



CAAS helps local families and individuals achieve financial security while working to eliminate the root causes of economic injustice

Job Title: Director of Community Organizing

Supervisor: Executive Director

Hours: 35 hours per week; availability for weeknight & some weekend responsibilities required

Salary Range: \$80,000-\$87,000 annually, full benefits

Status: Full time, non-union, exempt status

Location: Somerville, MA; hybrid position requiring at least 2 days in the office weekly

OVERVIEW:

The **Community Action Agency of Somerville**, known as **CAAS**, is changing lives for our community members who are furthest from opportunity. For over 40 years, we have been helping local families and individuals achieve financial security while working to eliminate the root causes of economic injustice. Our vision for Somerville is a city where no one lives in poverty, where we support each other through strong community structures, and where the opportunity to thrive is a lived experience for every resident. We are proud to be a source of stability and support for our community. Our website: <https://www.caasomerville.org/>

OUR PROGRAM & MOVEMENT:

In just 3 years, the CAAS [Community Organizing & Advocacy program](#) has grown to become a key anchor in Somerville's local movement for housing justice. Our unique organizational model allows us to support our tenants holistically, and our leaders are those who experience the affordable housing crisis first-hand. We are dedicated to empowering Somerville residents who are the most oppressed from accessing power: renters, low-income and working class residents, people of color, immigrants and refugees, single parents, seniors, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ folks, and others. Our core areas of work are: grassroots leadership development, anti-displacement tenant organizing, and community organizing for housing justice and structural change.

Alongside tenant leaders on the Somerville Renters Committee, our campaigns have educated hundreds of tenants about their rights, won protections such as the longest local Covid-19 eviction moratorium extension in the state, secured millions of city budget funds for affordable housing needs, and helped make Somerville's home rule petition for rent control the strongest in Massachusetts. We unite and organize residents of all backgrounds under the vision that housing is a human right, and bring the mission of community action to life.

ABOUT THE ROLE:

The **Director of Community Organizing** will guide the vision, strategy, and management of our dynamic and highly collaborative CAAS Organizing program. They will be responsible for supervising and mentoring staff and tenant leaders, overseeing displacement prevention and broader policy campaigns for housing justice, and holding strategic partnerships in the community. They will also manage the administrative operations of the program and act as a key member of CAAS management. The ideal candidate has direct experience organizing in a multiclass, multiracial, and multilingual movement setting, a track record of developing strong leaders and impactful campaigns, and an unwavering commitment to justice and building the leadership and power of marginalized communities.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Staff & Program Management

- Hire, supervise, and train 5-6 staff Organizers, providing reliable support for short-term and long-term tasks, goals, and development in full team, small group, and 1:1 settings
- Guide daily implementation and longer term strategic vision of the program's core focuses: tenant leadership development, anti-displacement tenant organizing, and community organizing
- Produce quantitative and qualitative data for funder reports on the program as needed
- Collaborate regularly with the Director Housing Advocacy on the program's coordinated casework and tenant organizing model focused on preventing residential displacement
- Assist Director of Finance with program expense reports, invoicing, budget monitoring
- Assist Development Manager with program fundraising opportunities and relationships
- Serve as a member of the CAAS Management team and participate in agency-wide initiatives and decision making
- Ensure staff have current information on policies impacting Somerville and the program, housing, low-income residents, and other issues core to our mission

2. Community Organizing Oversight

- Oversee the identification, development, and implementation of strategic campaigns aimed at city, state, or budgetary policies that advance housing justice in Somerville
- Work with staff and leaders on strategy escalation, relationship building, and reflection
- Lead and participate in policy advocacy on key issues (verbal, written testimony, etc.), educating and mobilizing leaders, members, and the broader community
- Assist Communications Manager and staff on key messaging, storytelling, and press / media strategies that are timely, accessible, and engaging to our low-income and multilingual members and broader community stakeholders

3. Tenant Organizing Oversight

- Oversee and support staff on tenants' rights education, advocacy casework, and building campaigns to ensure high quality and responsive services
- Manage referrals from the CAAS Housing Advocacy Program (HAP), Somerville Office of Housing Stability (OHS), and other partners, coordinating on cases and strategy
- Oversee research, base building, and outreach activities to identify tenants in private, public, and inclusionary rental housing who are at-risk of displacement from Somerville due to "market forces" such as building sales, rent increases, and corporate investors
- Work with staff to develop winning strategies and tactics for tenant unions/associations and anti-displacement campaigns

4. Base Building & Leadership Development

- Build and maintain relationships with Somerville Renters Committee (SRC) leaders
- Work with staff to carry out SRC monthly meetings, develop leadership pipelines and opportunities, and campaign goals
- Oversee and support staff in engaging new low-income and immigrant tenants and allied residents in Movement Meetings, campaigns, and other actions and events to become more committed members and leaders

5. Coalition Building

- Represent CAAS Organizing in community and coalition settings, while supporting and integrating staff and leaders into these roles and providing oversight
- Build steady and strategic relationships with allied agency and movement partners, City staff, and elected officials, especially on matters related to casework, campaigns, and policy goals

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS & LEADERSHIP TRAITS:

Professional Background

- At least 5-10 years experience in tenant organizing and advocacy, community organizing, movement building, or base building settings; deeply committed volunteer experience will be considered in addition to paid experience
- Proven ability to build trusting relationships with individuals and groups across different socioeconomic classes, racial/ethnic identities, and languages other than English, particularly low-income residents and immigrants
- A proven commitment to the connection between individual case management or advocacy and community organizing, ideally experience in both settings
- Experience working and navigating the intricacies of a nonprofit organization, ideally in a management or leadership role

Leadership Skills

- At least 3-5 years experience hiring, supervising, and training full-time staff organizers and volunteer members, ideally in a team setting (i.e. 2 or more staff concurrently)
- At least intermediate/conversational verbal and written skills in **Spanish** or another high-need Somerville language
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills
- Excellent attention to detail and independent accountability on multiple dynamic tasks
- Advanced organizing skills such as power analysis, campaign strategy and escalation, and applied theories such as popular education, conflict resolution, and demonstrated experience coaching other staff and leaders in these skills
- Extensive experience organizing and facilitating community meetings, actions, and events in-person and online, ideally multilingual settings
- Advanced proficiency with technology such as Google Suite, Zoom Pro, Canva, and ability to learn public records and databases, such as the Registry of Deeds

Leadership Traits

- A strategist who embraces the “messier” aspects of organizing, is a problem-solver and results-oriented, but also stewards processes and relationships with intention and care
- An excellent multi-tasker who can decisively follow through on responsibilities with great attention to detail, while remaining flexible and responsive to the emergent needs of the program and holding the bigger picture
- An emotionally intelligent leader who has the ability to delegate and share power with staff, models inclusive and collaborative leadership practices, engages in self-reflection, and is open to feedback
- A principled organizer who is able to remain grounded and move with integrity when navigating high-stress or sensitive situations
- Is passionate and deeply committed to liberation, transforming injustice and ending all forms of oppression, and building collective power for the most marginalized

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS (but not required):

- Experience organizing in the Greater Boston region and preferably Somerville, including existing relationships in the community strongly preferred
- Familiarity with the Massachusetts affordable housing crisis and players, State House political dynamics, and current legislative proposals strongly preferred
- Foundational knowledge of tenants’ legal rights and eviction procedures
- Experience fundraising, grant writing, and reporting with private foundations and/or government entities
- Experience writing successful press releases, building productive relationships with news media, and coaching staff and leaders on interviewing and public speaking

LOCATION AND TRAVEL:

The Director of Community Organizing will work from the CAAS administrative office in Union Square, Somerville at least 2 business days per week. We have hybrid flexibility to also work from home or remotely other days of the week. Ability to travel to in person local meetings and events in the metropolitan area required, as well as availability for evening commitments and occasional weekend commitments to best accommodate the needs of our tenant leaders and members (typically 1-2 weekend days per month).

PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is occasionally required to stand; walk; sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel; reach with hands and arms; stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl and talk or hear. Certain community events, such as public hearings, protests and rallies, and marches will require more prolonged physical tasks and stamina to walk, sit, stand, and chant for lengths of time. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move up to 10 pounds.

WORK ENVIRONMENT:

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

COMPENSATION:

This is a salaried, exempt position with a hiring range of \$80,000-87,000 per year. CAAS offers competitive compensation for this position plus a robust benefits package, which includes 4 weeks of paid vacation each year, additional sick and personal days, 13 paid holidays, and flex time. Our insurance provider is Blue Cross Blue Shield medical, dental and vision which begins the first day of the month following hire. We have a comprehensive retirement 403(b) plan through Mutual of America with eligibility to contribute on the date of hire and 4% employer match after one year of employment. We also offer a free and confidential Employee Assistance Program (EAP) which allows employees and their household members to contact professional counseling services, referrals for elder-care, mental health, legal planning and financial advice. Staff also receive generous paid professional development opportunities and a team of committed, collaborative colleagues.

HOW TO APPLY:

The review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled, with a priority deadline of Friday, February 9 at 5:00pm EST.

The hiring process for this position is expected to involve the following:

Round 1: A 35-45 minute screening on Zoom with a member of the Interview Committee.

Round 2: A 60-70 min group interview with management staff and program staff from the Interview Committee on Zoom. We may request 2-3 samples of previous work that demonstrates your communication, policy, and/or strategic planning skills.

Round 3: A 75-90 min group interview with program staff and tenant leaders from the Interview Committee in-person at the CAAS office in Union Square, Somerville.

We will then conduct a check of 3 professional references, including at least 1 supervisor and 1 supervisee. Finally, CAAS requires all staff to successfully pass a CORI background check in order for a hiring offer to be made.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT:

No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be discriminated against by this program, including in employment, because of race, religion, sex, national origin, immigration status, cultural heritage, age, disability, sexual orientation, or marital status. CAAS may be able to assist eligible candidates with immigration-related work permits for work authorization in the U.S.

We strongly encourage people of color, women and gender non-conforming people, queer people, working class people, people with disabilities, undocumented people, and people who have intersecting identities to apply.

TO APPLY:

Please submit a resume and a cover letter outlining your experiences, qualifications, and why you're the right fit for this role as a single PDF (max 4 pages) with the subject line "Director of Community Organizing application" to careers@caasomerville.org. We will review candidates on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Our priority deadline is February 9, 2024 at 5:00pm EST.