

Policy Director (0566C), California Policy Lab - 81495
University of California, Berkeley

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Posted Sep. 29, 2025, set to expire Jun. 30, 2026

Job Title Policy Director (0566C), California Policy Lab - 81495
Department California Policy Lab
Institution University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, California

Date Posted Sep. 29, 2025

Application Deadline Open until filled
Position Start Date Available immediately

Job Categories Director/Manager

Academic Field(s) Governmental Relations
Business & Administration

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Job Description

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About Berkeley

At the University of California, Berkeley, we are dedicated to fostering a community where everyone feels welcome and can thrive. Our culture of openness, freedom and belonging make it a special place for students, faculty and staff.

As a world-leading institution, Berkeley is known for its academic and research excellence, public mission, diverse student body, and commitment to equity and social justice. Since our founding in

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1868, we have driven innovation, creating global intellectual, economic and social value.

We are looking for applicants who reflect California's diversity and want to be part of an inclusive, equity-focused community that views education as a matter of social justice. Please consider whether your values align with our [Guiding Values and Principles](#), [Principles of Community](#), and [Strategic Plan](#).

At UC Berkeley, we believe that learning is a fundamental part of working, and provide space for [supportive colleague communities via numerous employee resource groups](#) (staff organizations). Our goal is for everyone on the Berkeley campus to feel supported and equipped to realize their full potential. We actively support this by providing all of our full-time staff employees with at least 80 hours (10 days) of paid time per year to engage in professional development activities. Find out more about how you can [grow your career](#) at UC Berkeley.

Departmental Overview

The California Policy Lab (CPL) generates research insights for government impact. Through hands-on partnerships with government agencies, CPL performs rigorous research across issue silos and builds the data infrastructure necessary to improve programs and policies that millions of Californians rely on every day. We focus our work in six policy areas: education, criminal justice reform, poverty and the social safety net, labor and employment, health, and homelessness and high needs populations. We work in close partnership with state and local public agencies, co-developing and carrying out joint research agendas. Our staff are mostly based at UC Berkeley and UCLA and we work with faculty and students at all ten UC campuses. In 2025, we are opening a new Sacramento office, housed at the University of California Student and Policy Center, across the street from the Capitol.

CPL recognizes the value of having a diverse staff at all levels of the organization. We are looking for equity-minded applicants who represent and understand the diverse racial and ethnic, gender identity, sexual orientation, educational, socioeconomic, cultural, and disability backgrounds present in California. When you join our team, you can expect to be part of an inclusive and equity-focused community. The employee will be appointed through CPL's Berkeley site, which resides as a center within the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment (IRLE).

Position Summary

The Policy Director will lead CPL's Sacramento office, with a primary goal of amplifying CPL's impact through engagement with the legislature, the Governor's Office, and other Sacramento-based stakeholders on matters of research and data. The Policy Director will bring CPL's research and data

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insights into the policymaking process while also sourcing new project ideas through stakeholder engagement. The position is ideal for a seasoned policy professional with deep experience in California state government and an existing network of trusted relationships with Sacramento-based policymakers and staff. The Policy Director will represent the entire Lab and will report to the Executive Directors at our Berkeley and UCLA sites.

The Policy Director will work in close coordination with the UC Office of the President's External Relations and Communications Division (ERC) and the government relations offices at relevant UC campuses, including following their guidance on how to interact with Sacramento stakeholders and regularly reporting on interactions with key policymakers.

The California Policy Lab is a nonpartisan research lab focused on some of the most pressing issues facing California. CPL is not an advocacy organization, though our research is designed to be actionable and to directly inform policy at the state and local level. The Policy Director will advance CPL's mission by identifying opportunities to inform state legislation with data and research, translating CPL research into actionable recommendations, and building and maintaining research relationships with Sacramento-based stakeholders. This is an exciting opportunity to join a leading policy-focused research institute and to help craft and strengthen how we engage with policymakers across the state.

This role reports to the Executive Directors at UCLA and UC Berkeley and will be part of the Leadership Team at CPL. The formal appointment will be at UC Berkeley.

Application Review Date

The First Review Date for this job is: 10/10/2025.

Responsibilities

Research Synthesis and Strategy (50%)

- Develop and execute CPL's a state-level strategy for informing the policymaking process with research, in collaboration with the Executive Directors and faculty leadership at UCB and UCLA.
- Analyze pending and likely future legislation to identify opportunities to inform the policy process through data and evidence.
- Synthesize CPL's research to inform pending legislation and to identify areas of potential legislation to relevant stakeholders.
- Identify legislative and regulatory opportunities to advance the use of government data for research and improve government decision-making.

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- Coordinate with CPL's research teams so they can generate relevant deliverables for Sacramento-based audiences.

Internal CPL Leadership (20%)

- Keep CPL leadership and staff educated on active and emerging policy issues and opportunities, as well as legislative deadlines and Sacramento-based events that are relevant to CPL's research areas.
- Work with CPL's communications team and research staff to develop policy briefs, testimony, and other materials.
- Mentor CPL staff on legislative processes and effective policy communications.
- Manage part- or full-time contractors or staff for communications or event planning.
- Coordinates, as appropriate, with CPL's Advisory Board and soon-to-be-launched Faculty Board on active policy issues.
- Identify opportunities for funding or partnerships that advance CPL's strategic plan and state strategy.
- Performs other duties as assigned.

Stakeholder Engagement (20%)

- Serve as CPL's primary representative in Sacramento.
- Build and maintain relationships as a trusted research and analysis resource for key players in Sacramento.
- Communicate complex research findings to policymakers, agency leaders, and advocacy partners in clear, actionable ways.
- Organize briefings, testimony, public events, and other outreach to share research findings and policy recommendations.
- Represent CPL at policy convenings, hearings, and other public events.
- Represent CPL in relevant coalitions and stakeholder groups.
- For the responsibilities above, maintain consistent collaboration and communication with UCOP ERC and the various UC campus government relations offices on all issues that involve state legislation, state policy strategy, or advocacy with elected officials or interest groups to ensure CPL's approach is aligned with UC-wide goals and with relationships for which those offices are the primary managers.

Public Affairs (10%)

- Take (or refer, as appropriate) media requests on behalf of the Lab.

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- Author op-eds, blog posts, or other shorter commentary pieces, with a focus on uplifting CPL research findings and making CPL's research visible and understandable for a policy audience.
- For the responsibilities above, maintain consistent collaboration and communication with UCOP ERC and the various UC campus government relations offices on all issues that involve state legislation, state policy strategy, or advocacy with elected officials or interest groups to ensure CPL's approach is aligned with UC-wide goals and with relationships for which those offices are the primary managers.

Required Qualifications

- Minimum 5 years of professional experience in California state government, the Legislature, or related policy roles.
- Ability to leverage an existing network of trusted relationships with Sacramento-based policymakers and staff.
- Deep understanding of California's legislative, budgetary, and regulatory processes.
- Demonstrated success translating research or technical analysis into actionable policy recommendations.
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to work collaboratively with a diverse range of stakeholders, including academic researchers, agency leaders, elected officials, and community partners.
- Knowledge of CPL's mission and demonstrated ability to advance evidence-informed policy.
- Demonstrated skill in advancing equity and understanding how policy impacts a variety of California communities.
- Bachelor's degree in related area and/or equivalent experience/training.

Preferred Qualifications

- 10+ years of professional experience in California state government, the Legislature, or related policy roles.
- Experience working in one of CPL's major policy areas (criminal justice, homelessness, workforce, education, social safety net, health).
- Experience developing or leading state-level policy campaigns or initiatives.
- Experience in a similar role of translating complex and nuanced research findings into actionable, policy-focused insights for decision-makers.
- Master's degree, JD, or other advanced degree in public policy, public administration, law, or a related field and/or equivalent experience/training.

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Salary & Benefits

For information on the comprehensive benefits package offered by the University, please visit the University of California's [Compensation & Benefits](#) website.

Under California law, the University of California, Berkeley is required to provide a reasonable estimate of the compensation range for this role and should not offer a salary outside of the range posted in this job announcement. This range takes into account the wide range of factors that are considered in making compensation decisions including but not limited to experience, skills, knowledge, abilities, education, licensure and certifications, analysis of internal equity, and other business and organizational needs. It is not typical for an individual to be offered a salary at or near the top of the range for a position. Salary offers are determined based on final candidate qualifications and experience.

The budgeted annual salary range that the University reasonably expects to pay for this position is \$120,000.00 - \$170,000.00.

- This is an exempt monthly-paid position.

How to Apply

- To apply, please submit your resume and cover letter.

Other Information

This position will be governed by the terms and conditions in the agreement for the Research and Public Service Professionals, represented by the UAW.

- This is not a visa opportunity.
- This position will be based in Sacramento and will partly work (20%) from the UC Student and Policy Center (1115 11th St., Sacramento, CA 95814).
- This position is eligible for up to 80% hybrid work. Exact arrangements are determined in partnership with your supervisor to meet role responsibilities and department needs, and are subject to change.

Conviction History Background

This is a designated position requiring fingerprinting and a background check due to the nature of the job responsibilities. Berkeley does hire people with conviction histories and reviews information

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received in the context of the job responsibilities. The University reserves the right to make employment contingent upon successful completion of the background check.

SB 791 and AB 810 Misconduct Disclosure Requirement: As a condition of employment, the final candidate who accepts a conditional offer of employment will be required to disclose if they have been subject to any final administrative or judicial decisions within the last seven years determining that they committed any misconduct; received notice of any allegations or are currently the subject of any administrative or disciplinary proceedings involving misconduct; have left a position after receiving notice of allegations or while under investigation in an administrative or disciplinary proceeding involving misconduct; or have filed an appeal of a finding of misconduct with a previous employer.

"Misconduct" means any violation of the policies or laws governing conduct at the applicant's previous place of employment, including, but not limited to, violations of policies or laws prohibiting sexual harassment, sexual assault, or other forms of harassment, discrimination, dishonesty, or unethical conduct, as defined by the employer. For reference, below are UC's policies addressing some forms of misconduct:

[UC Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy](#)

[UC Anti-Discrimination Policy](#)

[Abusive Conduct in the Workplace](#)

Equal Employment Opportunity

The University of California is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, protected veteran status, or other protected status under state or federal law.

To apply, visit

https://careerspub.universityofcalifornia.edu/psc/ucb/EMPLOYEE/HRMS/c/HRS_HRAM_FL.HRS.CG_S

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Contact Information

Please reference Academickeys in your cover letter when applying for or inquiring about this job announcement.

Contact

N/A

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