



# Communication**FIRST**

Because communication is a human right.

## **JOB OPENING:**

### **Policy Director or Policy Associate**

Position posted **January 9, 2025**

CommunicationFIRST is the only nonprofit organization led by and focused on protecting the human and civil rights and advancing the interests of the estimated 5 million children and adults in the United States who cannot rely on speech alone to be heard and understood due to disability or other condition and regardless of cause or age of onset. CommunicationFIRST is a cross-disability, cross-generational, multi-racial, and multicultural disability-led civil rights organization. We promote systemic change through public engagement, policy and practice reform, and legal advocacy.

The **Policy Director** (or **Policy Associate**) role is a **full-time, primarily remote** position (title and salary will depend on the seniority and experience of the successful candidate). The successful candidate will elevate the interests of CommunicationFIRST's constituents on the national policy stage, and occasionally at the state level, and will advocate in a wide range of policy areas. The successful candidate will be based in the Washington, DC area.

CommunicationFIRST is a small but nimble organization with an ambitious agenda. We build consensus to determine organizational policies and priorities, and we work collaboratively to achieve our goals. As a young organization, each employee can expect to work on a wide variety of tasks, including conducting research, writing, leading discussions, seeking feedback, managing deadlines, participating in coalition spaces, making presentations, organizing remote and in-person events, and engaging with members.

### **Responsibilities**

- Monitor, analyze, report on, and influence federal (and some state) policy developments in areas that impact people with speech-related disabilities, including Medicaid, civil rights, disability data collection, health care, guardianship, the legal system, education, participatory research, and more
- Build and maintain existing relationships with congressional and agency staff, and with other organizations

1629 K Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20006

<https://CommunicationFIRST.org/>



- Represent CommunicationFIRST in disability policy coalitions; collaborate with community partners; build new alliances and coalitions
- Attend congressional briefings, Hill meetings, hearings, and other events
- Prepare legislative testimony and rulemaking comments
- Draft press releases, white papers, policy briefs, in-depth reports, position statements, toolkits, FAQs, newsletters, proposals, and other written materials
- Deliver presentations in small and large, public and private, and in-person and remote settings; report internally and externally on policy developments
- Organize and/or attend occasional policy events, including webinars, out-of-town conferences, and in-person “Hill days”
- Address policy-related media inquiries, and remain flexible with additional duties

### **What We Hope You’ll Bring to the Role**

- At least three years of experience working on federal policy, ideally at a disability-focused advocacy organization
- Strong familiarity with issues relevant to disability policy, including the Medicaid waiver system
- Familiarity with CMS, HHS, DOJ, ED, FCC, NIH, and other key federal agencies
- Exceptional attention to detail; Excellent organizational, interpersonal, communication, writing, presentation, and editing skills; Experience writing in plain language
- Demonstrated ability as a self-starter who, in consultation with others, can prioritize, manage, and execute multiple tasks simultaneously from start to finish with minimal supervision
- Experience using AAC, interacting with AAC users, and/or other lived disability experience
- Deep commitment to the values of the organization and a passion for advancing CommunicationFIRST’s mission and disability equity and justice principles
- Commitment to consistently treating colleagues, coalition partners, and members with kindness and humility, even in stressful situations



- Ability to protect the confidentiality of sensitive information
- A “can-do” attitude and flexibility to work before or after typical work hours to meet organizational needs
- A Bachelor’s degree is required. A law degree or Master's degree in Social Work, Business, Public Administration, Health, Public Policy, or a related field is preferred.

## Salary and Benefits

- Fully remote daily work environment, with attendance at in-person meetings and events in Washington, DC and travel elsewhere expected
- Challenging and fulfilling work in a collegial, friendly, and disability-centered working environment at a small but mighty national nonprofit civil rights and social justice organization
- Salary
  - Policy Director: \$80,000-\$90,000
  - Policy Associate: \$50,000-\$60,000
- Excellent health, dental, and vision insurance, with 90% of employee premiums covered by the organization
- Short-term disability insurance
- Unlimited PTO
- Stipend to cover use of home office and equipment

## Application Process

- Email [jobs@communicationfirst.org](mailto:jobs@communicationfirst.org) with the subject line “**Policy Position: [First name] [Last name]**,” and attach (in a single, screen-readable PDF, if possible):
  - (1) a **cover letter** describing: (a) whether you are applying for the Director or Associate-level policy position, (b) your interest in and qualifications for the position; (c) your connections (if any) to people who need AAC, and to disabled people generally; and (d) when you would be able to start if offered the position;
  - (2) your **résumé or CV**, containing detailed information about your work experience and other qualifications for this position; and
  - (3) two short (less than 5-page) **writing samples**.



- Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the position is filled. No phone calls, please. We will only contact candidates who are selected for interviews. Interviews will be conducted over Zoom or similar platform. We will request at least three references at the interview stage. One or more untimed writing, editing, or presentation exercises may be given later in the process.

**People with speech-related or other disabilities and people of color are strongly encouraged to apply. We are an LGBTQIA-friendly workplace. Please let us know of any accommodations you might need to apply by contacting us at [jobs@communicationfirst.org](mailto:jobs@communicationfirst.org) or by calling or texting 202-556-0573.**

*CommunicationFIRST is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, language, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, personal appearance, family responsibility, political affiliation, or any other status protected by applicable law.*

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