

**The Arc of Illinois**  
**Ligas Family Advocate (Northern Illinois) Job Description**

The Arc of Illinois is looking for an experienced individual interested in working in the field of disability advocacy, supports, and services. This individual must be flexible, able to travel and available to begin work by January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. This full-time position requires work with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, (I/DD) and families to support their access to home and community-based services. Interested and qualified individuals, please submit cover letter and resume, including salary requirements, to [Shirley@thearcofil.org](mailto:Shirley@thearcofil.org). Closing date for applications will be November 20, 2020.

**Position Description:**

The Ligas Family Advocate Program staff includes the Director, an Advocate for Southern/Central Illinois and an Advocate for Northern Illinois. The Northern Illinois Ligas Family Advocate will provide family-to-family support for individuals and their families who are selected through the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) Prioritization of Urgency of Needs (PUNS) as a result of the Ligas Consent Decree. Family advocates will address the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families by providing information about, and options for, using community based services for the developmentally disabled, including Home-Based Support Services (HBSS) and Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) services to build full and integrated lives in their homes and communities

The **Ligas Family Advocate for Northern Illinois** will meet with Ligas class members who receive early PUNS notification letters and those that are selected from PUNS to receive home and community-based services and/or their guardians/families to discuss the options available to them within the parameters of the Ligas Consent Decree and the existing Home Based Services Program and CILA Program. Family advocates will discuss with class members and their families the full spectrum of options available to them; sharing examples of creative ways other families have worked within the guidelines to achieve a full life for their loved ones with I/DD. The goal is to meet with individuals and/or their families as early as possible in the process, before a service plan is developed with the Independent Service Coordination agency (ISC).

**Duties and Responsibilities:**

The family advocate will work closely with Ligas class members, families, ISC agencies and others to support class members in finding the home and community-based services that meet their needs. The LFA will work with families and individuals who have received early notification of an upcoming PUNS selection and those already selected. The northern Illinois Family Advocate will work with individuals served by the following ISCs: Community Alternatives Unlimited (CAU), Suburban Access and Service Inc. of Illinois, Region E. The Ligas Family Advocate position does not replace the work of the ISC. Instead, family advocates are a supplement and a support to the ISC, maintaining a positive relationship with an individual's ISC contact and any ISC employees they may meet in the course of their duties.

Family advocates may need to use a variety of methods to connect with class members and their families – mail, email, phone calls, in person meetings, possible group meetings with multiple families in one setting and through virtual Zoom meetings and webinars during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the future where convenient. The emphasis is on the convenience and comfort of the Ligas class members

and their families. Family advocates are expected to do a certain amount of traveling for meetings with and their families, ISC Agencies, hosting informational sessions, Know your Options, etc.

Family Advocates will develop timely materials, for example, infographics, fact sheets, resource link summary documents and PowerPoints that assist individuals and their families in understanding service delivery, as well as their responsibilities when enrolled in the Home-Based Services Program.

Family Advocates will: 1). Keep records of all contacts with Ligas class members/families and 2). Record data on barriers to employment, barriers to successful implementation of Ligas awardees' service plans, trends observed, and will submit monthly reports to Program Director. Other duties may be assigned as needed.

**Qualifications/Skills/Experience:**

An ideal candidate for the Ligas Family Advocate of Northern Illinois position would have a family member with a disability and be able to provide personal experience/insight to the issues families encounter in their search for supports and services for a loved one as well as compassion for their struggles. At least three years of case management, individual or system advocacy or information and resources experience. Bachelor degree preferred. Professional experience in the intellectual/developmental disability field.

Candidates will be competitive if they have knowledge about some or all of the following:

- 1). The Ligas Consent Decree
- 2). PUNS (Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services)
- 3). The State of Illinois Department of Human Services/Department of Developmental Disabilities Service System (CILA, Home-Based Support Services, etc.)
- 4). Person-Centered Planning
- 5). Self-Determination
- 6). Employment First
- 7). Knowledge of Independent Service Coordination agencies and Department of Human Services DDD system – interaction with staff at both is required
- 8.) Spanish speaking

- Family Advocates are knowledgeable about the utilization of natural and community environments, natural supports, and best practice methods/concepts in ID/DD services and supports.
- Family Advocates are personable and possess excellent listening, communication, organizational, and data collection skills, both oral and written.
- Family Advocates will be proficient in Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Zoom etc.
- Family Advocates will be required to travel to meet the requirements of the position.
- Family Advocate is a full-time position and reports to the Ligas Family Advocate Program Director.