

P.A.L.A.N.T.E.

People Against Landlord Abuse & Tenant Exploitation



ABOUT PA'LANTE HARLEM

PA'LANTE Harlem ("PA'LANTE") is a community-based grassroots organization that works to reduce poverty, advocate for safe housing, and end tenant exploitation by holding negligent landlords and property managers accountable for unsafe living conditions and violations of landlord-tenant law, thereby enabling lower-income and working-class community residents to remain in homes that are safe and affordable. PA'LANTE engages in advocacy and outreach, organizes effective tenant associations, provides long-term technical assistance, and represents individuals and tenant groups in New York City Housing Court, New York State Supreme Court, and before administrative agencies, particularly the New York State Division of Homes and Community Renewal ("DHCR").

For well over a decade, PA'LANTE has organized tenant associations to address deteriorating physical conditions in their buildings; assisted with enrolling buildings into the Proactive Preservation Initiative; successfully advocated for a legislative change to ensure succession rights for family members in Tenant Interim Lease buildings; obtained hundreds of rent reduction orders from DHCR for conditions in apartments and public areas of apartment buildings; preserved thousands of apartments through repairs and upgrades; prevented hundreds of evictions and illegal deregulations; and successfully obtained more than \$2 million in rent refunds to dozens of families who were overcharged rent by their landlords.

POSITION OVERVIEW

PA'LANTE is seeking a Housing Specialist, or Senior Housing Specialist – depending on experience – to join the organization. The specialist will primarily represent tenants in upper Manhattan and the Bronx, fighting to enforce tenants' housing rights.

PA'LANTE is grounded in the organization's grassroots and dynamic approach to tenant advocacy, which sets it apart from other non-profit homeless prevention and legal services providers. This approach emphasizes strategic consideration of how to best and most comprehensively address tenants' housing issues, and it entails diligence in enforcing our clients' rights through enforcement mechanisms and strategic partnerships with City, State and Federal agencies to truly protect our affordable housing stock and ensure that families live in an affordable and habitable homes.

The specialist will report directly to the Founding Executive Director, and will work collaboratively with the Managing Counsel and other members of the team to submit cases to the New York State Division of Homes and Community Renewal, City enforcement agencies, and in Housing Court in collaboration with our legal team.

PA'LANTE recognizes the dignity of our historically-marginalized communities. It is therefore essential to understand the burdens tenants face on a daily basis. To that end, the specialist will be expected to interact directly with tenants and tenant associations in a culturally competent manner.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide technical assistance and wrap around homeless prevention services to low income families and the working poor
- Assist rent regulated renters with individual applications to housing enforcement agencies including Housing Preservation & Development, Division of Housing & Community Renewal (apartment complaints, rent overcharge, lease renewal procurement, succession rights, etc.)
- Conduct research for potential building wide class-action cases
- Help organize individual Tenants' Associations
- Assist tenants' associations in networking and building alliances with other tenant associations
- Coordinate and help facilitate regular workshops specific to housing rights, laws and processes
- Participate in and/or lead periodic tenant association evening meetings when representing a group of tenants
- Engage in advocacy and mediation with landlords and managing agents
- Update case management CRM system, maintain and update files and case notes, and assist in grant reporting when needed
- Work with the Executive Director, Managing Counsel, and other team members to represent PA'LANTE in the community

EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Five (5) years of relevant experience
- Fluent in written and spoken Spanish
- A deep commitment to advocating on behalf of working-class, lower-income, and marginalized communities
- A proven ability to communicate effectively with diverse groups of people, offices, agencies, and organizations
- Excellent writing, research, community organizing, and advocacy skills
- Reliable, detail-oriented, well-organized, and able to work both collaboratively and independently
- Knowledge of government benefits

COMPENSATION

Salary range of \$52,000 to \$80,000 (dependent on experience). PA'LANTE offers a generous benefits package, including health, dental, and vision insurance, paid sick/personal days, vacation time with rollover days, retirement account, life insurance, etc.

HOW TO APPLY

This position reports Elsia Vasquez. Please send a cover letter and résumé by email to palante@palanteharlem.org with "PA'LANTE Housing Specialist Opening" in the subject line. Applications will be assessed on a rolling basis until the position is filled.