

Pro Bono Competencies Analysis

In furtherance of the mission of the Committee on Pro Bono and Legal Services to 1) facilitate the provision of pro bono legal services to underserved populations and 2) address issues facing attorneys and advocates who offer pro bono services, the Committee prepared a chart as a tool to encourage more attorneys to provide pro bono legal services by educating them about the training opportunities and skills development associated with pro bono work.

The chart lists practice areas down the left-hand side and important legal skills across the top. Each practice area was assigned a "score," representing how often lawyers doing pro bono work in a given practice area utilized a particular legal skill, e.g. conducting depositions or drafting contracts. There are three possible "scores": (1) the skill is almost always involved in pro bono work available in the practice area, (2) the skill is sometimes involved, and (3) the skill is almost never involved.

Best Practices

The Best Practices series has been a feature of the Committee for approximately seven years. Each session convenes a group to discuss an issue impacting pro bono legal services. A broad audience is invited; we typically get attendees from law firms, legal services organizations, law schools, corporate in-house lawyers and others. The sessions are not recorded, in order to encourage a safe space within which the participants can have a candid discussion.

Six Years of Best Practices

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting Started (finding matters, engagements, screening, collaborating) • Keeping it Going (motivating volunteers, supervision strategies) • Setting Boundaries (defining scope, terminating matters) • Looking Back and Looking Forward (evaluating what we've done and goal setting) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aiming toward the Future (training new retired and international lawyers) • Beginning Early (targeting law school students and clinics, mandatory, externships) • Collaborating for Impact (diversity & pro bono, marketing & pro bono, recruiting & pro bono, impact litigation & large scale advocacy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaster Relief (in the wake of Sandy) • The 50-Hour Rule • Doing Right the Right Way (ethics) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practices & Current Pro Bono Trends • Housing • Economic Empowerment • Family Law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro Bono Basics in a Changing Landscape • Measuring Impact (evaluating and measuring impact beyond hours) • Preparing For and Managing Risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All About the Benjamins (relationships and lack thereof between monetary support for legal services and pro bono) • OnBoarding: Pro Bono Professionals Discuss What Makes for a Good Board Experience • Expanding the Pro Bono Community: Moving Beyond Legal Services (pro bono services from other professions) • It's a Thin Line Between Love And Hate: Exploring the Legal Services and Law Firms Working Relationship

New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice

2011-2016 testimony at Chief Judge's Hearings on Civil Legal Services and engagement in city-wide and state-wide initiatives related to Non-lawyer Practitioner developments, the Pro Bono Scholars Program, the 50 Hour Pro Bono Admission Rule and the Pro Bono Reporting Rule, including participation in the Chief Judge's Task Force Law School Conferences and Technology Conferences.

Right to Counsel Bill endorsement, with modifications

PBLS has been advocating vigorously for passage of Intro No. 214-a, the Right to Counsel in Housing Bill pending before the NYC Council.

A report written for this Committee stating that Intro 214-a will save the City a total of \$320 million per year was undertaken pro bono by the global financial advisory firm of Stout Risius Ross (SRR). This follows recent news coverage relating to the increase in funding to legal services for housing work, which has resulted in an 18% reduction in evictions.

The compelling nature and need for passage of Intro. 214-a has also been highlighted by the recent release of Matt Desmond's book, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, which has received widespread, very positive attention in the mainstream press.

Disaster Preparedness

PBLS has been investigating methods by which large numbers of attorney volunteers can be identified, contacted and mobilized in the event of a disaster. There is a pilot program in place to test a volunteer management system at a few large legal services organizations that would populate a central database in an emergency.

Encouraging Pro Bono for Small Firms and Solo Practitioners

PBLS provides information on pro bono opportunities for attorneys practicing solo and in small and mid-sized firms, or in smaller corporate legal departments that do not have full-time pro bono professionals. We have held events to discuss different types of pro bono opportunities that are most appropriate for attorneys practicing outside of BigLaw. We are currently working with other bar associations and groups to provide information targeted specifically to solo practitioners, and attorneys at smaller and mid-sized firms. Pro Bono Net worked with us to create a webpage that highlights pro bono trainings and opportunities for organizations that do not have a dedicated pro bono administrative function.

Supervisors' Guidelines for Law Student Pro Bono Work

PBLS is working on ways to encourage and enable law students to do appropriate pro bono work, develop best practices for law student pro bono, and draw law students into work (full-time or pro bono) that increases access to justice both during and after their law school careers.

This year, they are (a) developing a basic ethics program designed for law students before they take on their first pro bono projects; (b) providing suggestions to the courts on how to improve various implementation and tracking aspects of the 50-hour rule; (c) providing input to the Statewide Law School Access to Justice Council of the New York State Permanent Commission on Access to Justice on various topics, and (d) potentially working with Pro Bono Net and others to develop a New York law student pro bono portal.

Increasing In-house Attorney participation through supporting the creation of a city-wide working group of in-house counsel.

PBLS has organized conversations for in-house program leaders and are creating work product that addresses the needs of corporate pro bono programs concerning issues including malpractice coverage, bar admission requirements, and pro bono partnerships and co-counseling. Our in-house counsel roundtable events have been attended by counsel from organizations with a range of pro bono programs, from established programs with policies and procedures to legal departments that are looking into establishing a program. The in-house attorneys have met recently and have decided to meet quarterly to discuss their programs and other issues specific to their pro bono community.