

### **ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION**

Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation (NHLC) is the only law firm in the world dedicated exclusively to the protection and advancement of Native Hawaiian legal rights. Founded in 1974, NHLC has spent more than 50 years standing alongside Native Hawaiian families, cultural practitioners, and communities to safeguard *‘āina*, water, sacred places, traditional practices, and the rights that sustain Native Hawaiian identity and lifeways. NHLC serves statewide and works at the intersection of Western law and Native Hawaiian justice, pursuing outcomes that are grounded in *pono* and guided by *‘ike kupuna*. NHLC provides Native Hawaiian families and communities skilled legal advocates when their rights are at stake.

NHLC's work spans a wide range of impact areas, including land and homestead rights, water protection, sacred and culturally significant places, traditional and customary practices, *iwi kupuna*, family law, disaster recovery and resilience, and the protection of traditional knowledge and cultural intellectual property. The organization is widely respected for its legal excellence, principled advocacy, and deep accountability to the *lāhui*. In recent years, NHLC has expanded its reach and impact significantly, managing more than 100 active cases annually and delivering thousands of hours of legal services to communities across Hawai'i.

### **ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY**

Hawai'i's only dedicated Native Hawaiian rights law firm, NHLC seeks an experienced, values-driven leader to serve as its next Executive Director at a moment of exceptional organizational strength and expanding impact. The Executive Director will guide NHLC in advancing its mission to protect and uplift Native Hawaiian identity, culture, and rights while leading the implementation of the organization's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. This work centers on preserving *pilina* to *‘āina* and *‘ohana*, empowering cultural practitioners, cultivating allyship for *‘Ōiwi* justice, nurturing the next generation of Indigenous rights leaders, and ensuring enduring access to skilled Hawaiian rights advocates for the *lāhui*.

Building on significant momentum and the institution's existing legacy as a more than 50 year old Native Hawaiian serving nonprofit, the Executive Director will steward NHLC's continued growth and long-term sustainability. In recent years, the organization has secured substantial new funding and expanded its base of philanthropic support beyond Hawai'i, including major national funders, that has strengthened capacity. At the same time, NHLC operates without an endowment and relies on annual fundraising to sustain its work, making diversified revenue streams, strong partnerships with funders, and disciplined financial stewardship essential to maintaining and expanding its impact. The Executive Director will oversee organizational operations and financial management, ensure compliance with funder and audit requirements, strengthen internal systems and data practices, and support the delivery of high-quality legal services across NHLC's core practice areas, including land and homestead rights; government accountability to public and Native Hawaiian trust duties; protection of traditional and customary Native Hawaiian practices, water and natural resources, sacred places and *wahi pana*, *iwi kupuna* protection; family law; and emerging community priorities.

As NHLC's chief executive and public-facing ambassador, the Executive Director will represent the organization with the Board, staff, community partners, funders, and the broader legal and philanthropic communities, both in Hawai'i and nationally. They will guide a highly skilled and mission-driven team delivering complex legal advocacy and services statewide. The ideal

candidate will be a respected, relationship-centered leader with deep credibility in the legal community and a strong understanding of Native Hawaiian rights and community priorities. They will lead in alignment with the values that guide NHLC's work, demonstrating *pono* (a commitment to justice and integrity), *kuleana* (a deep sense of responsibility to community and mission), *onipa'a* (steadfast dedication in the face of complex challenges), *wiwo 'ole* (courageous advocacy for Native Hawaiian rights), and *pilina* (the ability to build and sustain meaningful relationships across communities and partners). They will bring demonstrated experience leading professional teams, particularly within legal or advocacy settings, while managing complex, high stakes work and fostering a culture of excellence, collaboration, and accountability. Success in this role also requires cultural competence, humility, and the ability to build trust across communities, along with a strategic orientation toward fundraising and partnerships that will sustain and grow NHLC's work for generations to come.

Target Annual Salary: \$150,000 - \$170,000

#### **HOW TO APPLY**

Please submit the following, addressed to Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation Search Committee, c/o Inkinen Executive Search, via email to [executives@inkinen.com](mailto:executives@inkinen.com) by **April 27, 2026**:

- Cover Letter - expressing the reason for your interest in NHLC, and how your skills and experiences match the ED role.
- Resume

For detailed information, please visit <https://www.inkinen.com/nhlc-ed>