

PRO BONO MENU OF
OPPORTUNITIES



MASTER LAWYERS
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MASTER LAWYERS SECTION

Pro Bono Opportunities

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PRO BONO MENU OF OPPORTUNITIES

Master Lawyers Section

Introduction

The State Bar of Michigan, through the Committee on Justice Initiatives and the Pro Bono Initiative, supports a number of opportunities for members of the legal community to give their time and resources to those who are unable to afford an attorney. The overall goal of the PBI is that every attorney and firm in the state has one or more opportunities available to them to fulfill their pro bono obligation. Our goal in developing this “menu” is to allow attorneys flexibility in serving the community by choosing the ways that best fit their individual skills and circumstances. We are especially pleased to let members of the Master Lawyers Section¹ know through this customized menu the range of pro bono opportunities that are particularly suited to their wisdom and experience. We encourage you to use this information to help you decide how you can help provide legal assistance in your community.

In 1990, the Representative Assembly adopted the Voluntary Standard for Pro Bono Participation. The Standard encourages lawyers to fulfill their pro bono obligation by providing 30 hours of service and/or donating \$300 to an organization providing free legal services to the poor each year. The two options—service or donations—are of equal value; both are necessary to address the lack of access to legal assistance.

In general, pro bono programs are not directly sponsored by the State Bar. Rather, these programs are sponsored by local legal aid programs, local and specialty bar associations, state and local advocacy organizations, and law school clinics. Contact information for these programs is contained in the Pro Bono Reference Manual <http://www.michbar.org/programs/atj/probonomanual.cfm>.

Service Options for More Experienced Lawyers

The programs listed here provide ideas on the areas of opportunity, location of service, and names and emails or websites to contact for more information. Many more pro bono opportunities exist and can be explored through the Pro Bono Reference Manual.

¹ Active, inactive, and emeritus SBM members of good standing who have reached age 60 or completed 30 years of practice as members of the Bar will automatically be entered for free membership in the section. Over 11,700 members qualify. Active, inactive, and emeritus SBM members of good standing who have reached age 50 or have completed 20 years of membership in the Bar may join the section for \$25.

American Civil Liberties Union Fund of MI

Michael J. Steinberg

msteinberg@aclumich.org

Statewide program

This program has opportunities available for volunteer lawyers of any age.

Bay Area Women's Center

Regina Turner: Executive Director

rturner@bawc/mi.org

Bay County area

This program needs experienced family lawyers who know child custody laws.

CALL

(248) 443-8068

Kari Deming, ext. 231

Southfield office serves many areas across the state.

CALL uses more experienced lawyers on its case intake telephone hotline. There is a set schedule – minimum of 3 hours per day, two days per week, with a one year commitment.

Center for Civil Justice

Terri Stangl

tstangl@ccs-mi.org

Serves Arena, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Genesee, Gratiot, Isabella, Lapeer, Midland and Saginaw Counties

CCJ needs 1) help with legislative analysis and advocacy; 2) direct advocacy with federal and/or state lawmakers in the pro bono attorney's district on selected poverty law issues; 3) complex litigation - assist with legal research and writing, discovery, and/or possible co-counseling opportunities; 4) brief on site telephone services related to food assistance program to callers to food and nutrition program helpline based in Flint

Community Legal Resources

Leor Barak, Pro Bono Coordinator

lbarak@clronline.org

Statewide program

CLR offers non-profit corporate restructuring, drafting and negotiating Community Benefits Agreements, real estate/vacant property policy work.

Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association Foundation- ATJ programs

www.detroitlawyer.org

Confer with clients in any area of the law you are comfortable, without engaging in long term representation.

Elder Law of Mi- Mid-America Pension Rights Project

Keith Morris, Deputy Director

kmorris@elderlawofmi.org

Statewide program

This program uses pro bono lawyers for Qualified Domestic Relations Order entry, almost always uncontested. A limited number of seats on this program's board and advisory council are available for volunteer service.

Farmworker Legal Services- Division of LSSCM

Thomas K. Thornburg

thornbur@lsscm.org

Statewide program

This program is most interested in experienced lawyers who will accept (as referrals or on a co-counsel basis) more complex tort, civil rights, and employment law cases.

First Step

Judy Ellis: Executive Director

jellis@firststep-mi.org

Serves Western Wayne County and Downriver areas

This program uses pro bono lawyers for free legal clinic for advice and counsel.

HAVEN

Megan Widman

mwidman@haven-oakland.org

Serves Macomb, Oakland, Washtenaw and Wayne Counties

HAVEN provides non-legal advocacy support for domestic violence victims and makes referrals to pro bono attorneys for the actual legal representation on a case by case basis.

Immigration Assistance Program

Diocese of Kalamazoo

Kirsten Inquilla

kishinquilla@gmail.com

Serves Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, Van Buren Counties

This program offers opportunities for general consultations, naturalization applications, family-based immigration petitions, Violence Against Women Act petitions, adjustment of status applications and temporary protected status applications. Spanish spoken. Mentoring opportunities are available.

Immigration Assistance Program

Diocese of Grand Rapids

Kirsten Inquilla

kishinquilla@gmail.com

Serves 11 counties in western Michigan

This program offers opportunities for general consultations, naturalization applications, family-based immigration petitions, Violence Against Women Act petitions, adjustment of status applications and temporary protected status applications. Spanish spoken. Mentoring opportunities are available.

Lakeshore Legal Aid

Catherine McGee

cmcgee@lakeshorelegalaid.org

Serves 17 counties in thumb and bay area

This program uses pro bono attorneys for family law and senior matters. It also matches senior lawyers with less experienced attorneys to assist them on any pro bono case the new attorney may take.

Legal Aid and Defender Assn., Inc.

Lynda Krupp, Pro Bono Coordinator

lkrupp@ladadetroit.org

Mary Blaney

MBlaney@ladadetroit.org

Julie Nuse

JNuse@ladadetroit.org

Serves Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties

This program offers a wide variety of opportunities including providing advice and counsel, brief services, research, case handling (litigation or non-litigation) in many issue areas of civil law, and pro se clinics for divorce and expungements.

Legal Aid of Western Michigan

Paul Abrahamsen, Pro Bono Coordinator

pabrahamsen@legalaidwestmich.net

Mary Ellen Drolet

medrolet@legalaidwestmich.net

Offices in Grand Rapids, Big Rapids, Holland, Kalamazoo, Muskegon, St. Joseph, Niles

Retired attorneys can volunteer through this agency's pro bono program to take cases. Interview space and support for attorneys who have closed their office can be available.

Western also has an Internet based advice program which offers an opportunity to commit a discrete amount of time and can be done from any location.

Legal Assistance Center

Grand Rapids, MI

Visit legalassistancecenter.org for online volunteer application

Serves Kent County

LAC provides courthouse-based information and education to the public at large and individual pro se litigants, particularly in the areas of family and landlord/tenant law. Minimum commitment of six months, volunteering at least one regularly scheduled four-hour shift per week.

Legal Assistance Program- Macomb County Dept of Senior Services

Thomas Hartwig

Thomas.hartwig@macombcountymi.gov

Probate law, low-fee will panel, Chapter 7 bankruptcy, foreclosure defense, loan modification, Chapter 13 bankruptcy, community legal education presentations.

Legal Services of Eastern Michigan

http://www.lsem-mi.org/

Offices in Port Huron, Flint, Midland, Saginaw.

Open to any volunteers.

Legal Services of Northern Michigan

http://www.lsnm.org/

Offices in Gaylord, Alpena, Escanaba, Houghton, Marquette, Sault Ste. Marie, Traverse City

Internet advice program allows eligible clients to post a question to a private messaging system where answers are provided by pro bono attorneys who can limit hours of participation. Both client and attorney remain anonymous.

Legal Services of South Central Michigan (LSSCM)

Elizabeth Wharton

ewharton@lsscm.org

Offices in Ann Arbor, Jackson, Monroe, Battle Creek, Lansing

LSSCM refers cases in a full range of poverty law subject areas to attorneys in each of our communities; we support several specialty referral panels (family law, bankruptcy, wills, etc.); pro bono lawyers staff clinics and/or make legal education presentations in some communities.

Michigan Clinical Law Programs

Paul Reingold: Executive Director
mclp@umich.edu

Clinical law program occasionally needs help from pro bono firm lawyers on complex litigation or appeals, or on specialized practice like immigration, real estate or municipal issues.

Michigan Immigrant Rights Center—A Division of LSSCM

Susan Reed
susanree@lsscm.org

Statewide program

MIRC sponsors immigrant rights clinics, through which lawyers are trained and then handle routine immigration law matters such as assisting persons who are eligible for citizenship in preparing naturalization documents. The training and the clinic usually occur on 1 or 2 days. MIRC supports the lawyer in any necessary follow up. This program also refers more complex immigration matters to more experienced attorneys.

Michigan Legal Services

Marilyn Mullane: Executive Director
mmullane@michiganlegal.org

Statewide program with emphasis on Detroit metropolitan area

MLS offers opportunities to represent homeowners in mortgage foreclosure.

Michigan Migrant Legal Assistance Project, INC

Teresa Hendricks: Executive Director

Statewide program

Employment law cases, class actions and collective actions with expertise in FLSA and AWP. U visa, V visa opportunities. Ability to speak Spanish required for independent case handling; a plus for co-counsel.

Michigan Protection and Advocacy Service, INC.

Mark Cody

mcody@mpas.org

Statewide program

Special education, guardianship, employment and other disability rights.

Student Advocacy Center of Michigan

Leslie Harrington : Executive Director

leslie@studentadvocacycenter.org

Statewide program

Juvenile offenders need help with educational resources.

Sugar Law Center

John Philo: Executive Director

jphilo@sugarlaw.com

Co-counsel or informal advisory capacities with litigation.

Underground Railroad, INC

Valerie Hoffman: Executive Director

vhoffman@undergroundrailroadinc.org

Serves Arenac, Bay, Genesee, Gladwin, Lapeer, Midland and Saginaw Counties

Family law and immigration law.

University of Detroit Mercy Law Clinical Program

C. Michael Bryce

brycemi@udmercy.edu

Serves Wayne County

Assist doing intake with Mobile Law Office - consumer, social security, veterans, or immigration law.

Donation Option

For many lawyers, providing pro bono service is not the best option. Those lawyers are encouraged to meet their pro bono obligation by contributing to the Access to Justice (ATJ) Fund.

The ATJ Campaign is a partnership of the State Bar, the Michigan State Bar Foundation, and the civil legal services programs in the state to raise money to support civil legal services throughout the state for low-income persons. Contributions to the ATJ Fund, administered by the Foundation, can be designated for a local program or for a statewide long term endowment. The guideline for financial giving established by the Voluntary Standard is a minimum annual monetary commitment of \$300. In 2006 the Representative Assembly adopted a guideline that lawyers who can afford to do so are encouraged to donate \$500 per year in lieu of pro bono service.

For more information about the ATJ Fund, including programs eligible for designated donations, how to donate online, download a gift form or review gift options, go to www.atjfund.org

Conclusion

The two main goals of the Voluntary Standard are to provide guidance to lawyers about how they could meet their responsibility under Michigan Rule of Professional Conduct (MRPC) 6.1 and to describe a range of pro bono activities that will permit every lawyer to satisfy that obligation. Over time, lawyers and law firms and non-profit legal services providers have worked together to develop programs that offer a wide range of case types and practice setting to pro bono lawyers. The advent of the Master Lawyers Section offers an even greater opportunity to apply the skills of sections members to the unmet legal needs of the poor.

The need for representation in civil cases remains very great. We urge you to connect with one of these programs and to take advantage of one of these opportunities.

For More Information

Contact the State Bar at pbi@mail.michbar.org
Candace Crowley P32078
ccrowley@mail.michbar.org
517 346 6319

The Pro Bono Menu of Opportunities for Members of the Master Lawyers Section is organized through the

Committee on Justice Initiatives

Hon. Cynthia D. Stephens, co-chair
Terri Stangl, co-chair

Pro Bono Initiative

Margaret Costello, co-chair
Robert F. Gillett, co-chair

Master Lawyers Section

Edgar W. Pugh, Jr., chair

SBM

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