



NEED TO KNOW

# The Benefits of Pro Bono

## Why Pro Bono?

Washington continues to have a critical need for pro bono assistance to meet an access-to-justice gap. Over 70 percent of low-income Washington residents experience at least one civil legal issue each year. At least 76 percent of that population did not get any legal assistance because of lack of resources or not knowing how to access resources.<sup>1</sup>

This is where WSBA members can make a difference. Lawyers and Limited License Legal Technicians (LLTs) in Washington have a professional responsibility to assist in the provision of legal services to those unable to pay and should aspire to render at least 30 hours of pro bono service per year. See RPC 6.1 and LLLT RPC 6.1.

The WSBA works with Qualified Legal Services Providers (QLSPs) across the state to connect lawyers and LLTs with clients who need pro bono legal advice and assistance. QLSPs are not-for-profit organizations that provide legal assistance to low-income Washingtonians.

**ONLINE:** There are over 50 QLSPs, a list of which, by county, can be found online at [www.wsba.org/connect-serve/volunteer-opportunities/psp/qualified-legal-service-providers](http://www.wsba.org/connect-serve/volunteer-opportunities/psp/qualified-legal-service-providers).

## Earn CLE Credits

In addition to making a valuable difference in their communities, many legal professionals utilize pro bono work as a professional development opportunity: to learn new substantive areas of law, work with different client communities, and deepen their legal skills. Although these opportunities are enriching on their own, by volunteering with a QLSP, you have the added benefit of earning unlimited “other” MCLE credits for your pro bono work. A win-win situation!

## Free Public Service Education CLEs

The WSBA maintains a portfolio of free Public Service Education CLEs available to staff and pro bono volunteers of QLSPs. Authenticated volunteers can access over 20 CLEs with topics ranging from “Working with Survivors of Domestic Violence” to “The Alpha-Bravo-Charlies of Working with Vets.”

**ONLINE:** For more information, contact [PublicService@wsba.org](mailto:PublicService@wsba.org).

## Pro Bono Publico Honor Roll

Every year, the WSBA generates a list of WSBA members who have submitted over 50 hours of pro bono work during the reporting period. These members receive both a commendation letter and a certificate recognizing their commitment to volunteerism. The Washington Supreme Court Pro Bono Publico Honor Roll<sup>2</sup> also recognizes these stewards of justice.

### NOTES:

1. Learn more about the Civil Legal Needs Study at [https://ocla.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CivilLegalNeedsStudy\\_October2015\\_V21\\_Final10\\_14\\_15.pdf](https://ocla.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/CivilLegalNeedsStudy_October2015_V21_Final10_14_15.pdf).
2. <https://www.wsba.org/docs/default-source/connect-serve/2018-washington-supreme-court-pro-bono-publico-honor-roll.pdf>

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