

**ACLU of Tennessee**  
**Executive Director**

Nashville, TN

## Executive Director

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### About Client

The American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee (ACLU-TN) seeks a dynamic, experienced, chief executive to lead and expand a civil liberties agenda throughout Tennessee. ACLU-TN is a statewide, non-partisan, non-profit membership organization that uses legal, legislative, and public education approaches to protect and promote the enduring values of freedom, fairness, justice and equality. Its mission encompasses a broad range of constitutional issues involving individual rights and freedoms, including free speech, racial justice, privacy, religious liberty, reproductive rights, LGBTQ rights, and more. ACLU-TN is an affiliate of the national ACLU, the leading defender of civil liberties guaranteed by our nation's Bill of Rights.

First organized in 1968, ACLU-TN is one of this area's premier public advocacy organizations. ACLU-TN has an annual operating budget of approximately \$1.7 million with appropriate reserves. The organization is led by a 21-member Board of Directors and a staff of 13. ACLU-TN uses an integrative advocacy model – including advocacy, legislative lobbying, litigation, organizing and public education – to strategically pursue its mission to protect everyone's constitutional rights. ACLU-TN is a designated affiliate in the national ACLU's current strategic investment in building regional strength and capacity across the South, affording the next Executive Director an opportunity to shepherd ACLU-TN through an exciting period of growth and development.

ACLU-TN is based in Nashville, a vibrant city with a temperate four-season climate that is frequently singled out as one of the best U.S. cities for work, family, and quality of life. Home to more than 1.8 million people, the Nashville metropolitan area has over a dozen colleges and universities and features many cultural and recreational amenities including a symphony orchestra, professional sports, an extensive park system, great restaurants, and abundant live music offerings across a variety of genres.

For more information on ACLU Tennessee, please visit its [website](#).

### The Opportunity

The Executive Director serves as the chief executive officer of ACLU-TN, with primary responsibility for managing the organization's day-to-day activities and operations, leading the organization's fund development efforts, directing the work of a professional staff, and serving as the primary spokesperson for ACLU-TN. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director ensures that the organization is fiscally sound and that its internal and external communications, fund development, and programs are meeting the current and emergent needs and interests of its constituents.

The Executive Director will have a working knowledge of and a deep commitment to civil liberties issues and policies and be a leader and manager who is adept at balancing internal management with external impact and visibility. The individual must be an outstanding communicator who is able to convey effectively the mission and activities of the ACLU to a variety of constituencies and stakeholders, as well as to the broader public. The successful candidate also should be strategically oriented, and able to lead staff and board through big-picture thinking about the trajectory and evolving mission of the organization.

The Executive Director’s responsibilities include:

### Strategy & Vision

- Establish a clear vision for the continued growth and expansion of the ACLU providing direction to guide programs that align with the organization’s vision.
- Initiate and strengthen relationships and collaborations with organizations and leaders who are connected to the ACLU’s mission and purpose.
- Work in partnership with ACLU-TN staff and board, and when appropriate with ACLU national staff, to carry out the organization’s mission.
- Operate strategically in a political and social environment where success on civil liberties issues depends on the ability to work effectively with individuals across the political spectrum.

### Organizational Leadership

- Serve as an effective and visible spokesperson for the ACLU, effectively articulating the organization’s history, programs, and mission.
- Lead the organization’s fund development efforts – utilize a staff-driven program model that focuses on increasing the number and capacity of major donors.
- Inspire, motivate, and build rapport to cultivate a cohesive staff, ensuring that there is a strong internal communication, participation, coordination, and accountability.
- Champion and value diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in working relationships with the Board of Directors and all staff and actively strive to assure the organization closely reflects the communities it serves.
- Supervise, lead, and mentor staff to meet priorities, achieve organizational and strategic goals and fulfill the organization’s mission.
- Represent the organization in the media, increase public awareness and broaden the organization’s reputation to strategic constituents.

### Operational Oversight

- Ensure by effective management and leadership that the day-to-day operations are professionally and efficiently organized and administered.
- Direct legal, legislative, public advocacy, and communications programs.
- Oversee strategic planning, program execution, and human services.
- Oversee the organization’s financial operations; oversee the budgetary process and ensure that sound financial controls are in place.
- Motivate and maintain a cohesive staff, ensuring that there is strong internal communication and coordination; recruit new staff when appropriate and evaluate performance.
- Use technology to facilitate organization management, fundraising, communication, public education, and advocacy.

## Board Relations

- Implement policies, programs, goals, and objectives as established by the ACLU-TN Board of Directors.
- Work with the board to identify and help recruit new board members who add diversity to the board and whose talents, interests, and commitment help to further the ACLU's mission.
- Regularly brief the board on the status of the organization.
- Engage the board in meaningful participation to further the organization's goals.

## Candidate Profile

The ideal candidate will have most, if not all, of the following professional and personal qualities, skills, and characteristics:

- Proven managerial, problem-solving, strategic planning, fund development, and financial management experience in the private, not-for-profit, or public sector.
- Credibility and experience to connect the ACLU to resources and opportunities outside the organization; a successful track record of raising money from a variety of sources, major donor experience is preferred.
- A successful track record creating and implementing programs; experience creating partnerships and collaborations.
- A history of communicating effectively in writing and verbally, including excellent public speaking skills for both formal and extemporaneous presentations; ability to represent the ACLU to a broad public.
- High emotional intelligence and proven experiences in leading and fostering a varied range of internal and external stakeholders.
- Strong diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging analyses and commitments as well as experience successfully leading and integrating diversity into organizational policies, practices, management, and culture.
- A record of success working in partnership with a board and staff of diverse personalities and talents.
- Ten years of professional experience and a Bachelor's degree are expected requirements; an advanced degree is preferred.

### **Ideally, the successful candidate will also exhibit the following qualities and characteristics:**

- Personally committed to advancing the ACLU's values, mission, goals, and programs, with an understanding of the range of civil liberties issues and their implications.
- A dedicated leader and representative who can translate vision into action; someone who is passionate about networking and representing the organization to critical constituencies including ACLU members, the public, government, and the media.
- A person who is intelligent and inspiring; able to conceptualize, express ideas and anticipate and act on events which may create opportunities for the ACLU.

- An entrepreneur who is creative, strategic, resourceful and politically astute; someone who understands the value of creating partnerships with other organizations as a way of accomplishing the ACLU's goals.
- An energetic person who can handle and prioritize multiple activities and responsibilities; a self-starter and finisher.

## Compensation & Benefits

Salary is commensurate with experience and will be discussed directly with interested candidates. Excellent benefits include paid vacation, medical and dental insurance, retirement plan, life and long-term disability insurance, and generous paid holidays.

## Contact

Trisha Sutrisno and Shelby Woods of Koya Partners have been exclusively retained for this search. To express your interest in this role please submit your materials [here](#) or email [tsutrisno@koyapartners.com](mailto:tsutrisno@koyapartners.com) and [swoods@koyapartners.com](mailto:swoods@koyapartners.com) directly. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential.

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ACLU is an equal opportunity employer. We value a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture. The ACLU encourages applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, citizenship, disability, veteran status and record of arrest or conviction.

The ACLU undertakes affirmative action strategies in its recruitment and employment efforts to assure that persons with disabilities have full opportunities for employment in all positions.

The ACLU of Tennessee comprises two separate corporate entities, the American Civil Liberties Union of Tennessee (an IRS 501-c-4 entity) and the ACLU Foundation of Tennessee (an IRS 501-c-3 organization). Both entities have the same overall mission, and share office space and staff. The ACLU has two separate corporate entities in order to do a broad range of work to protect civil liberties.

Koya Partners is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to individuals living with disabilities. If you are a qualified individual living with a disability and need assistance expressing interest online, please email [NonprofitSearchOps@divsearch.com](mailto:NonprofitSearchOps@divsearch.com). If you are selected for an interview, you will receive additional information regarding how to request an accommodation for the interview process.

## About Koya Partners

Koya Partners, a part of the Diversified Search Group, is a leading executive search and strategic advising firm dedicated to connecting exceptionally talented people with mission-driven clients. Our founding philosophy—The Right Person in the Right Place Can Change the World—guides our work as we partner with nonprofits & NGOs, institutions of higher education, responsible businesses, and social enterprises in local communities and around the world.

For more information about Koya Partners, visit [www.koyapartners.com](http://www.koyapartners.com).