



2025 Search Criteria

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Dependency Advocacy Center

Dependency Advocacy Center At A Glance



Location
SAN JOSE, CA



Reports to
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER**



**Position
Classification**
FULL TIME / EXEMPT



Desired Start Date
OCTOBER 2025



Number of Staff
40



**Operating
Budget Size**
\$4.6M

The Opportunity

Dependency Advocacy Center (DAC) is seeking a strategic and collaborative leader to serve as its next Chief Operating Officer (COO).

DAC is engaged in powerful programmatic work, with a staff that is effective, closely bonded, and deeply dedicated to the cause. DAC was founded on the belief that traditional legal advocacy is insufficient to adequately represent families in child welfare cases. Our goal is to promote timely reunification and preservation of families in a safe, healthy environment. Fulfilling our mission requires leadership that is committed to system change through transformative support and well-equipped counsel. Our daily work is motivated by addressing systemic change even as we offer solutions for the current unjust system. DAC is a trauma-informed organization that seeks to be a national leader in these efforts to mitigate the harm of, and ultimately transform, the legal system.

The COO is a key member of the Executive Team and is responsible for the overall operations of the organization, including financial health and processes, human resources, contract/grant obligations, organizational policies, fund development, and strategic organizational growth. The COO serves an essential role, connecting the broader vision of our programmatic work with the concrete details and processes needed to bring that vision to reality.

Alongside strong communication and leadership skills, the COO will bring an unwavering commitment to improving the lives of families and communities that is explicitly rooted in racial and social justice. They will be a lifelong learner who prioritizes personal learning and growth alongside organizational evolution to drive continued excellence.



Who We Are

DAC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides interdisciplinary family defense legal services to indigent parents and children involved with Santa Clara County's child welfare system and the juvenile dependency court. Additionally, DAC has established innovative programs focused on preventing unnecessary entry into the dependency court and foster care systems by offering crucial early access to legal advice and resources designed to assist parents who are at risk of having their children removed. DAC is committed to addressing injustice and ensuring that families receive the support they need to thrive in our communities.

Our adult clients face the risk of permanent separation from their children due to allegations of abuse and neglect. Substance use disorder, intimate partner violence, and mental health concerns are commonly presenting issues, often rooted in the layered effects of poverty, marginalization, and intergenerational trauma. DAC's focus on legal advocacy work, coupled with social services and lived experience resources, helps our parent and youth clients be fully supported in a system that is not otherwise designed for their success.

The holistic support offered by DAC's interdisciplinary team of attorneys, social workers, and peer mentors provides parents and children with a more comprehensive network of resources and support. DAC advocates for parents and children who are often overlooked, judged, and not seen as worthy, during the most painful moments of their lives. With this pioneering approach to advocacy and a proven commitment to client-centered strategies, DAC is making a difference for thousands of underserved families in Santa Clara County.

As DAC continues its growth and evolution, it is imperative that the next COO work to bridge DAC's overarching mission, vision, and strategies with practical, sustainable practices and processes.

For more information, please visit the [DAC website](#).



What You'll Do

ESSENTIAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

In collaboration with the Board, Executive Team, Management Team, and Staff, the COO will provide the strategic leadership necessary to ensure that DAC has the resources and infrastructure to effectuate its programmatic goals in service of its clients and community. As part of the Executive Team, the COO provides big-picture oversight to the operations and financial arm of the organization, and likewise ensures that decisions made by executive leadership appropriately reflect the financial and operational realities of the organization.

Strategic Vision & Leadership

- ✓ Partner with Board and Executive Team to develop and implement DAC's long-term strategy in alignment with vision and strategic direction.
- ✓ Build DAC's capacity to enhance strategic contribution to the child welfare system.
- ✓ Create and oversee infrastructures needed to move forward DAC's growth goals.
- ✓ Center diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility across all internal and external work.

Finance & Operations

- ✓ Provide fiscal and administrative oversight and daily management to ensure compliance, organizational sustainability, and effective service delivery.
- ✓ Oversee Director of Operations and other administrative staff responsible for financial, operational, and personnel processes.
- ✓ Manage financial processes: accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll, donations, credit cards, bank deposits, and cash flow, as well as reporting and forecasting.
- ✓ Guide annual budgeting, resource allocation, and goal-setting processes.
- ✓ Oversee annual audit, 990 filing, and organizational insurance needs.
- ✓ Oversee contract renewals, contract/grant invoicing, and budget compliance.

HR & Administration

- ✓ Develop and provide oversight to the HR/People function, including on notable HR matters.
- ✓ Oversee improvements to internal systems, processes, workflow, and policies.
- ✓ Manage standards and changes related to staff compensation and benefits.
- ✓ In partnership with other leadership, retain and build a strong team with a values-aligned culture.

Fund Development

- ✓ Take lead on budget development for government program contracts and private funding asks.
- ✓ In partnership with the CEO, design development strategies and infrastructure to attract individual donors and philanthropic support.
- ✓ Manage daily development processes.

Program Oversight

- ✓ Work with program managers to ensure program contract compliance.
- ✓ Along with CPO and program managers, participate in program reporting requirements.

External Relations

- ✓ Maintain good working relationships with outside financial firm, accountants, HR attorney, and other consultants.
- ✓ Build strong relationships with funders.
- ✓ Serve as an ambassador for DAC.

Board Engagement

- ✓ Support the Board's annual goals and attend board meetings.
- ✓ Work with Board Treasurer on board finance committee.
- ✓ Participate in financial reporting to board at board meetings and upon request.



Who You Are

IDEAL CANDIDATE PROFILE

Successful candidates will have many of the following core competencies, personal qualities, and experience. We value deep connection to DAC mission/values over perfect alignment of all qualifications and considerations listed below.

Nonprofit Experience

- ☑ Employment experience in nonprofit settings and strong understanding of the nonprofit business model.
- ☑ Prior collaboration with government agencies and community programs.

Proximity and Connection to Community

- ☑ Commitment to equity, accessibility, and racial justice in all elements of strategy and organizational leadership.
- ☑ Lived experience in a marginalized community and/or fierce advocate for the populations that DAC serves.

Financial Management Skills

- ☑ A strategic thinker who understands how finances support the broader mission.
- ☑ Experience with financial management including budgeting, planning, and reporting.
- ☑ Deep attention to detail to ensure compliance with financial requirements.
- ☑ Experience raising money from private and public sources, including maintaining and growing government contracts.

Visionary Organizational Leadership Experience

- ☑ Has a clear point of view and bold vision for growth (programmatic, impact, and financial).
- ☑ Collaborative, leads with a "power with" not "power over" approach, and understands the value in setting aside their own ego.
- ☑ Strong leader and efficient operator able to balance competing demands; does not shy away from practical decisions.

Human Resources Management

- ☑ Experience in overseeing and managing the full continuum of human resources matters.
- ☑ Understanding of current human resources laws and best practices.
- ☑ Ability to navigate sensitive personnel matters.
- ☑ Commitment to creating a positive work environment for all staff.

Operations Management

- ☑ Analytical and problem-solving skills to maintain organizational operations.
- ☑ Ability to balance high-level needs and the details needed for seamless implementation.
- ☑ Forward thinking in developing policies and procedures.

Results-Driven

- ☑ Strong voice of authority in organizational planning and decisions.
- ☑ Cooperative and inspirational, with a firm / practical approach.

Emotional Intelligence & Relational Abilities

- ☑ Engages with colleagues and partners with integrity, kindness, humility, compassion, and diplomacy.
- ☑ Strong listener who shares ideas and feedback with clarity and intention.

Other

JOB REQUIREMENTS & QUALIFICATIONS

Education and Experience

- ☑ Graduate Level Degree – preferably in finance, business administration, human resources, law, or closely related field which will provide knowledge of the principles, practices, administration of nonprofits.
- ☑ Experience overseeing finance, human resources, fundraising, government contracts, administration, marketing/communications, policy, events, and board engagement.
- ☑ Experience building and maintaining organizational partnerships, guiding programs, and independently leading complex projects required.
- ☑ Demonstrated management experience including hiring and development of a team.
- ☑ At least 5 years of relevant leadership experience in social justice fields, including several years of management-level leadership.

Function-Specific Skills

- ☑ Demonstrated commitment to public interest work.
- ☑ Confident, engaging, and clear communicator that can convey the organization's policies and practices in both internal and external arenas.
- ☑ Ability to be solutions-oriented, balance the big picture with details, and plan ahead.
- ☑ Ability to manage competing priorities in a fast-paced environment.
- ☑ Demonstrates cooperation, empathy, and proactive, clear communication.

Finance & Technical

- ☑ Experience with financial oversight, including budgeting, planning, and reporting.
- ☑ Experience with nonprofit finances, government contracts, and annual audits; knowledge of GAAP and accrual-based accounting practices.
- ☑ Strong knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint required.
- ☑ Understanding of legal and regulatory requirements.

Communication Skills

- ☑ Demonstrated skill as an effective oral and written communicator who can customize an approach depending on the audience.
- ☑ Strong interpersonal and listening skills required, with sensitivity and appreciation for diverse viewpoints and various communication styles.

Compensation & Benefits

- This position offers a competitive salary range of \$140,000-\$150,000 per year, commensurate with experience. DAC has a compensation policy that prioritizes equity and transparency.
- DAC offers a benefits package that includes health, dental, vision, 3 weeks paid vacation with an increase after two years, paid sick leave, 15 paid holidays annually, parental leave, civic engagement paid time off, sabbatical leave, a 403(b) retirement plan, and professional development opportunities.

More details can be provided upon request.

Geographical Location & Remote Work

- DAC serves clients in Santa Clara County, CA.
- The COO must be able to attend internal and external meetings in person.
- Some remote work may be possible, depending on the schedule of meetings.





How to Apply

- ☑ Please send a resume and thoughtful cover letter to DACjobs@sccdac.org with the subject line: “**DAC COO Search**”
- ☑ Your cover letter should answer the following questions:
 - ☑ How do your skills and experience align with the position description?
 - ☑ In order to best serve our clients and our community, DAC is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace in which differences are acknowledged and valued. How has your personal background or experiences, professional or otherwise, prepared you to contribute to social justice, racial equity, and diversity among our staff?

NOTE

- All applications will be held in strict confidence.
- Applications without a cover letter will not be considered.
- Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and earlier applicants may receive priority consideration. DAC encourages all interested candidates to submit their applications promptly.
- DAC requires that all employees be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or qualify for a medical or religious exemption.

Equal Opportunity Employment

DAC thrives on our diversity and we are proud to be an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to cultivating a workplace in which diverse perspectives and experiences are welcomed, respected, and celebrated. Applicants who are Latine/Latinx, Black, Asian and Pacific Islander, Indigenous, and other people of color, individuals with lived experience within any of our program areas, and individuals who have been impacted by the criminal legal system are strongly encouraged to apply. We are committed to equal employment opportunity and providing reasonable accommodations to qualified candidates and employees pursuant to applicable law. It is the policy of DAC to provide equal employment opportunities to all applicants (including employees) inclusive of race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, breastfeeding, national origin, age, abilities/disabilities, neurotypicality, socioeconomic status, veteran status, marital status, prior convictions, or any other protected classifications under federal, state, or local law.