

# PRO BONO/PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF LAW

Tribone Center for Clinical Legal Education

Pro Bono/Public Service

**PROGRAM**



*"The welfare of the people is the highest law."*

# PRO BONO/PUBLIC SERVICE GUIDELINES

---

## MISSION STATEMENT

"*Salus Populi Suprema Lex*" is Duquesne University School of Law's motto meaning the welfare of the people is the highest law. This is particularly fitting with respect to the Pro Bono Program. The law school's faculty, staff, and students have a long tradition of serving the community and helping those in need. The Pro Bono Program at the law school goes one step further by providing a structure through which students can recognize the professional obligation to serve the disadvantaged. Duquesne University School of Law's Pro Bono Program encourages and facilitates its law students to serve the public interest with the goal that these law students will then serve the public interest in their professional careers.

If you have any questions concerning Duquesne's Pro Bono Program, please contact Beth Licciardello. She can be reached by telephone 412-396-4730 or by email at [licciardellos@duq.edu](mailto:licciardellos@duq.edu).

# **PRO BONO/PUBLIC SERVICE GUIDELINES**

## **HOURS REQUIREMENT**

Students are recognized at graduation if they complete a minimum of 50 hours of pro bono service. Students may complete their pro bono service as early as the second-full semester of their first year of law school. They must complete the 50 hour minimum by the last day of classes of their final semester of law school.

## **CRITERIA**

In order to satisfy the requirements of the voluntary Pro Bono Program, the pro bono service must be law-related. Students may not receive financial compensation from a client or other source for pro bono legal services or academic credit for services rendered. Further, a licensed attorney site supervisor must adequately supervise and review any and all work. The service provided must be:

- a) Done on behalf of people who are not able to afford legal services, have limited access to legal services, or are underserved by the private bar, or
- b) Targeted at protecting the rights of an individual or individuals in situations raising important public interest concerns and/or important rights belonging to a significant and underserved segment of the public.

## **AWARDS**

Students who complete 50 hours of volunteer (not for credit or pay) service will receive a Pro Bono Service Recognition Certificate. Students performing 61-120 hours will receive a Pro Bono Service Honors Certificate. Students with hours in excess of 120 will receive a Pro Bono Exemplary Service Certificate.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **PROJECT SELECTION**

Pro Bono service projects must be preapproved by a clinical faculty member. Please contact Beth Licciardello for assistance. The student and their supervisor will then be required to certify hours via school-provided time sheets.

If you plan on taking the Bar Exam in a state other than Pennsylvania, there may be mandatory requirements for pro bono service. Requirements for qualifying pro bono service can be found on individual state bar association websites.

### **DUQUESNE / ALLEGHENY COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION / PITTSBURGH PRO BONO PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS**

The Law School has established formal pro bono projects with public interest law organizations, non-profits, bar association pro bono clinics, and private attorneys.

### **COMMUNITY-BASED LEGAL SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS**

Students interested in working individually with a community-based legal services organization must let Beth Licciardello know where they would like to work. She will assist the students in getting their work approved.

### **SUBMISSION OF FORMS FOR PRO BONO OPPORTUNITIES**

Upon the completion of the 50 hours of pro bono service, time sheets must be turned into Beth Licciardello (via hand delivery, fax or email) by noon on the Wednesday before the final day of classes of the student's final semester of law school.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

All work completed on active cases with real clients is protected under the attorney-client privilege and must be kept confidential as required by law and PA Rules of Ethics. Confidential information relating to these cases may not be revealed without express permission of the client. Students are reminded to be vigilant in protecting client information and to preserve confidentiality.

All work provided in conjunction with the pro bono project must be completed in a timely and professional manner. If a student is unable to complete an assigned task, he or she should contact the supervising attorney immediately. Students must comply with all rules regarding academic integrity, including policies related to plagiarism. Further, any potential conflicts of interest or other ethical concerns must be brought to the attention of the supervising attorney immediately.

Students must record their own hours by submitting school-provided time sheets to satisfy the Pro Bono Service Requirement. **Any misrepresentation of the number of hours completed will be subject to discipline under the Honor Code.** It is the student's responsibility to submit time sheets in a timely manner to ensure that proper credit is received.

# **PRO BONO PROGRAM**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is the Pro Bono Service Requirement?**

All students must complete a minimum of 50 hours of pro bono service prior to graduation for recognition.

### **What kind of project qualifies for credit towards the Pro Bono Service Requirement?**

In order to satisfy the requirements of the voluntary Pro Bono Program, the pro bono service must be law-related. Students may not receive financial compensation or academic credit for services rendered. However, students may receive funds related to cost of living in connection with their service.

### **When can a student begin work towards the requirement?**

Students can commence voluntary pro bono service in the second-full semester of the first year of law school.

### **When must a student complete their hours?**

Students must complete the minimum 50 non-mandatory hours and turn in their time sheets by the last day of classes of their final semester of law school to receive recognition.

### **How do students select a Pro Bono Project?**

Students may research available pro bono opportunities themselves or they may arrange for an outside pro bono service project with preapproval from a clinical faculty member.

### **What if I performed pro bono service in the past that I would like to receive credit for?**

Students should contact the Pro Bono Department to arrange for certification of previous pro bono service projects. Certification is not guaranteed.

### **Can I count training hours for a project that I complete?**

Yes. You may use the hours you attended in training toward your hours of pro bono work.

### **Can I get credit for training hours for a project if I don't end up working on that project?**

No. Training is connected to service and you may only get credit for training hours if you participate in the project.

**Does work performed for a clinic or certain externship programs qualify for credit toward the Pro Bono Service?**

Yes, additional hours beyond the 280 hours required for clinics and certain externship programs will qualify for credit for pro bono.

**If I receive a stipend from the Public Interest Law Association, does work performed at my summer fellowship qualify for credit towards Pro Bono?**

Yes. Any hours above those worked for pay will be recognized for voluntary pro bono service.

**Does an unpaid internship at a for-profit law firm qualify for pro bono credit?**

No, unless the work performed was a non-fee generating pro bono matter.