



POLICY DIRECTOR, CLEAN AIR & WATER (Attorney) FEDERAL POLICY OFFICE - WASHINGTON, DC

ABOUT US

West Harlem Environmental Action a/k/a WE ACT for Environmental Justice is a non profit, community-based advocacy organization that works to build healthy communities by ensuring that people of color and/or low income residents participate meaningfully in the creation of sound and fair environmental health and protection policies and practices. **WE ACT is a nationally recognized leader in the environmental justice (EJ) movement** and is known for its work in the areas of children's environmental health; government accountability; and climate, energy and environmental justice. WE ACT's deep roots in the community, track record of policy impact, integrity and reputation are driving exponential growth over the next year, including in our federal policy office.

WE ACT is the only national EJ organization with a permanent presence in Washington, DC. Our newly minted five-year strategic plan outlines a federal policy strategy that includes advancing and reforming new national policy, practices and regulations; supporting policy implementation and regulatory efforts of existing policy to ensure accountability; convening coalitions, organizations and researchers to drive a shared national EJ agenda; building a powerful narrative to catalyze a national EJ movement; and serving as a connector, regrantor and technical assistance provider to build the capacity of EJ organizations into a powerful, cohesive national movement.

WE ACT prioritizes the voices of longstanding community members, communities of color, lower-income communities and, most importantly, those who have been historically marginalized and subjected to environmental and other forms of racism and exclusion. In accordance with the Jemez Principles, **we believe that communities must speak for themselves.** We work at the intersection of community engagement and activation, policy, research and education. WE ACT leverages our place at the table to push system actors, including elected officials, Big Greens, coalitions and allies to center racial justice and equity.

ABOUT THE ROLE

WE ACT is seeking a Policy Director, Clean Air & Water (Attorney) with a demonstrated passion for justice and equity issues for our Federal Policy Office. This individual reports to the Senior Director of the Federal Policy Office and will pursue the use of administrative, legislative and regulatory actions to address the environmental and socio-economic burdens of pollution, creating safe and healthy living conditions in frontline communities.

While national policies aim to allocate funding and resources to particular communities, we have seen time and time again that government often falls short. The Policy Director, Clean Air & Water (Attorney) will lead WE ACT's efforts to support environmental justice initiatives, particularly those related to the use of the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act to reduce pollution in overburdened communities of color. These initiatives include ensuring that environmental justice organizations are poised to receive funding allocated from across federal agencies (e.g., EPA, HUD,) using the Justice40 framework.

The Policy Director will also promote the use of rigorous economic analysis in federal rulemaking; draft grant and fundraising material and donor reports; engage with external partners and the media to build support for public health policy; and ensure clean air and water protections lead to improved environmental, economic, social and political outcomes for Upper Manhattan and various constituencies of the EJ movement. The person in this role will identify the most important existing federal EJ legislation and regulation and assess the status of current implementation efforts in New York City and New York state, providing legislative guidance and influencing policy regulation to ensure accountability. The Policy Director will also conduct research and develop reports to provide oversight and promote compliance with policy guidelines. They will communicate findings and raise awareness among key decision-makers by organizing systems, bodies and local community members for implementation efforts that are falling short. **Key Responsibilities include:**

Legal Strategy

- Co-create and implement a comprehensive federal regulatory affairs plan in support of the policy priorities of the Federal Policy Office and to define short- and long-term goals and objectives related to WE ACT's clean air and water policy impact.
- Identify and implement environmental justice interests in legal, policy and regulatory solutions, including litigation, regulatory proceedings and other advocacy venues.
- Conduct legal and factual research on climate, clean air and water issues, particularly Clean Air Act regulation of pollution from the power sector and major industrial sources.
- Co-create public comments, white papers, policy, technical reports and analytical tools that can be used in legal campaigns, particularly with respect to the power sector, industrial sources and policies affecting the use of science and economics in federal clean air rulemaking.
- Prepare and have at the ready alternative and innovative solutions to detrimental court rulings that further constrain or weaken critical EPA and Clean Air Act protections.
- Convene and facilitate meetings and working groups with EJ movement partners, experts, advocates, ratepayer and consumer groups, manufacturers, business organizations and associations, outside counsel and others to develop relationships and strengthen networks in order to address barriers to equity-centered environmental policy.
- Track and support WE ACT's partners in pertinent regulatory dockets.

Policy Analysis & Regulatory Affairs

- Provide analysis of legal cases and trends, as well as proposed federal laws and regulations that may perpetuate inequitable public health and economic burdens in communities disproportionately impacted by air and water pollution.
- Serve as WE ACT's point person on clean air and water regulations, education and communication with federal regulators and policymakers, developing strong relationships, identifying opportunities and priorities and establishing WE ACT as the go-to resource for

policymakers, regulators, coalition members and other stakeholders around environmental justice and clean air and water policy.

- Provide testimony and support administrative advocacy to ensure strong implementation of existing federal laws and regulations.
- Draft public-facing documents such as fact sheets and blog posts about legal and policy issues surrounding clean air and water in order to build robust public support.
- Share legal insight on state and federal regulatory issues with members of the Environmental Justice Leadership Forum, an alliance of 50 environmental justice groups representing 22 states that is convened by WE ACT.

Staff Management

- Supervise the Federal Regulatory Affairs Manager (Attorney), Energy and Transportation Policy Manager and Education & Toxics Policy Manager, including establishing annual objectives (to support overall goals established in the policy agenda), provide regular feedback and appropriate recognition, conduct annual performance reviews and support ongoing professional development.
- Partner with the Senior Director to determine and manage the legal program budget, ensuring cost effectiveness and accurate reporting to funders.
- Support overall fundraising efforts related to the policy agenda and priorities.
- Develop dashboards to track progress and benchmarks against the policy agendas and proactively produce reports and analyses of campaigns to inform strategies and improve results.
- Routinely report to advisors, partners and funders and on policy activities, campaigns and events, providing quantitative and qualitative analyses to support their oversight and engagement.
- Ensure compliance with all legal and lobbying requirements, as appropriate.

ABOUT YOU

The incoming Policy Director, Clean Air & Water (Attorney) is driven by their belief in and commitment to WE ACT's vision and mission. Through their track record as a policy advocate, lawyer or legal strategist, the successful candidate determines and drives WE ACT's federal policy agenda around clean air and water. The Director builds authentic and lasting relationships inside and outside the organization with regulators, policy makers and coalition members, engaging with them as partners in WE ACT's mission and vision.

The successful candidate is entrepreneurial and self-directed, bringing policy and political savvy to prioritize an ambitious agenda for maximum impact. This role requires a deep commitment to the principles of environmental justice and the ability to influence the development and implementation of federal policy and regulation. The optimal candidate has worked in an advocacy environment and understands the movement context, possessing a strong grasp of the economic, social and political forces that shape environmental policy related to clean air and water in the U.S. **The selected candidate will also possess most of the following *Core and Preferred* qualifications:**

Core

- Strong commitment to the mission and goals of WE ACT and a strong passion for solving the climate crisis through environmental justice.

- At least 2-4 years of increasing responsibility in public policy, with a proven track record of accomplishments designing and executing strategies that generate strong EJ-centered policy, intervening in administrative dockets and successfully influencing regulatory policy.
- JD, law school graduate admitted, or willing to apply for admission, to the District of Columbia Bar.
- Demonstrated experience working across lines of race, class, gender and geography and an analysis of how climate change and energy-related issues intersect with historically marginalized communities.
- Demonstrated understanding of how organized movements create change and accomplish policy objectives and familiarity with administrative, constitutional and regulatory processes.
- Outstanding research, analysis, oral and written communications skills in order to:
 - Translate complex data and analysis into persuasive narratives;
 - Communicate WE ACT strategies without jargon;
 - Write and deliver cogent arguments often within a short turnaround time.
- Exceptional project management skills and a high degree of emotional intelligence to support consensus building and collaboration between and among diverse stakeholders who may possess divergent viewpoints.
- Outstanding relationship-building skills with a wide range of diverse external constituencies, diplomatic abilities and authentic leadership skills that build the trust-based relationships necessary for stakeholders to buy in and share accountability for our collective work.
- Demonstrated ability to prioritize and be flexible in a fast-paced, constantly evolving and collaborative environment, where working on a team and working individually are required.

Preferred

- Background in environmental, climate, energy, or civil rights policy with a specific focus on the Clean Air Act and associated clean air and water legislation, regulations and policies.

SALARY & BENEFITS

WE ACT offers competitive nonprofit compensation and is committed to justice in salary transparency and wage equity. The salary range for this position is \$125,000 - \$140,000, based on experience and qualifications. WE ACT offers a generous suite of benefits, including comprehensive health care (medical, dental and vision), flexible spending account, life insurance, pre-tax transit program, retirement programs and paid holidays and vacation, along with onsite HR support for your benefit needs. WE ACT follows a **3-2 hybrid work policy**, requiring 3 days in the office per week. All staff are fully vaccinated.

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

WE ACT is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages applications from people of color, women, persons with disabilities and LGBTQ communities. We are committed to transparent and equitable recruitment, hiring and promotion processes that foster inclusion and belonging. If you've read this job description, are excited by it and can see yourself in this role, we hope you apply. If you need a reasonable accommodation during the application or interview process, please email David Hudson at davidhudson@weact.org.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply or nominate a candidate, please send to david.hudson@weact.org with “Policy Director, Clean Air & Water (Attorney)” in the subject line a resume, a sample legal brief or memo and cover email or letter answering the following:

- 1) Why are you passionate about environmental justice?
- 2) Briefly share a policy (legislative, administrative or regulatory) win you played a key role in, particularly a lesson learned that you would apply to WE ACT’s clean air and water policy goals.

Submission in a combined PDF or Microsoft Word file is preferred. This position is open until filled and applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.