

CUA LAW PRO BONO PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The mission of CUA Law's Pro Bono Program is to help students develop the public service ethos they will need as future lawyers by facilitating pro bono opportunities and celebrating the pro bono contributions of the CUA Law community.

In general, to qualify as part of CUA Law's Pro Bono Program, the student's work must be:

- *Public interest/Public Service;*
- *Law-related;*
- *Supervised by an attorney; and*
- *Not for compensation or academic credit.*

Students should prioritize providing pro bono legal services to people who otherwise would not be able to access or afford legal assistance and to organizations working to improve access to justice.

I. Qualifying Work *(Additional work not listed below may qualify as pro bono for the CUA Law Pro Bono Program. All questions regarding qualifying work should be directed to jobs@law.edu.)*

a. Public Interest/Public Service includes work:

- i. On behalf of people of limited financial means;
- ii. On behalf of people with limited access to legal representation;
- iii. Improving access to justice;
- iv. Securing or protecting civil rights, civil liberties, human rights, or public rights;
- v. Promoting or protecting the welfare of the environment or animals;
- vi. Improving the legal profession, the judicial system, or public understanding of the law; and
- vii. Providing government services in furtherance of the above.
- viii. Work may be performed with nonprofit organizations, government agencies, public defenders, prosecutors, judges, courts, legislative bodies, international organizations, foreign governments, law schools, and law firms.
- ix. In all of the above, the legal services should be provided without fee or expectation of fee, or in some circumstances at a substantially reduced rate.

b. Law-related includes:

- i. Work involving the use of legal skills or knowledge of the law;
- ii. Translation or interpretation done for law-related pro bono matters; and
- iii. Volunteering in a low-income tax clinic (e.g., VITA).
- iv. Law-related does not include community service that is not legal in nature.

- c. *Supervised by an attorney:*
 - i. The work should be directly or indirectly supervised by an attorney, including: attorneys admitted to practice and in good standing with the appropriate licensing authority in a jurisdiction, law school faculty, and judges.
 - ii. If the work is not supervised by an attorney, the student must seek pre-approval from the Office of Career and Professional Development, at jobs@law.edu.
 - d. *Not for compensation or academic credit*
 - i. Students may not receive any financial compensation for the work, including a salary, stipend, or grant.
 - 1. Hours worked beyond those compensated may be counted as pro bono.
 - ii. Students may not receive academic credit for the work.
 - 1. Students completing an externship for academic credit may count hours worked beyond the hours they received credit for. (2 credits = 120 hours; 3 credits = 180 hours)
 - 2. Students participating in a CCLS clinic for credit may not submit any clinic hours for pro bono credit.
- II. Exclusions**
- a. *Timing*
 - i. To qualify for the CUA Law Pro Bono Program, the work must be completed by CUA Law students in good standing between the first and last day of classes necessary for their degree.
 - ii. Transfer students may not submit pro bono hours earned while at their previous institution. They may submit pro bono work completed after their last day of classes at their prior school.
 - b. *Training*
 - i. Time spent training for a pro bono opportunity may be counted as pro bono hours, but only if the student follows through on the project.
- III. Approval**
- a. The Office of Career and Professional Development must approve student pro bono hours. Students may submit hours after they have been completed, but eligibility for the Pro Bono Program cannot be guaranteed without pre-approval.
 - b. The Office of Career and Professional Development reserves the right to deny the inclusion of hours.
- IV. Reporting Pro Bono Hours**
- a. All qualifying pro bono hours must be properly reported in Symplicity. See the Reporting Pro Bono Hours On Symplicity document for directions.

V. Pro Bono Pledge

Students may pledge to complete 50, 100, or 150 hours of pro bono during their time in law school. The Pro Bono Pledge can be a helpful motivational tool, and is entirely voluntary. There are no repercussions for not completing the pledge. Students are recognized for their pro bono achievements regardless of the pledge. Students can make the pledge when they register for pro bono on Symplicity. (See Reporting Pro Bono Hours On Symplicity for directions.)

VI. Recognition

a. Pro Bono Honors

- i. Students who complete 50, 100, and 150-plus hours of pro bono will receive Pro Bono Honors recognition upon graduation.

b. Michael F. Curtin Pro Bono Award

- i. Each year at graduation, the law school recognizes two exceptional students (one from each division, day and evening) for their pro bono service by awarding them with the Michael F. Curtin Pro Bono Award. The award is given to the graduating students who have honored the highest ideals of the Columbus School of Law. Some of the factors considered for this award are: the student's dedicated hours to pro bono work, the diversity of their pro bono service, its impact on the community, the student's continuous involvement in pro bono service throughout law school, and student's efforts to instill the importance of pro bono participation in their classmates. The award is named in tribute to alumnus Michael F. Curtin '65, in recognition of his more than 50 years of leadership and selfless dedication to the law school and the legal profession.

c. Additional Recognition

- i. Students are also celebrated for their pro bono service throughout the year in the Pro Bono Honor Roll, posters, newsletters, online articles, and in other ways.

VII. Pro Bono Advisory Board

The Pro Bono Advisory Board ("PBAB") is charged with fostering student engagement in CUA Law's Pro Bono Program. The role of PBAB Members, comprised of day and evening student representatives from each academic year, includes:

- a. Recruit students from their respective classes to take part in pro bono projects.
- b. Maintain contact with their classmates, keeping them up to date with new pro bono opportunities.
- c. Assist fellow students with pro bono program issues, such as registration and timesheet submission.
- d. Meet with the Office of Career and Professional Development to discuss trending student interests and needs to ensure the program supports the student body. With this in mind, members work to identify, develop, and carry out new pro bono projects under the direction of the Office of Career and Professional Development.

- e. Assist with annual on-campus events, such as Pro Bono Week, and on-campus training by legal service providers. Members help with on-campus panel discussion programs set up and clean up.
- f. Inform the Office of Career and Professional Development of student achievements in pro bono participation.
- g. Liaise with on-campus student organizations, keeping them informed of the pro bono program's agenda and events. They will also seek the participation of these groups in pro bono projects.
- h. Regularly meet with the Office of Career and Professional Development.

If you are interested in becoming a PBAB Member, please contact jobs@law.edu.

VIII. New York State Bar Mandatory Pro Bono

All applicants for admission by examination to the New York State bar must perform 50 hours of law-related pro bono service prior to application filing. Further information about the requirement, including FAQs and the Form Affidavit of Compliance, can be found at <http://www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/probono/baradmissionreqs.shtml>. What qualifies as pro bono service for the New York State bar is NOT always the same as what qualifies as pro bono for the CUA Law Pro Bono Program! Students considering applying for admission in New York are strongly encouraged to complete a Form Affidavit of Compliance immediately at the conclusion of each pro bono project.

http://www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/probono/appforadmission_probonoreq_fillable.pdf

Any questions regarding the New York bar pro bono requirement should be directed to ProBonoRule@nycourts.gov.

IX. Examples of Qualifying Placements for the CUA Law Pro Bono Program

Amara Legal Center
Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain
Animal Welfare Institute
Bread for the City
CASA de Maryland
Catholic Charities Legal Network
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. (CLINIC)
Chemung County Court
Christian Legal Aid of DC
Circuit Court for Baltimore City
Council of the District of Columbia
D.C. Bar Landlord Tenant Resource Center
D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center Advice & Referral Clinic
D.C. Bar Small Business Legal Assistance Program
D.C. Law Students in Court
Environmental Council of the States
Federal Aviation Administration
Federal Bar Association
Federal Communications Commission
First Shift Justice Project
Good Samaritan Advocates
Hogar Immigrant Services
Hope Border Institute
Human Rights Defense Center
Humane Society of the U.S.
International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children
Kids In Need of Defense
Legal Aid Justice Center
Legal Counsel for the Elderly
Maricopa County Office of Public Defender
Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Maryland Court of Special Appeals
Maryland Office of the Public Defender
Maryland Volunteer Lawyer Service (MVLS)
Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project
Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office
Neighborhood Legal Services Program
Orleans Public Defenders Office
Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office
Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland
Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia
Restoration Immigration Legal Aid
Santa Clara County Superior Court
So Others Might Eat
Street Law
Superior Court of the District of Columbia
The Capital Area Immigrants' Rights (CAIR) Coalition
The Humane Society of the United States
The Innocence Project Clinic and Clemency Project
The People's Law Library of Maryland
The Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program
The Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless
U.S. Air Force
U.S. Army
U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia
U.S. Court of Federal Claims
U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia
U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. House Judiciary Committee
U.S. Navy
Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program
Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs