



# Director of Policy

Housing Assistance Council

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[www.ruralhome.org](http://www.ruralhome.org)

The Housing Assistance Council (HAC) is a national nonprofit and leading voice for rural prosperity that has been helping local organizations build vibrant rural communities since 1971. Our mission is to support community development and improve housing conditions for the rural poor, with an emphasis on the poorest of the poor in the most rural places. HAC provides affordable loans, technical assistance, training, research, information and policy development for the nonprofit, for-profit, and public sectors. We are governed by a board of directors from private, public, and nonprofit organizations at the national, state, and local levels. HAC maintains relationships with Congress and federal agencies as a leading source on the conditions that drive rural development.

At HAC, we celebrate the rich diversity of rural America and proudly maintain a diverse staff and Board of Directors. We are an equal opportunity workplace whose decades of success come from being open, inclusive, and connected to each other. HAC's hiring and employment practices treat everyone fairly and equally regardless of race, color, ethnicity, gender, national origin, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, marital or familial status, ancestry, or status as a veteran. Black, indigenous and people of color are strongly encouraged to apply.

## **POSITION**

The Director of Public Policy is a newly created position based in HAC's Washington DC corporate headquarters, reporting directly to the CEO and serving on HAC's Executive Leadership Team. This individual will be expected to: maintain HAC's position as the leading authority on current rural housing and community development policy; grow HAC's role as a non-partisan, evidence-driven authority trusted by policymakers and practitioners; and represent HAC in a wide range of forums, demonstrating issue mastery and thought leadership when communicating with Congress, federal agencies, the affordable housing and community development industry, the media, and the general public. Some travel is required.

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In collaboration with HAC's staff and Board of Directors, the Director of Public Policy will be responsible for envisioning, articulating, and building support for a 'next generation' rural housing and community development agenda—a bold, comprehensive and detailed set of federal policy

and program reforms to better serve the needs of rural communities. To support this agenda, the Director will expand HAC's current policy work and establish a Public Policy Department. This individual is also expected to help develop revenue needed to maintain and expand the Department.

- Serve on HAC's Executive Leadership Team.
- Work with HAC's CEO, staff, and Board of Directors to develop and implement strategies on legislative, regulatory, sub-regulatory, and program management issues affecting affordable housing and community development in rural communities. This includes:
  - Establish and expand a 'next generation' rural housing and community development policy agenda that considers state-of-the-art solutions to age-old challenges;
  - Analyze current federal policy with an interest in helping programs be more efficient, effective, and impactful drivers of rural development;
  - Build and maintain relationships with USDA, HUD, and Congressional staff that enable HAC to continue to influence the authorizing and annual appropriations process, agency rule-making, and sub-regulatory and program management actions related to its existing federal policy agenda;
  - Maintain and expand HAC's relationships with affordable housing and community development stakeholders including but not limited to industry professionals, trade associations, individual peer non-profit organizations, coalitions, and public officials;
  - Forge new partnerships for HAC that will increase the organization's capacity to co-create housing solutions for the future and expand the constituency for HAC's existing and 'next generation' policy agenda.
- Establish and oversee the new Public Policy Department, including:
  - Establish and maintain practices that comply with the legal and regulatory requirements for non-profits engaged in public policy development;
  - Supervise the Government Relations Manager and other staff;
  - Partner with HAC's Development Manager to attract new philanthropic funders and/or generate earned income that will support the costs of the Department; and
  - Integrate the Department into HAC's organizational culture and develop strong working relationships and collaborations with HAC's other Departments including: Lending; Research and Information; Technical Assistance and Training; and Finance and Administration.
- Undertake directly and supervise others who:
  - Prepare written materials, including analysis of legislation and regulations, congressional testimony, reports to board, newsletters, online content, and other materials that are clear, compelling and help everyone—from industry experts to the general public—understand their impact on rural places and people;
  - Present information about policy and legislation in small and large group meetings; at industry gatherings and events; and in response to media inquiries;

- Manage coalitions hosted by HAC, including the Rural Preservation Working Group, a national organization of stakeholders deeply interested in the provision and preservation of affordable rental housing in rural areas;
- Represent HAC to coalitions, other organizations, federal departments, and agencies on policy-related matters;
- Plan for and carry out briefings, receptions, and other informational events, and
- Deliver training sessions and technical assistance, and conduct research.
- Other duties as assigned.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

The ideal candidate has held leadership and supervisory staff positions on Congressional committees, implemented high-profile policy initiatives as a Presidential appointee at the White House or in a federal department and comes to the job with a powerful professional network and a reputation for professionalism and integrity among affordable housing policy-makers.

- At least 10 years of experience in housing policy as it relates to the rural poor and underserved communities;
- Law degree and experience drafting statutes and regulation;
- Track record of hiring and promoting Black, Indigenous and People of Color so that public policy becomes a more diverse and inclusive field;
- Demonstrated history of innovating in the community development and housing policy space, including a willingness to disrupt constructively on behalf of vulnerable populations by challenging long-held tenets and stakeholders in the status quo;
- Strong working knowledge of HUD and USDA legislative and executive branch processes—including federal budgeting, appropriations cycles, program authorization, and regulatory promulgation—and demonstrated capacity to acquire and deploy additional expertise quickly;
- Demonstrated skill in evidence-based policymaking, especially as it relates to: social determinants of health; homelessness; and/or the economic impact of affordable housing;
- Skill at establishing and cultivating strong, long-term relationships;
- Appreciation for rural communities;
- Excellent written and verbal communications skills;
- Excellent interpersonal and public speaking skills;
- Excellent presentation skills;
- Ability to work effectively with others internally and externally;
- Ability to resolve conflicts while maintaining important and effective relationships;
- Ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures;
- Ability to handle multiple projects and meet established timelines;
- Detail orientation and high level of organization skills;
- Commitment to social justice issues.

**COMPENSATION**

HAC offers competitive wages, benefits, and growth opportunities. Flexible benefits packages include health insurance; life and other insurance; a retirement plan with partial employer match; time off; and other work/life benefits.

**TO APPLY**

Please email a resume, brief cover letter and salary requirements to [jobs@ruralhome.org](mailto:jobs@ruralhome.org) with “Director of Policy” in the subject line. Applications will be reviewed upon receipt, with interviews starting immediately.