



**California Marine Sanctuary Foundation
Chief of Staff
Santa Cruz, California
Full Time**

Candidates must be available to work a minimum of two days per week in the Santa Cruz, California office.

About the Organization

The California Marine Sanctuary Foundation (CMSF) is dedicated to preserving coast and ocean resources for present and future generations. Our mission is centered on protecting marine ecosystems, improving water quality, fostering climate resilience, and restoring coastal habitats. Through our four core programs—**Marine Conservation, Water Quality, Climate Change Adaptation, and Coastal Restoration**—we provide strong leadership and advance critical work in science-based policy, communications, and on-the-ground project implementation to enhance ocean and coastal health. CMSF is a close foundation partner with the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary and the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and leads several state and federally-funded conservation projects.

For more information, please visit [California Marine Sanctuary Foundation](https://www.cmsf.org).

Chief of Staff

The Chief of Staff is a newly created senior leadership position that will have strategic planning, programmatic management, and oversight responsibility across multiple CMSF program areas. As a thought partner to the Executive Director, and working collaboratively with program leads, the Chief of Staff will play a vital role in organizational planning, program development, operational leadership, and will ensure success in CMSF's overall initiatives.

The successful candidate will possess superb organizational and people management skills, and have a strong aptitude and passion for leading and inspiring a team of highly dedicated experts. They will have high-level program management experience, an understanding of the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors, and a strong background in at least one of our program areas.

Reporting to the Executive Director, this is an opportunity to join a growing organization at the forefront of marine and coastal conservation efforts. As the Chief of Staff, you will manage a dedicated team making a tangible difference in protecting one of the world's most iconic coastlines.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

The Chief of Staff will perform the following and other duties as assigned:

Program Support and Implementation

- Provide management oversight and support to program staff in marine conservation, water quality, climate change adaptation, and coastal conservation and restoration.
- Collaborate with program staff to develop, implement, and refine strategies for each program area, aligning them with CMSF's mission and organizational priorities.

- Guide the evaluation of program impacts and outcomes, ensuring alignment with organizational goals and funder requirements.
- Support program staff with seeking program funding aligned with strategic priorities.

Executive and Strategic Support

- Serve as a strategic advisor to the Executive Director, supporting high-level decision-making.
- Represent CMSF in meetings with partners, stakeholders, and funders, as needed.
- Participate in and prepare for monthly board and sub-committee meetings, as needed.
- Assist in the development of CMSF's organizational strategy, supporting initiatives that enhance organizational efficiency, communications, and mission delivery.

Operational Leadership

- Support high-performing, collaborative program teams by overseeing workflow, setting performance goals, and coordinating resources.
- Ensure effective communication and coordination across programs, fostering a culture of innovation, accountability, and shared goals and outcomes.

Qualifications

The successful candidate will have the following minimum qualifications:

Education and Experience

- A master's degree or equivalent work experience is required, with a focus on environmental science, marine biology, public policy, or a related field.
- A minimum of 8 years' experience in program management, staff oversight, conservation, nonprofit leadership, or a related field, with a demonstrated understanding of marine and coastal conservation landscapes.
- Experience managing cross-functional teams and implementing complex programs.

Skills and Competencies

- Strong leadership and interpersonal skills, with the ability to foster a positive, collaborative work environment.
- Excellent organizational, analytical, and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to communicate effectively with diverse audiences, including stakeholders, partners, funders, and the public.
- Proven experience in grant writing and securing funding for conservation projects, with a track record of successful proposal development.

Attributes

- Strategic thinker with a proactive approach to problem-solving and an ability to navigate complex issues with creativity and resilience.
- Passionate about marine conservation, environmental stewardship, and sustainable development.
- Commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace and within CMSF's programs.

Compensation and Location

This is a full-time position with competitive compensation between \$130-150K depending on experience. CMSF also provides a benefits package including vacation, paid holidays and sick leave,

medical and dental benefits, and a 403(b)(7) retirement plan with a 3% match and vesting after one year. CMSF is flexible and willing to discuss possible relocation assistance, as needed.

As mentioned above, this is **NOT** a remote position. Candidates must be available to work at least two days per week (Monday and Wednesday preferred), during traditional business hours, from CMSF's Santa Cruz offices. As mentioned above, please do not apply if you are unable to reliably commute to Santa Cruz.

To Apply

CEA Recruiting is assisting CMSF with this search. To be considered for this position, interested candidates must follow the link below to submit a resume, cover letter, and salary requirements through CEA's job portal. Please direct all applications and inquiries to [CEA Recruiting](#). This position will remain open until filled.

<https://job.ceiconsulting.com/jobs/chief-of-staff-monterey-ca-107398>

CMSF is committed to dismantling the longstanding racial, gender, and socio-economic boundaries that exist in the field of environmental conservation. When bringing on new staff and interns, we adhere to equitable recruiting policies and promote anti-discrimination within our work and with our partners in the local and conservation communities. We acknowledge that environmental conservation is woven with rich diversity including Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Ecological Knowledge and we will do our best to amplify all the voices that contribute to conservation. Lastly, we commit to continued listening and learning, adapting to the needs of our community, and being inclusive.

CEA Recruiting works with leading environmental nonprofits, foundations, and businesses to recruit top talent and design effective organizational staffing strategies. For more information, visit www.cearecruiting.com.