



MENTAL HEALTH
ADVOCACY
SERVICES

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

POSITION PROFILE

Organization: **Mental Health Advocacy Services**

Location: **Los Angeles, CA**



MANEVA

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW:

MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY SERVICES

Founded in 1977, Mental Health Advocacy Services (MHAS) is the only legal aid organization in Los Angeles County exclusively dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights of individuals with mental health disabilities.

Originally launched as a pilot project of the Los Angeles County and Beverly Hills Bar Associations, MHAS has grown into an independent nonprofit that reaches thousands of people each year with free legal services, systemic advocacy, and impact litigation.

MHAS serves more than 3,000 clients annually facing barriers to housing, healthcare, benefits, employment, and education. Its staff of attorneys and advocates provide representation and community education in areas such as homelessness prevention, fair housing, government benefits, reentry support, veterans' legal advocacy, special education, and medical-legal partnerships. The organization also has a history of landmark systemic victories, including restoring disability benefits wrongfully terminated by Social Security and securing legal representation rights for immigration detainees with serious mental disorders.

MHAS's mission is to protect and advance the legal rights of low-income adults and children with mental health disabilities, empowering them to maximize their autonomy, achieve equity, and secure the resources they need to thrive. Guided by values of empowerment, dignity, equity, collaboration, and wellness, MHAS is recognized across Los Angeles as a vital partner in the movement for disability rights and mental health justice.

The organization's legacy is shaped by two transformative leaders. Jim Preis, a pioneer in mental health law, built MHAS into the leading voice for people with mental health disabilities in Los Angeles. After his passing, Jenny Farrell led MHAS through a period of stabilization and renewal- rebuilding staff, strengthening funding, and preparing the organization for growth. Today, MHAS seeks a confident new Executive Director to lead the organization into its next era of impact and evolution.

To learn more about MHAS and their services, please visit their [website](#).



ROLE SUMMARY:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MHAS is seeking an Executive Director who will strengthen and stabilize the organization positioning it for continued growth and impact. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will bring both a strong legal background and the organizational leadership skills to guide a small but mighty nonprofit with a \$3 million budget and a team of 25 remote staff.

This is a moment for fresh energy and innovative ideas. The Executive Director will work thoughtfully and collaboratively to clarify MHAS's mission and services, focus its resources on the areas of greatest impact, and welcome opportunities to test and grow new approaches. The ideal candidate is an experienced nonprofit leader who combines legal expertise, proven fundraising success, and organizational management skills with a deep passion for advancing equity and justice for individuals with mental health disabilities in the Los Angeles community.

As the primary fundraiser and public voice of the organization, they will expand philanthropic support, inspire partners, and elevate MHAS's visibility as a leading advocate for individuals with mental health disabilities. They will oversee effective grant management to sustain and grow the organization's budget, reengage and expand the Board of Directors, foster a renewed sense of shared purpose, and uplift the entire organization- guiding MHAS into its next chapter with confidence, clarity, and passion.





LEADERSHIP & COMPETENCY EXPECTATIONS

Champion for Justice and Voice for Mental Health

This leader will be deeply aligned with MHAS's mission of protecting and advancing the rights of low-income individuals with mental health disabilities locally. They will bring both passion for the cause and a strong legal background, enabling them to lead with credibility and provide mentorship to legal staff. As MHAS's primary spokesperson, they will elevate the organization's visibility, build relationships across Los Angeles's legal, nonprofit, and philanthropic communities, and inspire others to join the movement for equity and justice.

Bold Fundraiser and Resource Builder

The Executive Director will serve as the chief fundraiser and ambassador for MHAS, expanding the base of philanthropic support and cultivating new champions for the mission. They will be deeply engaged in grant management at every stage- researching opportunities, cultivating funder relationships, writing proposals, and ensuring reporting and compliance for federal, state, and private grants. With a track record of fundraising success, this leader will strengthen existing partnerships, open new revenue streams, and build the financial foundation needed to sustain and grow MHAS's work.

Energizer of People and Culture

The Executive Director will continue to uphold and nurture a culture where staff feel connected, supported, and inspired by the mission. They will foster belonging across a remote environment by encouraging appropriate in-person collaboration, all-staff meetings, and team-building that strengthens morale. Through empathy, authenticity, and steady leadership, this individual will guide recruitment, retention, and staff development in ways that foster both individual growth and organizational strength. They will also champion clear and consistent communication, ensuring staff feel informed and engaged no matter where they work.

Visionary Guide for MHAS's Future

MHAS is at a turning point, and the Executive Director will bring the energy, clarity, and vision to lead the organization into its next chapter. In collaboration with the board and staff, they will contribute to and implement the strategic plan, prioritize focus areas, and navigate competing demands by clarifying what MHAS does best. This leader will provide fresh momentum, thoughtful direction, and the ability to balance big-picture strategy with day-to-day management.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Executive Management** – Provide strong day-to-day leadership of MHAS, overseeing staff, policies, and operations to ensure the organization runs smoothly and effectively.
- **Mission Alignment** – Review and refine programs to ensure resources are focused on MHAS’s core strengths, with clear goals and outcomes that reflect the organization’s mission.
- **Resource Development** – Design and execute a comprehensive fundraising strategy, identifying new funding opportunities, deepening donor engagement, ensuring grant management, and expanding institutional support.
- **Staff Leadership** – Inspire and support a remote team of 25 by fostering morale, collaboration, and professional development opportunities that build a sense of belonging and shared purpose.
- **Financial Oversight** – Partner with the Director of Administration & Finance to ensure accurate financial planning, monitoring, and reporting, safeguarding MHAS’s fiscal stability.
- **Board Engagement** – Work closely with the Board of Directors, supporting governance while actively recruiting and cultivating new members to broaden expertise and networks.
- **Community & Advocacy** – Represent MHAS in public forums, coalitions, and media, serving as a visible champion for the rights of individuals with mental health disabilities.
- **Governance & Compliance** – Ensure adherence to all legal, regulatory, and contractual obligations while maintaining high standards of nonprofit governance.
- **Innovation & Visibility** – Strengthen MHAS’s external presence by exploring new partnerships, elevating its brand identity, and positioning the organization as a leading voice in mental health advocacy.



QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate will be outcome-oriented and have a deep alignment to MHAS' mission, demonstrating genuine care for the well-being of the populations served.

While no single candidate will bring every single competency, strong candidates will offer the following skills, characteristics, and experiences:

- Passion for serving low-income individuals with mental health disabilities, and strong commitment to the Los Angeles community.
- Demonstrated success in grant management (federal, state, or private) or fundraising .
- Progressively responsible management experience, including oversight of teams, programs, or organizational operations in nonprofit, legal aid, or other mission-driven settings.
- Excellent communicator and public advocate, able to serve as the visible face of MHAS across legal, nonprofit, and philanthropic communities.
- Proven ability to engage and inspire boards, recruit new members, and strengthen governance practices.
- Juris Doctor (JD) degree and active membership in the California Bar required (or ability and willingness to become admitted). Prior litigation experience preferred, with demonstrated understanding of legal advocacy.



LOCATION, COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

This is a full-time, **remote** position with a **four-day work week**, based in Los Angeles, California. While MHAS operates primarily as a remote organization, there is an office where administrative staff work in person, which remains open and available for the Executive Director as they wish to use it. The role will also include occasional evening or weekend commitments for board meetings, fundraising events, or community engagements. Given the external-facing nature of the role, some time will be spent in the community - meeting with partners, funders, elected officials, and other stakeholders across the region.

The salary range for this position is **\$150,000 – \$175,000**, commensurate with experience, along with a comprehensive benefits package. Benefits include employer-paid health, dental, and vision insurance, long-term disability and life insurance, an employee-contributed 403(b) retirement plan, paid bar dues for attorneys, generous paid time off, and 18 paid holidays including extended time at year-end.

HOW TO APPLY

To express your interest in this opportunity, please submit your resume and cover letter [here](#).

All inquiries and discussions will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. This position is available immediately, and applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the role is filled.

We look forward to hearing from you!



ABOUT MANEVA GROUP

Maneva Group is a leading woman and minority owned executive search firm dedicated to connecting exceptional talent with organizations committed to making a meaningful impact. Through a consultative and client-focused approach, Maneva Group partners with mission-driven organizations to build transformative leadership teams.

Our name, Maneva, comes from the combination of two Sanskrit words: “**Mānav**” meaning mankind & “**Sevā**” meaning service. We are driven by the ideal of our name - service to humanity.