branch

1325 S. Wabash Ave. Suite 105, Chicago, Illinois 60605 (312) 939-2750

www.naarpr.org

Opportunity for two interns - Spring, Summer, Fall 2008 Prison Medical Care - Prisoner Human Rights

The National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression - Chicago Branch is conducting a study of medical care in Illinois prisons. The purpose of the study is to determine whether the denial of adequate medical care experienced by many prisoners of the Illinois Department of Corrections is systematic and rises to the level of deliberate indifference. If it does, then we have consulted with the Illinois Chapter of the ACLU about filing a class action suit to remedy this situation.

The study has been proceeding since 1998, and over 600 prisoners have so far become involved. The NAARPR-Chicago receives spontaneous complaints from people incarcerated in Illinois prisons regarding problems they are having with medical care and other issues. Because it is now widely known that we are engaged in this study we received between 30 and 50 letters every week.

It is our policy to briefly evaluate every letter and answer it. We have a semi-automated process for doing so: volunteers read each letter and enter summary data into a table in addition to a personalized response. The table is used to generate letters of reply to the prisoners. Prisoners sign releases authorizing us to access their medical records for review. Volunteer medical professionals conduct that review.

In addition to people with medical problems, we also receive letters from people who feel they have been wrongfully convicted or have other problems within the system. Where appropriate, we work with attorneys in such cases and conduct educational work among the population about them.

We have an opportunity for at least two interns to work on a non-paid basis in helping to evaluate, respond to and follow up on these letters. There are also many opportunities for more in depth research into issues of correctional medical care and problems of incarceration, including wrongful conviction.

Work may be done at home utilizing email and internet communications, or at our office at 1325 S. Wabash Ave. Suite 105, Chicago IL 60605, or both.

All volunteers are required to sign a non-disclosure statement accepting their responsibility to safeguard the information to which they will have access against unauthorized release or distribution, consistent with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).

Requirements:

1. Basic knowledge of Constitutional law and principles safeguarding human rights.
2. An informed lay understanding of common medical problems.
3. Proficiency using the Internet for light research tasks.
4. Proficiency in PC office skills using Microsoft Word and Excel.
5. A personal computer with connection to the Internet and an email account

Compensation:

1. These are non-salaried positions.
2. Volunteers will be reimbursed for basic expenses regarding local travel to and from the office and lunch, as well as any other out-of-pocket expenses incurred as a result of the work.

Students who are interested should send an email with "Project internship" in the subject line addressed to Project Director, Ted Pearson, at tpearson@naarpr.org, or call 312-927-2689.

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