



**UNHCR**

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

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**Individual Contractor (IC) – UNOPS  
Legal Associate, LICA-6**

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**Title: Legal Associate, Individual Contractor (UNOPS)**

**Contract type: Local ICA**

**Contract level: LICA-6 (GS 6)**

**Department/office: UNHCR San Diego**

**Duration: 5 month contract starting from 01/08/2020 with a possibility of extension**

**Application period: 13/07/2020 – 27/07/2020**

**General Background**

UNHCR is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. We deliver life-saving assistance like shelter, food and water, and develop solutions that ensure people have a safe place to call home where they can build a better future. Every year, millions of men, women and children are forced to flee their homes to escape conflict and persecution. We are in over 125 countries, using our expertise to protect and care for millions.

**Operational Context:**

Since 2013, asylum-seekers from the North of Central America, Mexico, and other regions have arrived in growing numbers at the U.S. southern border, putting pressure on the U.S. asylum procedure and border management systems. In 2019, rising numbers of family units and unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) within mixed flows have challenged current reception practices and systems that were originally built primarily with single male undocumented migrants in mind. Given the current challenges at the U.S.-Mexico border, UNHCR has established a field office in San Diego, and developed a commensurate set of work to serve persons of concern at the southern border. UNHCR has expanded its technical engagement with U.S. government entities at the border, as well as extended its interactions to include state and local government as well as civil society stakeholders in the southern border states. UNHCR in the U.S. is also strengthening its cross-border coordination with our counterparts in Mexico, as UNHCR Mexico has expanded its operations and partnerships in the northern border region (with direct field presence in Tijuana, Mexicali and Ciudad Juarez, and remote coverage of other border points from Monterrey). Given these circumstances, UNHCR is planning a modest expansion of staffing to strengthen technical assistance, engagement activities, and support to persons of concern.

In this context, UNHCR is recruiting for a Legal Associate (Individual Contractor (UNOPS)) function in the based in San Diego, California USA, as part of the small border deployment team reporting to the team leader (who is also based in San Diego). Travel to other locations in the southern border states, as well as less frequently to Washington, the rest of the United States, and abroad, may be required. The successful candidate will provide support with a wide range of activities, including building and maintaining effective and collaborative interfaces with relevant authorities and legal service providers; cross-border coordination with UNHCR teams in Mexico, especially with respect to particularly vulnerable asylum-seekers; and reporting activities.

The successful candidate will work to expand legal support and legal empowerment for asylum-seekers at the border, and will assist the San Diego team leader with a number of legal initiatives. Since 2017, UNHCR has worked with U.S. partners to build a national network of legal empowerment organizations, which is now being expanded to include border organizations in order to provide legal assistance and support for asylum-seekers in the MPP and / or other border processes. Since 2017, UNHCR has been providing support to a network of humanitarian respite shelters (transit shelters for asylum-seeking families released from detention), and more sustained UNHCR engagement with the shelter network – including through legal training - is needed to support greater institutional readiness to cope with sudden influx UNHCR is building legal service provider working groups along the border.

# Legal Associate LICA-6 (UNOPS)

## **Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Stay abreast of political, social, economic and cultural developments that have an impact on refugees and asylum-seekers, particularly at the border;
- Monitor asylum processing at the border, including accelerated screenings and immigration courts;
- Engage and advance UNHCR initiatives to provide legal assistance and support to persons of concern at the border, and support the implementation of UNHCR's national legal empowerment strategy at the local level;
- Coordinate with other UNHCR offices and partner organizations on the development of legal analysis relevant to persons of concern;
- Work closely with UNHCR's partner organizations to support the development of legal services and legal empowerment within a small number of UNHCR-led cross-border programs;
- Provide support to individual asylum-seekers in particular need, in coordination with the San Diego and Washington offices;
- Liaise with/participate in initiatives alongside competent authorities, NGOs and other relevant institutions in relation to issues of mutual interest;
- Contribute to child protection plans at in the area of response, in line with the UNHCR strategy;
- Contribute to effective information management through the provision of disaggregated data on populations of concern and their problems;
- Assist in the establishment and regular functioning of various coordination mechanisms.

## **Education:**

- Completion of a bachelor's degree in is required; Completion of a juris doctor (JD) or an LLM from a U.S. law school highly desired. Coursework and / or clinic in immigration law is strongly preferred.

## **Required qualifications and experience:**

- At least 4 years of relevant work experience. Up to 2 of those years may be substituted by time spent in higher education (for instance, a candidate with a juris doctor may count higher education for 2 years and needs to show 2 more years of relevant work experience). Experience with handling sensitive or confidential data.
- Strong written and oral communication skills.
- Good time management skills.
- Strong team orientation and demonstrated capacity to work collaboratively in a high-paced and often stressful environment.
- Experience with dealing with the public and diverse stakeholders.
- Direct services experience is a strong asset.
- Fluency in English and professional proficiency in Spanish are required; proficiency in other UN languages an asset.

## **Key Competencies:**

- Judgement and Decision Making
- Analytical Thinking
- Political Awareness
- Stakeholder Management

## **Desirable skills and competencies:**

- Completed the UNHCR Protection Learning Programme.
- Strong IT and information management skills and demonstrated understanding of protection data collection methodologies.

## **Legal Status:**

- Applicants must have legal residence with valid work permission in the US for the duration of the contract.

## **Legal Associate LICA-6 (UNOPS)**

**Application deadline: 17 July 2020 by close of business, 11:59PM (Washington DC time).**

Receipt of application will not be acknowledged and only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interview. Interested candidates meeting the above requirements are requested to submit 1) UNHCR Personnel History Form available at: [www.unhcr.org/recruit/unhcr-phf.docm](http://www.unhcr.org/recruit/unhcr-phf.docm) . If extra space is needed, please also use Supplementary Sheet available: [www.unhcr.org/recruit/unhcr-phf-sup.docm](http://www.unhcr.org/recruit/unhcr-phf-sup.docm) ; and 2) a letter of motivation by e-mail to [usawaadm@unhcr.org](mailto:usawaadm@unhcr.org) quoting “**Legal Associate – UNOPS**” in the subject line of the email. Shortlisted candidates may be required to sit for a written test and/or oral interview.

UNHCR does not charge a fee at any stage of the recruitment process (application, interview, processing or any other fees). UNHCR strongly encourages qualified female applicants for this position. UNHCR seeks to ensure that male and female employees are given equal career opportunities. UNHCR is committed to achieving workforce diversity including in relation to gender, nationality and culture. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidentiality.

**Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.**