



Becoming Involved in Community Organization

Community organizing has become a big phrase bandied around these days because Barack Obama, soon to be the 44th President of the United States, was once a community organizer.

Community organizing jobs themselves can be quite specialized because they basically deal with finding a group of disenfranchised people and helping them solve the problems they struggle with. However, many [job openings](#) have helping people as part of their intent and description. All public interest jobs deal in some respect with helping people better themselves or deal with making life better on a larger scale.

If you are interested in a [public interest job](#), or if you want to make public-interest employment a focus of your career, one of the best places to start is to look on the Internet for jobs that use these types of skills. Just about any job can focus on the public interest as one of its main interests.

Public Interest Attorneys

One of the ways to serve the public interest is by becoming an attorney that specializes in this. For this type of [public interest employment](#) you must go to law school and then you can specialize in public-interest representation for various public-interest agencies or organizations.

With this, you pick an area of interest such as the environment. For attorney jobs relating to community organization needs, you might specialize in zoning laws for a particular area which are negatively impacting residents, pollution problems, crime, or returning jobs to a particular city when they may have gone elsewhere.

Getting Involved in Community Organization as a Lawyer

When you are in law school, you can begin to focus on this area by undertaking a public-interest law internship. You can do this with any number of public interest agencies or even in particular communities. You can find a law firm that specializes in your particular area of interest or you can do an Internet search for lawyers looking for help where having an intern might be of some use to them.

When you do this, you will gain experience in the law as it pertains to your area of expertise so that when you leave law school, you will be able to specialize in your area of interest professionally.

Undertaking a [Public Interest Jobs](#)

Other public-interest jobs may first entail doing volunteer work for a particular organization you are interested in getting involved with, such as Greenpeace or other environmental organizations; you could work with organizations focusing on civil rights, antidiscrimination practices, and so on. Once you have gotten involved in an area you are interested in on a volunteer basis, you may decide that this definitely something you would like to do as a career. If that is true, you may need certain qualifications such as a college degree that you do not yet have. However, finding out where you would like to work in the public-interest job market and then gearing your education toward that is a great way to eventually get into public-interest employment as an actual career. While you are still in school, as with law school, you can volunteer to get job experience and may even be hired by the organization you are working for as a volunteer once you graduate. Because many public-interest organizations rely so much on their volunteers, you should have no problem finding volunteer work in your area of interest.

Making Life Better for Other People

If you want to get involved in public interest work as a career, your main drive is probably going to have to be making life better for others, not necessarily how much you get paid to do the job. Most public interest [job openings](#) pay relatively modestly compared to other professions, and those take on these professions do so because they want to make communities better for those who live there. However, your salary is likely to be much lower than it would be for some other for-profit areas of employment.



Public Interest Job Feature

Compensation and Outlook

Because so many public interest organizations and groups work on a grass-roots level, it is impossible to say just how popular this area of employment is going to be. That said, though, public-interest lawyers will be in high demand for many organizations. If this is an area that you are interested in getting into, you may want to consider becoming a lawyer and doing pro-bono work for these types of jobs before you sign on as a salaried attorney; similarly, many attorneys run their own practices to make enough money to live on but do pro-bono work as a percentage of their caseload simply to give back to the community.

In general, lawyers who work in public service do not make as much as lawyers in private practice do. Just as one example of the public service versus private, for-profit jobs market, public-service lawyers make roughly two-thirds what their private practice colleagues do. However, if you are driven by the desire to improve people's lives, working in public interest employment is certainly going to be of interest to you as a professional, while the amount you get paid will only be secondary.

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