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## Catholic Law Pro Bono Program Guidelines

The mission of Catholic 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 Catholic Law community.

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

- **Public Interest/Public Service**
- **Law-related**
- **Supervised by an attorney, and**
- **Not for compensation or academic credit**

I. **Qualifying Work** (Note: this is not an exhaustive list. All questions regarding qualifying work should be directed to [jobs@law.edu](mailto: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

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.

**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;
- iii. Volunteering in a low-income tax clinic (e.g., VITA).

Law-related does not include community service that is not legal in nature.

**c. Supervised by an attorney:**

- i. Work 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.

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](mailto: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. Hours worked beyond compensated work may be counted.
- ii. Legal services should be provided without fee or expectation of fee, or in some circumstances at a substantially reduced rate.
- iii. Students may not receive academic credit for the work. Hours worked beyond hours worked for credit may be counted.

2 credits = 120 hours; 3 credits = 180 hours.

**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 Catholic Law Pro Bono Program, work must be completed by Catholic 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 at their previous institution.

**b. Training**

- i. Time spent training for a pro bono opportunity may be counted as pro bono hours only if the student follows through on the project.

**III. Approval**

- a. The Office of Career and Professional Development (OCPD) must approve student pro bono hours.
- b. OCPD reserves the right to deny the inclusion of hours.

**IV. Reporting Pro Bono Hours**

- a. All qualifying pro bono hours should be reported in [12twenty](#).
- b. [Click here](#) for OCPD Guidelines on entering Pro Bono hours in 12twenty.

**V. Pro Bono Pledge**

Students are encouraged to pledge to complete 50, 100, or 150+ hours of pro bono hours during law school. The pro bono pledge is voluntary; students who do not commit to the pro bono pledge may still be recognized for pro bono hours logged in 12twenty.

**VI. Recognition**

**a. Pro Bono Honors**

- i. Students who complete 50, 100, and 150+ hours of pro bono and log their hours in 12twenty may receive Pro Bono Honors recognition at graduation.

**b. Michael F. Curtin Pro Bono Award**

- i. Each year at graduation, the law school recognizes two exceptional students (one from the day and evening division) for pro bono service. The award is given to the graduating students who meet the highest ideals of the law school. Factors considered are: hours; diversity of pro bono service; impact on community; student's continuous involvement in pro bono throughout law school, and efforts to instill the value of pro bono in classmates. The award is named in tribute to alumnus Michael F. Curtin '65, in recognition of his more than 50 years of leadership and dedication to the law school and legal profession.

**c. Additional Recognition**

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

**VII. 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 **may differ** from what qualifies as pro bono for Catholic Law. Students considering applying for admission in New York are strongly encouraged to complete a Form Affidavit of Compliance immediately after each pro bono project.

[https://ww2.nycourts.gov/attorneys/probono/AppForAdmission\\_Pro-BonoReq\\_Fillable.pdf](https://ww2.nycourts.gov/attorneys/probono/AppForAdmission_Pro-BonoReq_Fillable.pdf)

Any questions regarding the New York bar pro bono requirement should be directed to [ProBonoRule@nycourts.gov](mailto:ProBonoRule@nycourts.gov).

**VIII. Examples of Qualifying Placements for the Catholic Law Pro Bono Program**

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