BEST PRACTICES MANUAL

FOR

PRO BONO SERVICE PROVIDERS

PRO BONO RESOURCE CENTER
OF MARYLAND

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This Best Practices Manual for Pro Bono Service Providers has been formatted for ease of double-sided printing.
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INTRODUCTION

Pro bono service providers have been working to increase access to justice for Maryland’s poor and under-represented citizens since 1973, when the first pro bono referral program in Maryland was established by the Montgomery County Bar Association. Since then, an entire pro bono delivery service network has developed in Maryland, and today close to thirty pro bono programs operate throughout the state. These programs range from independent pro bono referral agencies to bar foundation programs to pro bono divisions of legal services organizations to informal referral systems through rural bar associations. While the substantive areas they address and the client populations they serve may differ, each program shares the important mission of placing indigent clients with pro bono attorneys willing to represent them for no fee or a reduced fee. As a result of the work of Maryland’s pro bono programs, the participation of Maryland lawyers in pro bono work has increased dramatically in the past three decades. Since 2002, lawyers in Maryland have increased their contribution of pro bono legal services annually, and each year since 2004, Maryland lawyers have donated over one million hours of free legal services to the state’s needy.

Despite this progress, the gap between the need for pro bono legal services and the availability of those services continues to expand. The national recession, the epidemic of mortgage foreclosures and the decline in economic growth in Maryland in the past several years have dramatically increased the need for pro bono legal services in this State. The growing number of attorneys willing to provide pro bono services despite the economic downturn affirms the commitment of Maryland’s lawyers to social justice and their strong sense of responsibility for fulfilling their obligation of “pro bono publico,” even in a time of financial hardship. Nevertheless, it is imperative that the number of Maryland attorneys performing pro bono legal services keep rising in order to address the increasing need.

To assist pro bono programs in their work, the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland has prepared this Best Practices Manual for Pro Bono Service Providers. The Best Practices Manual is organized in two parts. Part I, A Maryland Pro Bono Handbook, provides the history and background of organized pro bono in Maryland, tracing important events in the development of pro bono from the formation of the Maryland Legal Services Corporation in the 1980s to the current work of the Court of Appeals Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service and the Maryland Access to Justice Commission. Part I also examines the response to the present economic downturn and crisis in legal services funding and includes a “Maryland Pro Bono Basics” section in Q & A format that outlines the
fundamentals of the rules and systems in place for the performance of pro bono service in Maryland.

Part II, *Best Practices for Pro Bono Service Providers*, is a compendium of successful methods pro bono programs have implemented to recruit, train, and recognize pro bono attorneys. It sets forth techniques for pro bono programs to use to provide support and resources to volunteer attorneys, together with procedures for working with clients to promote positive case outcomes. Part II addresses key policies and protocols for placing, tracking and closing cases, as well as operational and fiscal policies for pro bono programs. It also discusses the importance of community outreach and collaboration with the judiciary and other legal services organizations, and includes sections on the special needs of rural counties and key issues related to pro bono program governance and management.

The Appendix to this Best Practices Manual contains sample forms, letters, policies, protocols, and brochures used by pro bono programs from across the state of Maryland, as well as by programs from around the country. The appendices are included to assist pro bono programs in implementing the ideas and suggestions outlined in the eighty Best Practices set forth in this Manual.

Throughout this *Best Practices Manual*, the terms “pro bono attorney” and “volunteer attorney” are used to refer to lawyers who represent indigent clients “without fee or expectation of fee” or for a “substantially reduced fee” as defined in Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct. This includes attorneys who represent clients for a reduced fee in contested family law cases through the Judicare program funded by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, as well as other reduced fee arrangements that qualify as pro bono under Rule 6.1.

This *Best Practices Manual* is intended as a resource for tools and techniques that will enhance the ability of pro bono programs to better serve their clients and meet the needs of their volunteer attorneys. The goal of this *Best Practices Manual* is to help pro bono providers harness the positive energy of service among Maryland lawyers and work with them to ensure equal access to justice for all citizens of Maryland.

March 2011
Part I

A MARYLAND PRO BONO HANDBOOK

"Only a significant increase in the donation of legal services to the poor will bring about a significant decrease in the number of indigent people who need legal services but do not receive them."
- Maryland Judicial Commission on Pro Bono, March 2000

There is one lawyer for every one hundred sixty-eight (168) people in Maryland, yet there is one legal services lawyer for every nine hundred and seventy (970) indigent Marylanders. Each year, approximately 80% of low-income Marylanders seeking necessary civil legal services are unable to obtain representation. Studies confirm, however, that having meaningful legal representation is often the single most important factor in assuring meaningful access to the justice system. As a result of this gap between the need for legal services and their availability, thousands of Maryland citizens are left without recourse when faced with problems relating to housing, employment, healthcare, consumer, disability and family law issues.  

In 2000, the Maryland Judicial Commission on Pro Bono issued its Report and Recommendations, finding that the civil justice system was not an accessible forum for resolving the legal problems of many Marylanders too poor to afford counsel. This was so despite many years of effort by pro bono service organizations to promote pro bono work in Maryland. Since the Maryland Judicial Commission's Report in 2000, significant changes have been made to increase the participation of Maryland attorneys in pro bono service, and pro bono service providers have been at the forefront of those efforts. Nevertheless, the gap between the need for civil legal services and the availability of those services continues to grow. The following history illustrates the collaboration that has occurred among pro bono providers, the private bar and the judiciary to increase the participation of Maryland lawyers in pro bono service, as well as the need to continue to work to expand opportunities for pro bono.

1 For statistics on the gap in legal services to the poor from the Maryland Access to Justice Commission, Interim Report, Fall 2009, see Appendix A.
Section A: History of Pro Bono in Maryland

1. Early Development of Pro Bono

As long as there have been lawyers practicing law in Maryland, there have been lawyers donating their time to provide free legal services to the poor and needy. Throughout most of Maryland’s history, however, this has occurred on an ad hoc basis, with individual attorneys or firms offering assistance to those in need who accidentally or serendipitously crossed their paths. The first organized pro bono referral system was established by the Montgomery County Bar Association in 1973, but it was not until 1981, in the face of state and federal budget cuts for legal services, that a statewide pro bono effort began to take form. In that year, when it appeared that federal funding for legal services would be severely cut or even eliminated, members of the Maryland State Bar Association (MSBA) created the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS). It was also in 1981 that changes to federal banking laws permitted the creation of the IOLTA (Interest on Lawyers Trust Accounts) Program, and the Maryland General Assembly created the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC) to administer the state IOLTA Program. Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, with funds from the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, was the first statewide organization to refer low-income Marylanders to volunteer lawyers who provided pro bono legal services.

In the years that followed, the organized effort to provide pro bono legal services in Maryland continued to evolve, although the interest of the private bar in providing pro bono legal services sometimes waned. Below is a timeline of the key events in the early development of a statewide delivery system of pro bono legal services.

*Timeline of Key Events in the Development of Pro Bono*

1988 The Maryland Legal Services Corporation Advisory Council, chaired by then-Congressman Ben Cardin, conducts a legal needs study and issues a report, Action Plan for Legal Services to Maryland's Poor, which finds that only 20% of those eligible for civil legal services receive them. The report recommends that, among other activities, the Court of Appeals adopt a mandatory pro bono rule. In place of a mandatory rule, the Maryland State Bar Association pledges to oversee an extensive campaign to increase the level of voluntary pro bono service in Maryland.
1989 The Court of Appeals considers the proposal for a mandatory pro bono rule, but instead adopts the MSBA proposal of a voluntary recruitment plan. The Court mandates that the MSBA “superintend” the effort and report back to the Court regarding its success. The MSBA launches a People's Pro Bono Campaign to spur pro bono service. Chief Judge Robert C. Murphy sends a letter to Maryland lawyers enclosing a survey on pro bono representation. Sixty percent (60%) of Maryland's lawyers respond, and approximately 80% of those responding say they have done or are willing to do pro bono work. The unprecedented positive response brings national attention to the campaign, earning the MSBA the ABA Harrison Tweed Award.

1990 The MSBA creates the People's Pro Bono Action Center, or PPBAC, as the statewide coordinator and clearinghouse for pro bono civil legal services in Maryland to implement the Court's mandate. The initial mission of PPBAC, which later becomes the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland (PBRC), is to support, train and refer volunteer lawyers to legal services providers, assist in the development of pro bono projects, and report on the progress. PPBAC begins referring volunteer lawyers to pro bono referral programs and legal services providers across the state, publicizing the need for pro bono assistance and advertising pro bono opportunities. It also assumes responsibility for tracking and reporting on pro bono services.

1992 The PBRC contracts with John A. Tull and Associates to evaluate the delivery of pro bono legal services in the state. The study surveys several thousand lawyers to learn the motivation for and frequency of pro bono service. The final report, *Furthering the Pro Bono Commitment in Maryland: An Assessment of the State's Volunteer Legal Services Delivery System*, makes numerous findings, among them that: 1) Maryland has a complex and diverse pro bono system that can be duplicative and is in need of coordination; 2) timely referrals and effective screening of cases is essential to volunteer lawyer satisfaction; 3) there is a crisis in family law that is systemic and beyond the capacity of the pro bono network to address; 4) locally based pro bono programs are essential in rural areas to increase pro bono involvement/participation; and 5) there is a substantial amount of pro bono work already being done throughout the state of Maryland. The Report also finds that lawyers who volunteer do so from a
strong sense of professional responsibility, and that most volunteers prefer to handle cases in an area of law in which they practice.

1992 A joint study by the MLSC and the University of Baltimore, *Increasing Access to Justice for Maryland's Families*, finds that only 11% of individuals eligible for family law legal services in Maryland receive them.

1993 The placement of pro bono cases through MLSC legal services providers triples and twice as many lawyers are donating their time. Twenty MLSC-funded legal services programs across the state now have a pro bono component.

1994 A national ABA *Legal Needs Study* confirms the findings of the Cardin report in Maryland that only 20% of those in need of civil legal services receive them.

1995 Placement of pro bono cases begins to drop due to funding cuts and increased client demand. Programs have difficulty identifying volunteers willing to accept pro bono cases. As commitment of private attorneys diminishes, so too does the commitment of some legal services providers to making pro bono referrals.

1997 The Maryland Coalition for Civil Justice initiative of the MSBA conducts a study and finds that family law is the top area of need and top priority for people eligible for civil legal services, followed by elder law and housing/landlord-tenant issues.

1998 Chief Judge Robert M. Bell establishes the Judicial Commission on Pro Bono Service to “investigate and make findings and recommendations about what role the Judiciary can and should play in expanding pro bono legal services.” The Commission conducts a statewide survey of judges, legal services providers, court personnel and individuals turned away from legal services providers.

2000 The Judicial Commission on Pro Bono Service issues its Report and Recommendations. The Commission finds that lawyers in Maryland need greater and more specific guidance about what their professional obligation to render pro bono service entails. The Commission also finds that there is a
need for a statewide system for tallying the amount and type of pro bono work rendered each year, and that the role of the judiciary is crucial in increasing pro bono and making it more “user friendly” for lawyers. The Commission's Report includes nineteen Recommendations, including the creation of a statewide oversight committee and local pro bono committees in each jurisdiction charged with formulating a local pro bono action plan. The Recommendations also address the role of judges and court administrators in facilitating pro bono, the need to revise Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct to emphasize the pro bono obligation, and the need to adopt other new rules to address the issues raised in the Report.

2002 The Court of Appeals adopts MD Rules 16-901 to 16-903, which implement many of the Recommendations of the Commission, including the creation of a statewide Standing Committee and Local Pro Bono Committees in each county and the requirement that Maryland attorneys report their pro bono service hours annually. The Court also amends Rule 6.1 of the Rules of Professional Conduct to clarify the definition of and obligation to perform pro bono service. (See Appendix B for the Maryland Pro Bono Rules.)

2. Adoption of Mandatory Pro Bono Reporting in Maryland

In February of 2002, the Court of Appeals launched a statewide program to address the shortcomings of the existing pro bono delivery system in Maryland. Key to that program was the adoption of Rule 16-903, which for the first time in Maryland history required each practicing attorney to file an annual report on his or her pro bono legal service. Under Rule 16-903, it became a condition precedent to the practice of law to submit information to the Court of Appeals regarding the nature of all pro bono work performed each year. The Pro Bono Legal Service Report, due annually on or before February 15, requests information regarding the number of pro bono hours an attorney contributed the preceding year, a description of the nature of that pro bono service, and the number of hours that were in matters referred by pro bono or legal services organizations. While the Rule did not make the performance of pro bono service mandatory, the reporting requirement served as a strong incentive for Maryland attorneys to begin participating in pro bono service if they were not already doing so.

Along with the adoption of Rule 16-903, the Court of Appeals amended Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct to establish an
aspirational goal of 50 hours of pro bono service annually for attorneys engaged in fulltime practice. Amended Rule 6.1 also clarified the definition of pro bono service, defining it as “legal service, without fee or expectation of fee, or at a substantially reduced fee,” and outlining the types of service that constitute pro bono. By clarifying the definition of pro bono, establishing an aspirational goal and requiring pro bono reporting, the Court of Appeals took significant steps to assure that greater numbers of Maryland lawyers would render greater hours of pro bono service annually.

3. Creation of the Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service and the Local Pro Bono Committees

In February of 2002, the Court of Appeals adopted two other key rules to help coordinate and revitalize the delivery of pro bono services in Maryland. Rule 16-901 created the Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service (“Standing Committee”), and Rule 16-902 established a Local Pro Bono Committee in each Maryland county. The Standing Committee and the Local Pro Bono Committees were created to coordinate the effort to increase access to justice by expanding pro bono service by attorneys throughout the state. The mandate of the Standing Committee was to study long range pro bono issues, serve as a clearinghouse for materials, and develop a State Pro Bono Action Plan to be presented to the Court of Appeals in 2005. The Committee was also charged with oversight of the newly created Local Pro Bono Committee in each county.

The Local Pro Bono Committees were established to address the need for expanded pro bono service at the county level, taking into account the specific needs of the county's population, the availability of legal services and pro bono referral programs in the county, and the degree to which the county bar and bench were involved in the pro bono effort. Under Rule 16-902, each Local Committee was to prepare a Local Pro Bono Action Plan that addressed, among numerous topics, the need to establish or expand attorney referral panels and ways to support the current services of existing pro bono providers.

In 2005, the Standing Committee submitted its State Action Plan to the Court of Appeals. The State Action Plan included a detailed description of the legal needs of Maryland’s poor, the scope and extent of pro bono services in the state, a summary of Local Pro Bono Action Plans prepared by Local Pro Bono Committees, and a series of Recommendations for the Standing Committee, the Court of Appeals, the Administrative Office of the
Courts, the bar, the bench and the legal services community. The State Action Plan was revised in 2006 to reflect the implementation of several of the Recommendations. As a result of the Standing Committee's Recommendations, the Court of Appeals revised Rule 16-902 to increase the participation of judges on Local Pro Bono Committees, require submission of annual reports on May 1 of each year, and allow counties within the same region to join together as a local committee with the approval of each Administrative Judge of the counties involved.

At the request of several Local Committees, the Standing Committee conducted a statewide survey of legal service providers in the state. It asked for county specific data, which it forwarded to each Local Committee. The Standing Committee also designed a survey of human and social services agencies and a client survey for use by Local Committees. The Standing Committee assisted in entering the data into the database system, collating the information and providing analysis for use by the Local Committees.

4. Assessment of Needs and Identification of Obstacles to Pro Bono Service

The Standing Committee in its State Action Plan found that family law cases consistently overwhelmed the legal services delivery system in general and pro bono programs in particular. Likewise, the Local Pro Bono Action Plans identified family law as the area of greatest need for legal services. Many noted the growing number of self-represented family law litigants and the strain they placed on the judicial system. Other areas of high need identified by the Local Pro Bono Committees included housing, landlord/tenant, consumer, elder law, bankruptcy/collections, and public benefits. Counties with large non-English speaking communities listed immigration as an area of high need as well.

One of the top goals articulated by the Local Pro Bono Committees in their Action Plans was to work closely with existing pro bono service providers and legal services agencies in their counties to expand the participation of lawyers in pro bono service. Many of the members appointed to Local Pro Bono Committee were directors and staff of pro bono programs and legal services agencies, allowing for the development of close working relationships and numerous collaborations between Local Pro Bono Committees and pro bono referral programs in their communities.
The Local Pro Bono Committees, working closely with pro bono service providers, identified a number of obstacles they faced in trying to implement their Action Plans, including:

- Lack of knowledge among lawyers of pro bono opportunities and pro bono service providers.
- Lack of knowledge of human services agencies about available legal services and pro bono programs.
- Mismatch between the areas of greatest need for pro bono services and the top areas of practice for private attorneys.
- Economic pressure on attorneys, stress of the practice of law, substantial demands on pro bono attorneys' time, and the work-family conflict.
- Lack of support services for volunteers.
- Attorneys unwilling to take long, time-consuming cases.
- Sense of burn-out by family law practitioners.
- Prohibitions against government attorneys engaging in pro bono work.
- Transportation and language issues.
- Lack of funding for pro bono initiatives.

Despite the many challenges identified in the Local Pro Bono Action Plans, the very process of forming the Local Pro Bono Committees, conducting surveys and formulating Local Pro Bono Action Plans helped to raise awareness of opportunities for pro bono legal service among lawyers, human and social service agencies and the public.

Section B: Response to the Economic Downturn and Crisis in Legal Services Funding

In October of 2008, the United States experienced its most severe financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. As a result, in the months that followed the citizens of Maryland, like Americans across the country, experienced record unemployment, an avalanche of foreclosures and evictions, and a huge surge in the need for public benefits. Given that even in times of economic boom poor people lack access to the courts, it was no surprise that the economic recession placed enormous strains upon the Maryland legal services delivery system. Requests for representation in matters involving critical legal needs such as housing and employment,
child custody, medical care and subsistence benefits skyrocketed. In the fall of 2009, the Legal Aid Bureau, the largest provider of legal services to the poor in Maryland, saw an increase of 64% in clients served and 73% in people turned away in one month.

Exacerbating the problem, the economic decline caused a severe crisis in legal services funding. A primary funding source for legal services providers in Maryland, revenue from IOLTA (Interest on Lawyer Trust Accounts) had plummeted. Historically low interest rates and shrinking deposits resulted in a 70% decrease in IOLTA revenue from FY 2008 to FY 2010. The projected $5 million shortfall in IOLTA revenue caused cuts in grants to the thirty-five non-profit legal services providers funded by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC), including many pro bono service providers. Such cuts significantly reduced the ability of legal services providers to serve those in need. To make up for the shortfall, the Maryland General Assembly passed a bill to increase the filing fees in Maryland Circuit and District Courts, which were far below the national average, and directed the funds generated to be deposited in the MLSC Fund. Effective July 1, 2010, the surcharge was expected to generate approximately $6.1 million annually in additional funding. However, a three year sunset provision in the law will eliminate the fee increases on June 30, 2013.

Despite the negative impact of the economic downturn on the practice of law, members of the Maryland bar stepped up to address the crisis in legal services. In 2008, almost 60% of all lawyers practicing in Maryland engaged in some type of pro bono activity, and the number of pro bono hours contributed by Maryland attorneys increased by over 40,000 hours from the year before. In 2009, the amount of attorney time donated increased by an additional 30,180 hours. Significantly, just prior to the economic freefall, Chief Judge Robert M. Bell created the Access to Justice Commission to develop and implement policy initiatives to expand access to justice for all citizens in Maryland. The Access to Justice Commission spent its first year focusing on the impact of the financial crisis on the delivery of legal services. In addition, the legal services community created an innovative project addressing one of the most pressing problems caused by the economic crisis: the Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project. Each is described briefly below.
1. Access to Justice Commission

The mission of the Access to Justice Commission, created by Chief Judge Bell in 2008, is to develop and implement policy initiatives that will expand access to justice in civil legal matters for persons who encounter barriers when participating in Maryland's justice system. The Access to Justice Commission is comprised of members of the Maryland Judiciary, legal services organizations, the Maryland State Bar Association, the Governor's Office, the Court of Appeals Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service and the executive and legislative branches. In its first year, the Commission created six committees and numerous sub-committees to examine and make recommendations on ways to increase access to justice by: 1) enhancing the safety, accessibility and convenience of the courts and justice system for all; 2) supporting the delivery of legal services; 3) assisting self-represented litigants; 4) addressing critical barriers to justice for those with language, literacy, and cultural differences; 5) promoting public information about the civil justice system; and 6) articulating what access to justice for all should mean in Maryland and identifying ways to measure the impact of the Commission's work. The Access to Justice Commission also held a Statewide Forum, as well as numerous Listening Events to get input from members of the public throughout the state, many of which continued into 2010.

In the fall of 2009, the Access to Justice Commission published its Interim Report and Recommendations. The Report addressed in detail the economic recession and the crisis in funding for civil legal services, as well as each of the areas of concern noted above. The Commission made a total of sixty-two Recommendations addressing each of these areas. Notably, thirty-four of the Recommendations focused on the critical barriers that prevent access to the justice system for all citizens. Sixteen additional Recommendations addressed issues of safety, accessibility and convenience. The Interim Report highlighted a new initiative by the courts, the District Court Self-Help Center Pilot Project, modeled on the existing Family Law Self-Help Centers in the Circuit Courts. The Pilot Project, launched in the District Court for Anne Arundel County in Glen Burnie, Maryland, provided assistance to self-represented litigants in landlord/tenant matters, small claims, debtor/creditor actions, domestic violence and traffic violations and developed best practices and standards to be followed in replicating the Pilot Project in other District Court sites in the state.
2. Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project

In 2008, in the face of an unprecedented number of foreclosures in the state of Maryland, the legislature enacted emergency legislation relating to the foreclosure process to offer greater opportunities for homeowners to preserve their homes. New notice requirements, additional defenses, and modifications to the process itself provided families and individuals a chance either to prevent foreclosure or mitigate their losses. In the spring of 2008, the state Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) approached the Court to help identify volunteer lawyers to assist distressed homeowners. Chief Judge Robert M. Bell requested PBRC to spearhead a massive recruitment effort that quickly evolved into the Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project. PBRC brought in many partners, including five pro bono referral providers (Allegany Law Foundation, Community Legal Services of Prince George's County, Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, Mid-Shore Pro Bono, and Montgomery County Lawyer Referral Program), and worked with Civil Justice, Inc. and other non-profit organizations, as well as the key state agencies, the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. In July of 2008, Chief Judge Bell launched the Project with a letter to all attorneys licensed in Maryland requesting their assistance in Maryland's foreclosure crisis by participating in the Project.

The Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project provides free training for participating attorneys in Maryland's new foreclosure law and process. Each attorney who takes the free training pledges to represent at least one at-risk homeowner and/or provide advice and counsel at a Foreclosure Solutions Workshop. Over 1140 attorneys have been trained in the Project as of December 2010, and volunteer attorneys have accepted close to 1,000 pro bono cases and counseled over 1700 at-risk homeowners. With the enactment of the Maryland Foreclosure Mediation Act, which went into effect on July 1, 2010, an additional avenue is available for volunteer attorneys to assist homeowners in Maryland facing foreclosure. The Foreclosure Mediation Act requires mortgage lenders to explore loan modification and other alternatives to foreclosure with homeowners, and establishes a mediation process for homeowners and lenders once foreclosure proceedings have been instituted. To facilitate the mediation process, PBRC and its partners have established a new phase of the Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project, providing training for volunteer attorneys to represent homeowners in mediation sessions with mortgage lenders and a neutral third party. The trainings are free in exchange for the attorney's pledge to represent two homeowners in mediation sessions or
other foreclosure prevention contexts. Since July of 2010, over 125 attorneys have been trained in the new foreclosure mediation process in live and web-based training programs.

The Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project is a prime example of the important and valuable pro bono work done by Maryland lawyers to address the critical legal needs of Maryland citizens during the current economic recession.

**Section C: Maryland Pro Bono Basics**

In July of 2002, a new era began for pro bono in Maryland when the Court of Appeals amended Rule 6.1 of the Rules of Professional Conduct, changing the definition of pro bono and providing for an aspirational goal of 50 hours of pro bono service annually for lawyers in full time practice. With this Rule change, together with the adoption of a mandatory pro bono reporting requirement pursuant to Rule 16-903, the Court of Appeals made it clear that pro bono service and/or a monetary contribution to legal services organizations was a professional responsibility of each Maryland attorney. (See Appendix B for the Maryland Pro Bono Rules).

The following Q & A outlines the fundamental rules and systems for pro bono and provides a quick guide to the basics of pro bono legal service in Maryland.

1. **What constitutes pro bono service?**

Many attorneys believe that pro bono service is any charitable work performed without compensation. However, Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, as amended in 2002, specifically defines pro bono service as _legal service_. It calls for the provision of professional services without fee or expectation of fee, or at a substantially reduced fee to:

(A) people of _limited means_;

(B) charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental, or educational organizations in matters _designed primarily to address the needs of people of limited means_;

(C) individuals, groups or organizations _seeking to secure or protect civil rights, civil liberties or public rights_; or
(D) charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental or educational organizations in matters in furtherance of their organizational purposes when the payment of the standard legal fees would significantly deplete the organization's economic resources or would otherwise be inappropriate.

Rule 6.1 also provides that pro bono service includes activities for improving the law, the legal system or the legal profession. Attorneys may discharge their pro bono obligation by contributing financial support to organizations that provide legal services to persons of limited means.

2. What are the requirements for pro bono service?

There is no requirement that attorneys licensed in Maryland perform pro bono service, only that they report their pro bono work each year in accordance with Rule 16-903. However, Rule 6.1 establishes an aspirational goal of 50 hours of pro bono service annually for attorneys in full-time practice, and a pro rata number of pro bono hours for part-time attorneys. The aspirational goal applies not only to attorneys in private practice, but also to legal services and public interest lawyers, as well as to most government lawyers.

Some government lawyers are prohibited by constitutional, statutory, rule, or other regulatory restrictions from engaging in representational pro bono service. When those restrictions apply, a government lawyer still may discharge his or her professional responsibility under Rule 6.1 by engaging in non-representational pro bono service activities or making a financial contribution to a legal services organization. Rule 6.1 does not apply to Administrative Law Judges (ALJs), judges, masters, law clerks and law professors, unless in addition to their duties in those capacities they engage in the practice of law.

3. What are the reporting requirements for pro bono service?

Under Rule 16-903, each attorney authorized to practice law in Maryland must file an annual Pro Bono Service Report stating the number of pro bono hours they rendered and any contributions they made to legal services organizations. The reporting requirement applies to all attorneys who pay
dues into the Client Protection Fund. Forms are mailed to attorneys by January 10 of each year and must be filed by February 15. The Report asks each lawyer to state the number of pro bono service hours donated in the previous year, how many of those hours were in matters referred by a pro bono or legal services organization, the areas of law involved, the number of hours the lawyer devoted to activities to improve the law, the legal system, or the legal profession, and any financial contribution made to one or more organizations that provide legal service to people of limited means. The lawyer must also state his or her area(s) of practice, the type and size of the firm or agency in which he or she practices and whether he or she is retired or working part time.

4. **What type of work qualifies as pro bono service?**

To qualify as pro bono service, the work must be taken on *without fee or expectation of fee*, or for a *substantially reduced fee*. Therefore, pro bono service does not include lost revenue for hours worked due to a client's failure to pay the fee, or “writing-off” hours that were worked from a client's bill. Nor does it include failure to prevail in a contingency fee case. The case must be entered into with the intention of waiving the fee or with an agreement with the client to pay a *substantially reduced fee*, that is, a fee that is *materially and extensively lower* than what would normally be charged, such as the $50–$55 per hour panel fees for public defender cases.

The work also must be performed for a person of *limited means*. A person of limited means is an individual who either qualifies for income-based legal services programs or is a person who the lawyer knows cannot afford to pay for legal assistance.

5. **Who qualifies for income-based legal services in Maryland?**

There are generally two formulas used to determine eligibility for income-based legal services programs. All legal services providers in Maryland funded by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation use the MLSC income guidelines, which require an income of less than 50% of the median Maryland income, based on family size, to qualify. For FY 2010–2011, a family of four must have an annual household income of less than $50,707 in order to qualify for free or reduced fee services. (For a chart of the
current MLSC income eligibility guidelines, see Appendix C or visit www.mlsc.org, as the guidelines change annually). In contrast, the Legal Aid Bureau is required to apply the federal income guidelines, which use 125% of the federal poverty line as the cut off for services. Under the federal income guidelines, the same family of four would have had to earn less than $27,563 in 2010 to qualify for Legal Aid services. In limited circumstances, the Legal Aid Bureau can represent individuals who are at 187.5% of the federal poverty line. (For a current chart of the Legal Aid Bureau's guidelines, see Appendix D or visit www.mdlab.org/guidelines.)

6. What legal services are available in Maryland?

The Legal Aid Bureau is the largest provider of legal services to the poor in Maryland. It has thirteen offices throughout the state and handles a wide-range of legal matters, including family, housing, wage and hour, consumer rights, government benefits, employment, elder rights and education cases. Each county or region sets priorities for cases accepted in that area. Due to federal funding restrictions, the Legal Aid Bureau is prohibited from handling certain types of cases, including class actions and prisoner litigation, as well as most fee generating cases, and cannot represent immigrants who do not have proper legal status in the United States. Legal Aid currently has funding for 150 staff attorneys, and it is an unfortunate reality that each year the Legal Aid Bureau must turn away many more cases than it can accept.

In addition to the Legal Aid Bureau, there are 35 MLSC-funded legal service organizations in Maryland, some of which have staff attorneys who provide direct representation for eligible clients. Many of these organizations specialize in a particular area of the law or target a particular client population. For instance, the House of Ruth Maryland and Heartly House represent victims of domestic violence. The Homeless Persons Representation Project (HPRP) counsels the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless. The Maryland Disability Law Center is the statewide protection and advocacy program for people with disabilities. CASA of Maryland serves the immigrant and day laborer community. The Public Justice Center engages in systemic litigation and legislative work to ensure protection of the unrepresented, including victims of domestic violence, the disabled, children and migrant workers. Clinical programs at the University of Baltimore and University of Maryland Law Schools also provide free legal assistance in a range of substantive areas. Despite the valiant work of these legal services providers in Maryland, statistics consistently show that
only 20–25\% of those in need of critical civil legal services receive assistance each year. It is up to pro bono attorneys to help fill this gap. (For an abbreviated directory of legal services programs, see Appendix E.)

7. What pro bono programs are available in Maryland?

A number of the legal services providers described above (excluding the law schools), have a pro bono component in their program. As a condition of federal funding, the Legal Aid Bureau must spend 12.5\% of its general revenues on private bar involvement (PBI). Several other organizations have a pro bono manager on staff responsible for placing cases with volunteer attorneys. In addition, there are four local pro bono referral programs located in Allegany, Hartford, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties which operate through their county Bar Foundations (namely Allegany Law Foundation, Community Legal Services of Prince George's County, Harford County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service, and Montgomery County Bar Foundation Pro Bono Program). Mid-Shore Pro Bono, a regionally based pro bono referral program, covers Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot Counties. The Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, the largest pro bono referral program in the state, serves all counties in the state but for Allegany, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. (For a guide to pro bono referral programs, see Appendix E.)

8. What pro bono opportunities are available for volunteer attorneys?

There is a rich and diverse selection of substantive matters and service opportunities for pro bono lawyers in Maryland. Volunteer lawyers working through pro bono referral programs handle all types of civil legal issues, from family law to consumer credit to bankruptcy to immigration cases. Opportunities are available for non-litigators who can use their skills to assist low-income clients in real estate, tax, community development and other transactional matters. Volunteer lawyers are needed for administrative hearings, criminal record expungements, employment counseling, identity theft, contract disputes, fraudulent lending practices and foreclosure prevention.
Pro bono opportunities are available to any lawyer or group of lawyers interested in doing pro bono in an area of practice with which they are familiar. For example, tax and business attorneys have participated in low-income tax clinics. Government lawyers have worked with hospice patients to provide counseling and prepare documents addressing end-of-life issues. Corporate and real estate lawyers have worked with neighborhood associations to reclaim abandoned properties and eliminate drug houses.

Trainings are available throughout the state for volunteer attorneys to gain knowledge in areas of the law outside their normal practice. As a resource center, PBRC actively coordinates training seminars in a variety of relevant areas of practice for lawyers willing to help pro bono clients. PBRC typically coordinates these training sessions in conjunction with legal services or pro bono providers who express a need for such assistance. Trainings are conducted across the state. As noted, the Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project has trained over 1,140 lawyers to represent distressed homeowners in foreclosure proceedings. Trainings are held regularly in bankruptcy and immigration law. Family law programs train lawyers to serve as guardians ad litem in contested custody cases. The Homeless Persons Representation Project frequently trains lawyers in the process of criminal record expungements. The Maryland Disability Law Center provides training for lawyers to represent students in special education matters and disciplinary hearings. And Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service conducts trainings for attorneys several times a year in areas such as landlord-tenant disputes, denials of long-term Medicaid, and adult guardianship.

Direct representation is not the only form of pro bono work available. Short-term pro bono opportunities exist in courthouse Self-Help Clinics, with hotlines and helplines, as well as in advice and counsel workshops and “ask a lawyer” programs. Volunteer lawyers conduct mediations and settlement conferences in District Courts throughout the state. Increasingly, pro bono attorneys serve as general counsel to non-profits serving people of limited means. There are also opportunities to engage in public education and community outreach, as well as to train other volunteer attorneys. Some pro bono attorneys serve as legislative advocates or assist with policy development for organizations that serve people of limited means. (For a list of short-term pro bono opportunities, see Appendix R.)
9. What resources and support are available for pro bono attorneys?

The Pro Bono Resource Center is the statewide clearinghouse and coordinator of pro bono services. PBRC works closely with legal services providers and pro bono projects throughout the state not only to help recruit pro bono attorneys, but also to provide support and resources for pro bono attorneys. PBRC coordinates training programs that are free or discounted, in return for a participant's pledge to take one or more pro bono matters. PBRC manages the MLSC Litigation Fund which is available to pro bono and Judicare attorneys to fund such expenses as depositions, document production and other discovery costs, expert fees, and copying and postage. (For the Litigation Fund Request Form, see Appendix G). In addition, PBRC offers services to pro bono attorneys such as mentoring, e-bulletins and online training access.

Individual pro bono programs also offer a wide array of resources. Most MLSC funded pro bono program throughout the state provides malpractice insurance for a pro bono attorney even if he or she has coverage. Pro bono programs provide intake or screening of cases to determine income eligibility of the applicant and the legal merits of their case. In most jurisdictions, advance fee waivers are available automatically to pro bono clients referred through an MLSC-funded program with a simple letter from that program. Many pro bono programs have sample letters of engagement, pleadings, discovery requests, and other court documents available to pro bono attorneys. Programs specializing in a particular substantive area often have research materials available for pro bono attorneys, as well as attorneys on staff to mentor attorneys who are new to the area of law.

10. Do pro bono services rendered independently of a program qualify as pro bono for reporting purposes?

Yes. If a lawyer comes into contact with a person of limited means and performs legal services for that person with no expectation of payment or at a substantially reduced fee, the lawyer is performing pro bono service. The benefit of organized programs is that they assist lawyers who wish to give their time, but do not know personally people in need of pro bono services. Programs also pre-screen clients for eligibility and legal need, assist volunteer lawyers with litigation costs and support staff, provide training, and offer malpractice insurance. In addition, it benefits the pro bono effort
statewide if an attorney who is independently representing a pro bono client has the client register with the local program, as data regarding the client is captured for statistical analysis and funding purposes.

11. What activities constitute improving the law, the legal profession, or the legal system?

Examples of this type of pro bono service include teaching legal education courses, public speaking on legal issues, volunteering as a mediator or settlement facilitator, serving as a faculty member for the MSBA Professionalism Course, serving on court created committees (such as Local Pro Bono Committees), and serving on a board of a legal services organization or other law related entity.

12. Who is doing pro bono service in Maryland?

According to the reporting data for 2009, the most recent statistics available, 59.3% of full-time attorneys practicing in Maryland were engaged in some type of pro bono work in 2009. Among all licensed lawyers, 54.8% reported engaging in some type of pro bono activity. Pro bono attorneys provided a total of 1,139,866 hours of pro bono service, a 30,180 increase from the previous year. Among full-time lawyers, 23.2% reported 50 hours or more of pro bono work.

A larger percentage of solo and small firm practitioners engage in pro bono work. In 2009, approximately 79.7% of solo practitioners reported some pro bono service hours while about 72.6% of small firm members (2–5 in size) donated their time. About 71.1% of those in extra large firms, with 50 or more members, reported pro bono service. Medium and large firms had the lowest percentages of pro bono hours, consistent with previous years. Government lawyers overall provided fewer pro bono hours than those in other offices. Approximately 25.1% of the full-time Maryland bar listed “government agency” as their place of business, translating into 5,069 lawyers.

The Eastern Shore and Western Maryland had higher proportions of lawyers rendering pro bono services overall than lawyers in other regions. Lawyers in Garrett County reported the highest percentage of lawyers rendering any pro bono service (79.3%), with Talbot County coming in
second (72.4%), followed by Queen Anne's County (69.9%). The lowest pro bono participation rates were reported in Baltimore City, Anne Arundel, Howard, Montgomery and Somerset Counties.

13. What types of pro bono services are being provided?

Tracking Rule 6.1, the breakdown of services provided by lawyers practicing in Maryland in 2009 was as follows:

- 55.4% rendered their services to people of limited means;
- 17.2% assisted organizations serving people of limited means;
- 4.8% worked with entities on civil rights matters; and
- 22.8% gave organizational help to non-profits.

The largest number of pro bono hours was donated in the family/domestic practice area even though family/domestic law ranked sixth as a primary practice area. Primary practice areas identified by lawyers do not necessarily correspond to the areas in which pro bono services are rendered or needed. (See chart below).

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<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>PRO BONO SERVICE AREA</th>
<th>PRIMARY PRACTICE AREA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Family/domestic</td>
<td>Litigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Corporate/business</td>
<td>Corporate/business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Litigation</td>
<td>Criminal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Real Estate</td>
<td>Government</td>
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Lawyers generally provided a high percentage of their pro bono service in their primary practice area. Those in certain practice areas tend to proportionately provide more pro bono service hours. The top areas included:

- Trusts/Estates/Wills – 76.8%  
- General Practice – 76.0%  
- Family/Domestic – 75.2%  
- Personal Injury – 64.4%  
- Litigation – 62.0%  
- Elder Law – 61.4%  
- Taxation – 54.9%
14. What is the area of greatest demand for legal services?

The overwhelming need for legal services continues to be in the area of family law. The Maryland Judicial Commission on Pro Bono in its Report and Recommendations in 2000 found that the top area of need for legal services was family law. In 2005, the Standing Committee on Pro Bono Service in its State Action Plan described the “Family Law Dilemma,” noting that family law cases consistently overwhelm the legal services system and pro bono programs in Maryland. In its 2006–2008 Needs Assessment Report, the Legal Aid Bureau found in its survey of “judicial stakeholders” (e.g., judges, court employees, legal services providers) that family law issues, including abuse, divorce, custody, visitation, and child support, were those most frequently encountered. Housing and consumer matters were also areas of high demand.

In FY 2010, staff and volunteer attorneys for the 35 MLSC funded legal services programs closed a combined 113,919 cases for low-income clients. The case breakdown was as follows:

- Family Law 41%
- Housing 23%
- Juvenile/CINA 9%
- Consumer/Finance 8%
- Immigration 4%
- Employment 4%
- Income Maintenance 2%
- Other 9%
  (Education, health, individual rights, wills and trusts and miscellaneous issues.)

15. Why do pro bono?

The most compelling reason to do pro bono work is the tremendous unmet need for legal services among low-income Marylanders and our responsibility, as legal professionals, to provide representation for those in need. For many volunteer attorneys, their pro bono work is the most stimulating, challenging and meaningful work they do. Pro bono provides an opportunity to connect with the community and help others who could be harmed by the system or taken advantage of without pro bono
representation. Volunteer attorneys frequently say that pro bono work reminds them of why they went to law school in the first place, allowing them to give back to the community by protecting the rights of the disadvantaged.

Pro bono work opens a new world of opportunities by introducing attorneys to people and cases they would never encounter in their normal practices. It challenges attorneys to be creative and stretch their imaginations to help someone in need. Many pro bono attorneys are amazed at the courage and fortitude of their clients in the face of tremendous odds, and feel grateful for the opportunity to have a positive influence on their clients' lives.

Pro bono also has practical benefits, including opportunities for professional development. Frequently, pro bono attorneys acquire training, mentoring and other experiences in their pro bono cases that help them in their ordinary practice (e.g., learning how to work with an interpreter). Often they are able to hone their lawyering skills, such as interviewing, negotiation and courtroom advocacy. Numerous short-term pro bono opportunities are available that do not involve direct representation but allow an attorney to utilize their legal skills while having a profound impact on the lives of many individuals. (For a list of short-term pro bono opportunities, see Appendix F.)

A recent ABA study found that lawyers do pro bono work at a rate three times that of the general public's volunteer work, 73% to 26.2%. It is not surprising, then, that pro bono attorneys find great personal satisfaction and meaning in doing this important work.
Part II
BEST PRACTICES FOR PRO BONO SERVICE PROVIDERS

OVERVIEW

In November of 2009, the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland sent a *Best Practices Questionnaire* to pro bono service providers funded by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation seeking information about the most effective policies, procedures, and protocols utilized by Maryland pro bono programs. The *Best Practices Questionnaire* addressed a wide range of issues, from the recruitment and training of volunteers to the best use of case management systems. The Best Practices that follow were compiled from the responses of Maryland programs to that *Best Practices Questionnaire*, as well as from the best practices of programs from other states. The vision of the *ABA Standards for Programs Providing Civil Pro Bono Legal Services to Persons of Limited Means*, published in 1996, also informs these Best Practices.

The *Best Practices Manual* is organized into eight chapters: Volunteer Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition; Support and Resources for Pro Bono Attorneys; Serving Clients; Policies and Procedures for Handling Cases; Operational and Personnel Policies; Collaborating with the Bar, Bench and the Community; Special Issues for Rural Areas; and Pro Bono Program Governance. Throughout this *Best Practices Manual*, the terms “pro bono attorney” and volunteer attorney” are used to refer to lawyers who represent indigent clients “without fee or expectation of fee” or for a “substantially reduced fee” as defined in Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct. This includes attorneys who represent clients for a reduced fee in contested family law cases through the Judicare program funded by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, as well as other reduced fee arrangements that qualify as pro bono under Rule 6.1.
Volunteer Recruitment, Retention and Recognition

INTRODUCTION

The three “Rs,” recruitment, retention and recognition, are essential elements of a successful pro bono program, for without volunteers, a program cannot exist. Recruiting competent and enthusiastic volunteers who provide high quality services is the first step. By formulating a Recruitment Plan that incorporates a variety of recruitment methods, a pro bono program can reach the greatest number of attorneys and entice uninvolved lawyers to participate as new volunteers. Step two is creating a cadre of dedicated volunteer attorneys who are committed to your program by adopting effective procedures that keep them engaged and supported and let them know they are valued members of your community. These can range from simple courtesies such as saying “thank you” to providing recognition of outstanding pro bono service at annual pro bono award ceremonies that reach a wide audience and publicize their good works. Thus, each of the three “Rs” can support and reinforce the others, helping to create a vibrant and effective pro bono community within your program.
A. VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

BEST PRACTICE # 1

PRO BONO RECRUITMENT PLANS

Develop a comprehensive Pro Bono Recruitment Plan that includes a variety of recruitment tools and methods, engages a wide range of participants and targets a broad spectrum of attorneys.

Goal: Maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of your program’s recruitment efforts and increase the probability of recruiting competent and enthusiastic volunteer attorneys who remain committed to your program.

What to do:

- Engage the board of directors and program staff in developing a long-range Recruitment Plan that includes multiple techniques and processes for recruiting new volunteers, has realistic goals and sets meaningful priorities.
- Identify the specific client needs the program seeks to meet and the types of volunteer attorneys necessary to meet those needs.
- Include in the Recruitment Plan a variety of recruitment methods, such as:
  - Engaging local judges, bar leadership and board members in letter writing campaigns to encourage
attorneys to volunteer who have the necessary skills and competence to meet the needs of your client population.

- Utilizing local judges, bar leadership, board members and current volunteers to make personal phone calls to solicit pro bono attorneys.
- Providing trainings for young lawyers and lawyers with unrelated expertise to develop the skills necessary to meet the needs of your clients.
- Publicizing volunteer opportunities through local bar journals and legal newspapers.
- Developing a recruitment brochure or fact sheet for inclusion in all recruitment letters and promotional materials.
- Presenting informational sessions to local bar associations, bar sections or other groups of attorneys describing the pro bono opportunities and support and resources available for volunteer attorneys.
- Including a recruiting message and user-friendly volunteer registration form on your program’s website.
- Holding a luncheon or other event for law firm pro bono coordinators and/or managing partners with judges and bar leadership attending to explore creative ways for the law firm to participate in your program.
- Developing a range of volunteer opportunities and systems for delivering services, including clinics, workshops, hotlines and other short-term pro bono opportunities.

- Target specific segments of the attorney population, including:
  - New admittees and young lawyers.
  - Government attorneys.
  - Business, tax, real estate and corporate lawyers.
  - Retired attorneys.
  - Law firms: large, medium and small.

- Seek to develop a Pro Bono Recruitment Plan that ensures continuous publicity of volunteer opportunities as well as provides for discrete recruiting campaigns.

Helpful tips:

- The Pro Bono Resource Center's bi-weekly E-Bulletin provides a statewide forum through which pro bono programs can disseminate information about available pro bono cases, trainings, recruitment, awards and other events. For more information, contact pbrc@probonomd.org.
- A sample volunteer attorney recruitment letter for Judicare cases from the Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence is available at Appendix H.
- For a detailed discussion of ways to involve local judges in your pro bono recruitment efforts, see Best Practice #65.
**VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT**

**BEST PRACTICE # 2**

**PRO BONO RECRUITMENT BROCHURES**

Develop a Pro Bono Recruitment Brochure that clearly and vividly describes the mission of your program, the client needs and populations served, and the nature and variety of volunteer opportunities available for pro bono attorneys.

**Goal:** An appealing and persuasive brochure that encourages attorneys to volunteer through your program, provides all of the information necessary for them to do so, and is appropriate for use in multiple contexts and settings.

**What to do:**

- Craft a recruiting message that specifically targets your audience of potential volunteers by considering:
  - The number of attorneys in your area.
  - The nature of their practices and areas of specialization.
  - The average size of the law firms in the area.
  - The number of government attorneys and the nature of their work.
  - The attitude and culture of the local bar regarding pro bono.
Include in the Pro Bono Recruitment Brochure information regarding:

- The type of pro bono opportunities available through your program.
- The extent of client need in the areas your program addresses and the benefit of pro bono service to the community.
- Significant client cases, including quotes from former clients and volunteer attorneys.
- Professional benefits to pro bono attorneys such as networking with other lawyers and experience in new practice areas.
- All support and resources available to volunteer attorneys, such as professional liability insurance, free trainings, mentors, model pleadings and litigation funds.
- The process to volunteer and any requirements for volunteering (e.g., three years of immigration experience for a green card workshop).

Distribute the Pro Bono Recruitment Brochure as widely as possible.

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Helpful tip:

- Sample Best Practice: The Pro Bono Recruitment Brochure developed by the Homeless Persons Representation Project is available at Appendix I.
VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

BEST PRACTICE # 3

NEW ADMITTEES AND YOUNG LAWYERS

Goal: Engage young attorneys in pro bono service early in their careers to inspire a life-long commitment to pro bono and assist them in developing essential lawyering skills.

What to do:

- Hold an annual cocktail party for new admittees and young lawyers at a local bar to introduce them to your program and the pro bono opportunities available to them.
- Ensure that all participants complete a sign-up sheet requesting their full contact information and areas of interest in pro bono.
- Distribute the Pro Bono Recruitment Brochure.
- Spotlight a current volunteer and/or former client who describes the impact of pro bono on their lives.
- Consider using the cocktail party as a fundraiser for your program.
- Seek co-sponsorship of the event by the local or specialty bar association or a section of the Maryland State Bar Association.

Target new admittees and young lawyers to volunteer for pro bono service.
Follow up with a letter to all participants and other new admittees encouraging them to volunteer with your program.

Include a reminder of their obligations under MD Rule 6.1 and the aspirational goal of 50 pro bono hours annually for each attorney.

Note that for young lawyers who are unemployed or underemployed, pro bono work provides an opportunity to develop essential lawyering skills and learn substantive areas of law.

Note that for all young lawyers pro bono work provides the opportunity to represent low-income clients in matters of critical importance in their lives, often the most interesting and compelling work a young lawyer can do.

Provide in the letter a summary of the support and resources your program provides, including malpractice insurance, trainings, and mentoring.

Create a special project within your program to attract young lawyer volunteers and include a free training in exchange for a pledge to take a pro bono case.

Use social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter to advertise volunteer opportunities and recruit volunteers.

Helpful tips:
- Have the new admittee/young lawyer letter co-signed by a local judge or bar association leader.
- Encourage peer-to-peer recruitment by young lawyers of other young lawyers.
Goal: Tap into the wisdom and experience of retired attorneys who have much to offer their communities and your pro bono clients.

What to do:

- Send a letter to retired and transitioning attorneys explaining the attorney emeritus rules and the pro bono opportunities available with your organization.
- Include information about the availability of malpractice insurance and of office space and other resources with your program.
- Explain that Maryland Rules were amended to create exceptions to requirements that previously prevented retired and inactive attorneys from performing pro bono work.
  - Rule 16-811 was amended to waive Client Protection Fund fees for inactive/retired attorneys whose practice of law solely involves work with a legal services program representing clients without compensation.
  - Rule 1-312 was amended to permit an attorney who does not maintain a law office to sign pleadings and
papers if the attorney’s practice is limited to work with a legal services program.

- Identify non-litigation pro bono services that may appeal to retired attorneys, such as mentoring, mediation, attorney trainings, community legal education programs and other short-term options.
- Create a pro bono project for retired attorneys to work with a targeted population such as veterans who are homeless or at risk for being homeless.
- Create a pro bono project for retired attorneys to work with low-income senior citizens on issues such as Medicaid, Social Security, wills and advanced directives.
- Work with local law firms to provide office space, supplies and clerical support for retired attorneys performing pro bono service.

Helpful tips:

- The Pro Bono Mentoring Program of the Young Lawyers' Section of the MSBA and the Pro Bono Resource Center can match senior and retired attorneys with young lawyers in a mentoring relationship. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or prbc@probonomd.org.
- The ABA waives dues for senior or inactive members who provide pro bono service. Contact the ABA at 800-285-2221 or Service@abanet.org.
- The Attorney Emeritus Rules Exceptions can be found in Maryland Rule 1-312 (a)(3) and Maryland Rule 16-811(e)(2).
BEST PRACTICE # 5
GOVERNMENT ATTORNEYS

Target government attorneys employed in County Offices of Law, the Public Defender’s Office, the State’s Attorney’s Office, the Maryland Attorney Generals’ Office, and with the Federal Government to volunteer for pro bono service.

Goal: Draw on the talents of the government attorneys in your area to provide a wide range of pro bono services that do not conflict with their governmental duties.

What to do:

- Assess the number or percentage of attorneys in your area who are employed by the municipal, county, State or Federal government and constitute an untapped pool of volunteers for your program.
- Investigate whether there is a policy in the government offices in your area addressing pro bono service.
  - The Maryland Office of the Attorney General and Office of the Public Defender each have statewide policies encouraging pro bono service by their attorneys.
  - The pro bono policies of County Attorney’s Offices and State’s Attorney’s Offices vary greatly from county to county.
  - The United States Department of Justice has a pro bono manager and pro bono policy that permits
federal attorneys to provide pro bono services in a wide range of matters.

- Contact the government offices in your area and ask to present a short informational program to the attorneys about the pro bono opportunities available with your program.
- Develop a Government Attorneys Project that accommodates the need of government attorneys by providing pro bono opportunities outside of working hours, or a location for meeting with clients, or identifies areas of the law that do not create conflicts such as:
  - Criminal record expungements.
  - Elder law matters.
  - Wage claim clinics.
  - Name changes and guardianships.
- Work with your Local Pro Bono Committee to encourage County Attorneys and State’s Attorneys who do not permit pro bono to change their policies.

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Helpful tips:
- The Court of Appeals Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service and the Local Pro Bono Committees are engaged in a project to encourage State’s Attorney’s and County Attorney’s Offices that have no pro bono policy or that prohibit pro bono to adopt a policy encouraging pro bono service. For information contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or sgoldsmit@probonomd.org.
- The Model Pro Bono Policy for Government Attorneys prepared by the Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service is available at Appendix J.
VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

BEST PRACTICE # 6

LAW FIRMS

Work with law firms, small, medium and large, to develop pro bono projects to be staffed and operated by the members of the firm as their contribution to the pro bono effort.

Goal: Partner with local law firms on special projects that are regularly staffed by attorneys of the firm.

What to do:

- Identify local law firms known for their expertise in specific practice areas relevant to your program such as family law, bankruptcy, immigration or real estate.
- Arrange to meet with a partner of a small firm to discuss possible pro bono projects for the firm to adopt in partnership with your program. Examples of small firm projects include:
  - Conducting a monthly roundtable for local pro bono attorneys to provide expert advice and mentoring for volunteer attorneys who take cases in a specific practice area such as family law or immigration.
  - Staffing a monthly or quarterly “Ask a Lawyer” program either as a general advice & counsel program or as a program focused on an area of law.
that is the firm’s specialty, such as consumer protection or estates and trusts.

- Adopting a local homeless shelter or soup kitchen and providing monthly advice and counsel sessions.
- Conducting a bi-monthly self-help consumer bankruptcy or low-income taxpayer seminar.

- Arrange to meet with the managing partner or pro bono coordinator of a medium-to-large firm to discuss possible pro bono projects for the firm to adopt in partnership with your program. Examples of medium-to-large firm projects include, in addition to the above, the following:
  - Underwriting a Legal Fair and providing attorneys to present information sessions and provide one-on-one advice and counsel sessions for participants.
  - Underwriting and conducting bi-monthly Green Card and Citizenship workshops for income eligible immigrants.
  - Adopting a struggling neighborhood and providing a full range of legal services to the community association.

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Helpful tips:

- **Sample Best Practice:** The House of Ruth Maryland partners with DLA Piper to pair associates with summer associates who work as a team on Protective Order cases.
- The ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service has resources available online for law firm pro bono initiatives at www.abanet.org/legalservices/probono/law_firms.shtml.
BEST PRACTICE # 7

SHORT-TERM PRO BONO OPPORTUNITIES

Develop a variety of short-term pro bono opportunities for non-litigators and practitioners looking for an opportunity to volunteer on a regular basis that does not involve direct representation.

Goal: Engage attorneys who are unable to provide direct representation by offering regular, time-limited opportunities to volunteer that are valuable services for clients and fulfilling for volunteer attorneys.

What to do:

- Establish a range of short-term volunteer opportunities for attorneys to work with clients directly, such as:
  - “Ask a Lawyer” programs—brief advice and counsel sessions.
  - Clinics—advice and litigation support for self-represented individuals in areas such as landlord tenant or small claims, possibly conducted at the courthouse.
  - Workshops—limited service programs focused on discrete topics such as child support modifications or green card applications.
  - Hotlines—offered weekly or monthly on specific substantive areas.
• Provide opportunities for attorneys to work on support and resources for the program, such as:
  ➢ Mentoring volunteer attorneys.
  ➢ Assisting with intake and assessment of cases.
  ➢ Preparing substantive materials for volunteers such as manuals, handbooks, and sample pleadings and forms.
  ➢ Conducting attorney trainings.
  ➢ Conducting community education programs.
  ➢ Participating in recruiting and fundraising.
  ➢ Helping to publicize the program.
• Develop opportunities for real estate, corporate, tax and transactional attorneys to participate in short-term pro bono, such as:
  ➢ Establishing a landlord/tenant clinic or small claims clinic and providing substantive training.
  ➢ Organizing a senior center/hospice project for the elderly poor and providing training on the preparation of wills, powers of attorney, advanced directives and other end of life documents.

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Helpful tip:
• The Pro Bono Resource Center can provide assistance in developing short-term pro bono opportunities and offers trainings in a variety of substantive areas. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

BEST PRACTICE # 8

PRO BONO RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGNS

Conduct a Pro Bono Recruitment Campaign for your program that includes a wide range of participants and targets a broad spectrum of attorneys.

Goal: Reach as many attorneys as possible in a limited period of time, describe the pro bono opportunities available to them and encourage them to participate as a volunteer in your program.

What to do:

- Conduct a letter writing campaign targeting all members or a specific segment of the local bar in your area, describing your program and the variety of pro bono opportunities available for pro bono volunteers.
- Include descriptions of recent cases and quotes from former clients and current volunteers describing their experiences.
- Include full descriptions of the support and resources your program provides to volunteer attorneys.
- Have the letter signed by a local judge, bar leader or prominent member of your board of directors (perhaps by all of the above, each targeted to different populations of attorneys).
Hold a telephone drive involving staff, current volunteers, members of the board of directors, and local judges and bar association leaders who call attorneys they know personally and encourage them to become a volunteer.

Provide scripts for the callers and stories from current volunteers about their pro bono experience.

Provide incentives for the participants who recruit the most volunteers such as gift certificates for local restaurants or retailers.

Be prepared with cases to refer and other pro bono opportunities available to engage the new volunteers immediately upon the conclusion of the letter writing and telephone drives.

Coordinate the Pro Bono Recruitment Campaign with National Pro Bono Week and have staff, current volunteers, local judges and bar leaders give presentations about your program at National Pro Bono Week events.

Publicize the Pro Bono Recruitment Campaign in e-blasts, list serves, newsletters, local bar journals and bulletins, and place articles, op-ed pieces and letters to the editor about the program in local newspapers.

Use social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter to advertise volunteer opportunities and recruit volunteers.

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Helpful tip:
- Information about National Pro Bono Week in Maryland is available on the PBRC website at www.probonomd.org or from sgoldsmith@probonomd.org.
CHAPTER 1

B. VOLUNTEER RETENTION

BEST PRACTICE # 9

NEW VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS

Develop practices and procedures to ensure that new volunteers are immediately engaged and supported in their pro bono work with your program.

Goal: Establish positive and long-term relationships with new volunteers by integrating them into the program and making the best and most efficient use of their skills.

What to do:

- Make a good first impression. Insist on a friendly, courteous and helpful attitude by all members of the staff when dealing with volunteers.
- Contact the new volunteer as soon as possible after they call, email or register to volunteer at a recruitment event.
- Ensure that at volunteer’s initial contact with the program includes an immediate next step for the attorney, whether it is a face-to-face meeting, the placement of a case, or the opportunity to participate in a training.
- Learn why the attorney is volunteering and determine the type of case and substantive matter in which they are interested.
- Make every effort to match the attorney with a client based on the attorney’s skills and background; the type of matter referred and the way it is placed with the
volunteer can affect the willingness of the attorney to participate in the future.

- Ensure that new volunteers are aware of all the types of support and resources available to assist them in their representation of pro bono clients such as mentors, trainings, sample forms and pleadings, and substantive manuals. (See Chapter 3)
- Develop user-friendly Volunteer Registration Forms that request detailed information about the volunteer attorney’s practice area, background and interests in volunteering. (See Best Practices #38)
- Establish protocols for staff when interacting with new volunteers and placing cases.
- Stay in contact with new volunteers by tracking the progress of their case and offering support whenever appropriate. (See Best Practice #45)
- Thank a new volunteer at each step of their case; if they provided short-term pro bono, such as staffing a clinic or workshop, provide feedback and let them know they have made a difference.
- Remember that personal contact is key in engaging and integrating new volunteers.

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Helpful tips:
- The National Association of Pro Bono Professionals (NAPBPro) provides numerous materials on their website regarding relationships with volunteers which are available at www.napbpro.net.
- The NAPBPro checklist Ways to Establish Effective Relationships with Volunteers is attached as Appendix K.
VOLUNTEER RETENTION

BEST PRACTICE # 10

ESTABLISHED PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

Develop practices and procedures that encourage volunteer attorneys to take cases frequently and keep them engaged and committed to your program.

Goal: Maintain positive, long-lasting relationships with established pro bono attorneys by letting them know they are a valued and integral part of your program.

What to do:

- Express your appreciation for a pro bono attorney’s work each time your program has contact with the volunteer.
- Communicate with your volunteers often through:
  - List serves.
  - E-blasts about available cases and upcoming events such as trainings, workshops or clinics.
  - Quarterly e-bulletins that provide updates on state or national news regarding legal services as well as information on program activities, support and resources and available cases.
- Place cases with volunteers carefully to best utilize their skills and avoid volunteer burn out.
➢ Know the number of pro bono cases a volunteer has and the status of each case before calling with another case.
➢ Work to match cases with the attorney's area of expertise and any requests they have made.
➢ Remember that “nightmare” cases are almost always inappropriate for pro bono.
➢ Follow a difficult and time-consuming case with a less challenging case.
➢ Remind volunteers regularly of the support and resources available to them. (See Chapter 3).

- Learn what motivates a pro bono attorney to volunteer (e.g., the desire to serve, to gain experience, to network), and keep it in mind when placing cases and engaging them in program activities.
- Provide a variety of short-term pro bono options to volunteers who need to switch out of direct service for a period of time in order to avoid losing a volunteer because they are unable to take a case.
- Develop effective procedures for intake and screening, conflicts checks, tracking cases and volunteer feedback to improve the experience of volunteers. (See Chapter 3).
- Speak to a pro bono attorney at the close of a case to learn about their experience and their interests in future cases.
- Send a thank you note at the close of each case, for participation in a training and at the conclusion of every project.

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Helpful tip:
- NAPBPro (National Association of Pro Bono Professionals) provides a Volunteer Interview Form to facilitate the gathering of information about a volunteer attorney’s experiences and preferences available at Appendix L.
VOLUNTEER RETENTION

BEST PRACTICE # 11

SAYING “THANK YOU”

Make it a top priority of your program to express appreciation to your volunteers at every possible opportunity.

Goal: Create a community of volunteers who are engaged, enthusiastic, and committed to your program by letting them know they are appreciated and valued members of the organization.

What to do:

- Be creative in the way you express appreciation for the work of your pro bono attorneys.
- Say “thank you” directly by:
  - Sending a handwritten thank you note through the mail (a lost art that shows you really care).
  - Sending an electronic thank you note that “talks,” flashes or otherwise makes a statement.
  - Encouraging a grateful client to write a thank you note to their pro bono attorney.
  - Asking a judge to write a letter of appreciation after final judgment in a significant case.
- Say “thank you” indirectly by sending them:
  - Birthday cards.
  - Holiday cards.
  - Get well cards and condolence cards.
- Notes recognizing professional accomplishments and milestone events.
- Express appreciation by telling others about the accomplishments of your volunteers.
  - Inform supervisors and colleagues in the lawyer’s office about their exemplary pro bono service (after obtaining the volunteer’s consent).
  - Use quotes from volunteers in your brochures, flyers, newsletters, e-bulletins and on your website.
  - Recommend the volunteer to serve on an important commission or task force.
- Express appreciation for your volunteers’ service by:
  - Holding a volunteers’ picnic or holiday party.
  - Arranging a “brown bag” lunch with local judges for exemplary pro bono attorneys.
  - Giving small, inexpensive gifts such as pins, mugs, pens, calendars and paperweights.
- Say “thank you” to your volunteers by allowing them to say “no” to a request without feeling guilty.

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Helpful tip:
- **Sample Best Practice:** The Women's Law Center of Maryland provides a certificate recording the number of pro bono hours donated with its end of the year thank you note to each attorney.
C. VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

BEST PRACTICE # 12

ANNUAL PRO BONO AWARDS

Create annual volunteer awards to honor exceptional pro bono attorneys for their outstanding service and contributions to the delivery of pro bono legal services.

Goal: Pay tribute to outstanding volunteer attorneys, encourage and re-energize all volunteers, aid in pro bono recruitment efforts, and provide positive publicity for your program in the legal community.

What to do:

- Develop annual awards for a variety of categories, such as:
  - Volunteer of the Year.
  - Young Lawyer Pro Bono Award.
  - Distinguished Service Award.
  - Solo Practitioner Award.
  - Small Firm Pro Bono Attorney Award.
  - Large Firm Pro Bono Attorney Award.
  - Government Attorney Pro Bono Award.
  - Law Firm of the Year.
  - Judicial Leadership Award.
  - Pro Bono Leadership Award.
• Establish criteria for each award based on objective standards such as total pro bono hours as well as subjective standards such as the nature and significance of the pro bono work performed.

• Establish a protocol for nominations for the Pro Bono Awards that includes a user-friendly nomination form and a deadline for submission.

• Establish a protocol for granting the pro bono awards that identifies who selects the winners and the process for selection.
  ➢ Include board members, staff and community leaders on a selection committee that makes recommendations to the board of directors.
  ➢ Set a time-table for announcing the award winners that coincides with an Annual Awards Reception or Banquet.

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Helpful tips:

• The Pro Bono Resource Center sponsors a statewide Maryland Pro Bono Service Awards program for which any volunteer, project, firm, etc., is eligible to apply. A program may choose to participate in that awards process in lieu of its own or in addition to its own. The PBRC awards nomination form can serve as a model for other pro bono programs and is available at Appendix M.

• The ABA Center for Pro Bono website provides materials concerning annual awards, such as award descriptions, sample calls for nominations and sample awards criteria available at www.abanet.org/legalservices/probono/recognition.html.
VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

BEST PRACTICE # 13

ANNUAL PRO BONO AWARDS CEREMONY

Hold an annual pro bono awards ceremony to confer the pro bono awards to recipients and celebrate the accomplishments of the program and its volunteers.

Goal: Provide a public forum in which to pay tribute to outstanding volunteer attorneys, create a sense of community among pro bono and legal services providers, encourage and re-energize volunteers, enhance pro bono recruitment efforts, and promote and publicize your program in the legal community.

What to do:

- Plan an awards event that is suitable for the size and finances of your program. Pro bono awards may be conferred during ceremonies held at:
  - Annual banquets at large or small event venues.
  - Luncheon receptions at local restaurants or in ceremonial rooms at the courthouse.
  - Cocktail receptions at the home of a member of the board of directors.
  - Joint awards ceremonies with other pro bono or legal services providers.
  - Local bar association annual meetings or other events.
• Engage the active participation of local judges to present awards and speak at the ceremony.
• Invite community leaders, local politicians and staff of other local legal services organizations.
• Publicize the event in all program newsletters, list serves, e-bulletins and on the website.
• Publicize the event on the Pro Bono Resource Center’s bi-weekly E-Bulletin.
• Publicize the event through the local bar association and the Maryland State Bar Association.
• Utilize the awards ceremony as a fundraiser for the program.
• Participate in the annual Maryland Pro Bono Service Awards ceremony at the MSBA Annual Meeting by submitting nominations.

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Helpful tip:
• The ABA Center for Pro Bono website provides materials concerning awards receptions and banquets, sample programs and award certificates available at www.abanet.org/legalservices/probono/recognition.html.
• The Maryland Pro Bono Service Awards nomination form is available at Appendix M and at www.probonomd.org/docs/2011-awards-application.pdf.
Best Practice # 14

Creative Ways to Honor Volunteers

Develop a variety of techniques to honor volunteers throughout the year that highlight their service and publicize their achievements.

Goal: Acknowledge the contributions of all your volunteers by incorporating volunteer recognition into a wide range of program activities.

What to do:

- Issue Certificates of Recognition to attorneys who have provided one through four years of service on the anniversary of their enrollment in your program.

- Award Certificates of Merit to attorneys who have provided five through ten years of service and consider presenting the Certificates of Merit at the annual awards ceremony.

- Create an Honor Roll recognizing attorneys who have performed a minimum of 100 or 200 pro bono hours each year.

- Publish the Honor Roll in all program newsletters, e-bulletins, list serves and on your website.
Publicize your volunteers’ accomplishments by:

- Encouraging publication of a piece about an exceptional volunteer in their law firm's or government office's newsletter, e-bulletin or on their website.
- Submitting a story for publication in the local bar association newsletter or e-bulletin about an attorney’s exemplary pro bono service.
- Getting a story published in a local newspaper about the pro bono service of an exceptional volunteer.
- Submitting an article on an exceptional lawyer's pro bono service to the attorney's law school alumni publication.

Recommend your volunteers for awards given by other organizations, particularly the Maryland Pro Bono Awards administered by the Pro Bono Resource Center and presented each year at the Maryland State Bar Association Annual Meeting.

List all volunteers and recognize the achievements of exceptional volunteers in the annual report of your program.

Helpful tip:

- The ABA Center for Pro Bono website provides materials concerning honor rolls and sample certificates available www.abanet.org/legalservices/probono/recognition.html.
Support and Resources for Pro Bono Attorneys

INTRODUCTION

The greater the array of support and resources available for pro bono attorneys, the more likely it is that their experience will be positive and that they will volunteer for additional cases and matters. Training programs are one of the most valuable support tools available to pro bono organizations because they serve multiple goals. Training seminars and workshops provide an opportunity for pro bono attorneys to take cases outside of their normal practice area by giving them the means to handle the matter competently and confidently. They allow experienced attorneys to perform short-term pro bono service by teaching as faculty in the program, and serve as excellent recruitment tools for new volunteers. Training programs also provide an opportunity for attorneys to network and become a part of the pro bono service community. Other support and resources for volunteer attorneys include sample pleadings, briefs and forms, mentoring programs, compilations of information regarding the local legal and social service programs available for indigent clients, and information regarding malpractice insurance and the availability of litigation funds.

Providing these resources and support improves the quality of legal serves rendered to clients and enhances the pro bono experience for volunteer attorneys.
A. VOLUNTEER TRAINING

BEST PRACTICE # 15

FREE or DISCOUNTED TRAININGS FOR PRO BONO PLEDGES

Develop training seminars and workshops on a variety of substantive areas offered free or at a low cost to attorneys who pledge to take a pro bono case or render a designated number of pro bono service hours.

Goal: Maximize the quality of services provided by pro bono attorneys, expand the types of cases volunteers are willing to accept, and enhance recruitment by providing the training free of charge or at low cost in exchange for a pro bono commitment.

What to do:

- Conduct a training assessment to determine the type and number of trainings appropriate for your program each year.
  - Identify the substantive areas of greatest client need.
  - Consider which types of trainings, e.g., seminars, workshops, full-day conferences, would be most useful for volunteer attorneys to learn these substantive areas.
- Offer the training free or at a low cost to attorneys who agree to accept a minimum of one pro bono case or agree to provide a designated number of pro bono service hours.
Determine whether to target the training to a particular audience of attorneys, for example:

- Target young lawyers for an introduction to family law and have a batch of uncontested divorce cases to refer to them after the seminar.
- Target business and transactional attorneys for a seminar on foreclosure proceedings and have clients ready to refer to them after the seminar.

Be creative in planning your trainings:

- Make your trainings as interactive and participatory as possible.
- Use role plays, simulated interviews, and mock hearings and trials to deepen the learning experience.
- Include discussions on the special challenges of representing clients living in poverty.

Engage judges, senior attorneys, pro bono and legal services staff and current volunteers as faculty.

Provide substantive materials, such as:

- Practice manuals and handbooks.
- Sample pleadings and forms.
- Procedural guidelines and checklists.

Consider additional trainings on practice in particular tribunals, such as administrative hearings, juvenile court and immigration court.

Partner with other pro bono and legal services organizations to conduct trainings.

Publicize the training through list serves, e-bulletins, bar publications and on your website.

Helpful tips:

- **Sample Best Practice:** The Maryland Immigrant Rights Coalition has conducted semi-annual trainings on immigration practice that include afternoon mock trials before judges in the Baltimore Immigration Court in exchange for taking a pro bono case.
- The Pro Bono Resource Center is willing to assist any organization or program in organizing trainings and can publicize them on PBRC’s bi-weekly E-Bulletin. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
VOLUNTEER TRAINING

BEST PRACTICE # 16

TRAININGS FOR EXPERIENCED PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

Develop a training round-table for experienced pro bono attorneys to address the challenges and nuances of a particular type of case (e.g., child custody), when the poverty of the client significantly impacts the case.

Goal: Minimize the problem of burn-out for dedicated pro bono attorneys who regularly work with poor and low-income clients by providing a forum for discussing the complex problems and challenges they face when representing clients living in poverty.

What to do:

- Identify the types of pro bono cases that pose particular challenges and difficulties for experienced attorneys due to the client’s poverty.
- Identify faculty from the staff of legal services providers, local or statewide, with experience addressing the special challenges that arise when representing low-income clients in this area of law.
- Organize the training as a roundtable or other informal arrangement to increase comfort levels and encourage free-flowing discussion.
• Determine whether to make the program by “invitation only” or open it to any attorney experienced in the substantive area.

• Invite local judges and masters to participate in the program to gain their insights on the issue as well as to educate them about the impact of poverty upon litigants in these types of cases.

• Collect contact information from all participants to be distributed after the program.

• Use the program to create a community of like-minded lawyers who can call upon each other when faced with difficult issues in pro bono cases.

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Helpful tips:

▪ The Pro Bono Resource Center has suggestions for faculty who can address the impact of a client’s poverty on legal representation in a variety of civil legal matters and could facilitate the discussion. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/ 800-396-1274 or csmearman@probonomd.org.

▪ Resources on poverty law issues are available from the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law at www.povertylaw.org.
VOLUNTEER TRAINING

BEST PRACTICE # 17

TRAININGS FOR NON-LITIGATORS

Develop a training program for non-litigators in areas such as will preparation, criminal record expungements, employment counseling, contract dispute resolution, low-income taxpayer representation or community development.

Goal: Engage transactional, corporate and business attorneys in pro bono work by providing the training necessary for them to handle matters that meet the needs of pro bono clients.

What to do:

- Identify the types of non-litigation matters that are high priority for your pro bono clients.
- In addition to the non-litigation matters listed above, consider:
  - End of life matters such as advanced directives and powers-of-attorney.
  - Immigrant matters such as green card and citizenship applications.
  - Unemployment and Social Security matters.
Incorporation documents and by-laws for community organizations and nonprofits.
Education matters such as school suspensions or expulsions, IEPs (Individual Education Plans) and special education issues.
Preparation of documents for consumer bankruptcy filings.

- Plan a seminar or workshop that will provide the participants with everything necessary to handle a pro bono case in the substantive area, including:
  - Substantive law synopses.
  - Handbooks on processes and procedures.
  - Sample forms and materials.
  - Checklists and to-do lists.

- Publicize the training in targeted e-blasts, list serves, newsletters and bar publications aimed at corporate, transactional and business attorneys.

- Consider collaborating with other pro bono and legal services providers to conduct the training.

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Helpful tips:

- **Sample Best Practice:** The Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services conducts lunchtime trainings at law firms and invites attorneys from surrounding firms to participate.

- The Pro Bono Resource Center can provide logistical support and material assistance for non-litigation trainings throughout the state. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
VOLUNTEER TRAINING

BEST PRACTICE # 18

TRAINING LAWYERS TO WORK WITH IMMIGRANT CLIENTS

Develop a training program or training module that addresses the cultural, racial, ethnic, gender and poverty issues that face attorneys handling a variety of pro bono matters for clients who are immigrants.

Goal: Provide guidance for pro bono attorneys regarding the complex issues raised by culture, religion and gender that may surface when clients are from immigrant communities.

What to do:

- Identify the populations of immigrant clients most often represented by pro bono attorneys in your program and, therefore, the language, cultural and other challenges frequently encountered by your volunteers.
- Consider the need for training on the use of interpreters in case preparation and in the courtroom.
- Consider the need for training on the cultural and religious practices of the largest immigrant groups in your area.
• Identify the types of cases in which your pro bono clients are most often immigrants, and tailor the program to address issues of culture and religion in the context of those cases.
• Involve faculty who have experience working with immigrant clients in non-immigrant matters and are sensitive to the issues raised by cultural and religious differences.
• Address the implications of legal decisions on immigration status, particularly in family law matters.
• Determine whether the program would be most well received as a stand-alone training or a training module to be included in all substantive training.
• Publicize the training in targeted e-blasts, list serves, newsletters and bar publications aimed at corporate, transactional and business attorneys.
• Consider collaborating with other pro bono and legal services providers to conduct the training.
• Create a webcast of this program available for viewing on your website (see Best Practice #19).

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Helpful tip:
• The Pro Bono Resource Center can suggest faculty to address the challenges of working with clients who have limited English proficiency and come from cultures unfamiliar to many Maryland attorneys. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
VOLUNTEER TRAINING

BEST PRACTICE # 19

USING TECHNOLOGY FOR VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Make use of online technology to greatly expand the ability of pro bono attorneys to access your trainings and gain the legal skills and information necessary to provide quality legal services to their pro bono clients.

Goal: Offer a mix of online training programs to provide busy volunteer attorneys with options that permit them to participate in trainings without regard to physical or geographical barriers.

What to do:

- Create webcasts of live trainings to post on your website permitting attorneys who could not attend the training to watch without regard to geography or time.
  - Volunteers register on your website and commit to take a pro bono case in exchange for a password or coupon code providing access to the webcast for a given period of time.
  - Pro bono attorneys may watch the taped training at any time of the day or night or multiple times within the time period.
  - Materials can be made available online with the password or sent by email once the registration is complete.
• Create **webinars** for interactive online trainings that permit real time communication between faculty and participants.
  ➢ Accessible online when participants call a conference call number and click the link that accesses the program and materials.
  ➢ Allows faculty to demonstrate resources such as on-line libraries and resource websites while participants watch.
  ➢ Permits participants to ask questions and faculty to respond in real time.

• Provide a **video-replay** of webcast seminars at central locations followed by a live Q & A with knowledgeable faculty fielding participants’ questions.
  ➢ Allows multiple uses of videotaped trainings.
  ➢ Enriches the viewing of the video by providing live responses to questions.
  ➢ Provides an opportunity for attorneys uninterested in online trainings to benefit from the seminar without requiring all faculty to be present to reenact the training.

• Use the technologies to engage attorneys who otherwise would not participate in trainings.

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**Helpful tips:**
- Sample Webcast Registration Forms for the Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project’s Pro Bono Attorney Foreclosure Mediation Training are available at Appendix N.
- The State Bar of Georgia Pro Bono Project has developed helpful materials on using technology for pro bono recruitment, retention and training. For information contact Mike Monahan at 404-527-8762 or mikem@gabar.org. Information is also available at www.georgiaadvocates.org.
- There are numerous online commercial websites that provide the technology to conduct and design webinars such as GotoWebinar.com and BeaconLive.com/webinar. Likewise, there are online services to help design webcasts to post on your website such as Podbeam.com (free) and elearninglearning.com.
B. SUPPORT SERVICES AND SUBSTANTIVE RESOURCES

BEST PRACTICE # 20

BASIC SUPPORT SERVICES

Provide basic support services to pro bono attorneys including malpractice insurance, administrative support, information about litigation funds, fee waivers, pro bono court reporters and investigators, and detailed reports from your intake and income eligibility screenings.

Goal: Enhance the pro bono experience of your volunteers by providing essential support services that facilitate their representation of clients.

What to do:

- Offer malpractice insurance to your pro bono attorneys available through the National Legal Aid and Defenders Association (NLADA) or other.
- Provide information to your volunteers about the availability of litigation funds through your program or the statewide litigation fund administered by the Pro Bono Resource Center for MLSC grantees:
  - Reimburse them for non-routine expenditures such as mileage, extensive copying, faxes, and registered mail.
Reimburse them for reasonable expert witness fees and discovery costs.

- Make available fee waiver forms and information about pro bono court reporters, investigators and paralegals.
- Offer administrative support such as letterhead, use of program conference rooms, filing court documents, and law student researchers where appropriate (e.g., for retired attorneys and new admeites).
- Use your intake and income eligibility screening process to provide volunteers with all essential information, a detailed statement of the facts and any available documents.
  - If staffing permits, conduct issue screening to ensure the case involves a genuine legal issue.
  - If staffing permits, conduct a merit screening to ensure the client will suffer harm if not served.

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Helpful tips:

- In Maryland courts pro bono attorneys working with MLSC funded legal services programs may use a memorandum provided by the program to obtain an automatic waiver of initial filing fees and court costs. The *Fee Waiver Memorandum* and forms used by Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service are available at Appendix O.
- The Pro Bono Resource Center administers the Litigation Fund for pro bono attorneys working with MLSC affiliated programs on pro bono or Judicare cases. The *Pro Bono/Reduced Fee Litigation Fund Reimbursement Request Form* is available at Appendix O.
- Contact the Pro Bono Resource Center about the availability of discounted litigation support services such as court reporters, process servers, nurse practitioners, appraisers and investigators. Information is available at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
- Negotiate with local support service providers regarding offering free or discounted services to the pro bono attorneys volunteering with your program.
SUPPORT SERVICES AND
SUBSTANTIVE RESOURCES

BEST PRACTICE # 21

MENTORING PROGRAMS

Institute a mentoring program to provide experienced attorneys as mentors and resources for young lawyers and lawyers new to the substantive area in which they are providing pro bono service.

Goal: Provide one-to-one support and guidance for pro bono attorneys by pairing them with experienced practitioners who have handled similar pro bono cases and can provide insight and advice.

What to do:

- Identify current and past volunteers who are seasoned attorneys with expertise in the areas of law in which your program serves the most clients.
  - Engage them to participate in the Mentor Program by agreeing to mentor two pro bono attorneys per year.
  - Remind them that by mentoring attorneys representing pro bono clients, they are providing pro bono services pursuant to MD Rule 6.1.
- Encourage retired and transitioning attorneys to serve as mentors.
- Engage staff attorneys as mentors and co-counsel if your pro bono program is part of a legal services organization.
• Develop a protocol for pro bono attorneys to request a mentor and for matching mentors with mentees.
• Publicize the availability of mentors to all new and current pro bono attorneys.
• Encourage networking and strengthen the pro bono community by providing opportunities for participants in the Mentor Program to socialize.

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Helpful tips:

▪ Sample Best Practice: Community Legal Services of Prince George’s County (CLS) conducts a monthly Family Law Mentoring Clinic in which an experienced family law practitioner hosts a roundtable discussion. Attorneys attending the Family Law Mentoring Clinic must accept two pro bono cases from CLS. For more information, contact CLS at 301-864-8353.
▪ The Pro Bono Resource Center (PBRC) and the Young Lawyers Section of the MSBA conduct a mentoring program available to all MSBA members. For more information, contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
SUPPORT SERVICES AND
SUBSTANTIVE RESOURCES

BEST PRACTICE # 22

LIST SERVES AND E-BULLETINS

Use email and online technology to provide your volunteers with information about available cases, support and resources, upcoming trainings and events, and updates on changes in relevant case law and statutory provisions.

Goal: Support your volunteers by communicating with them regularly through list serves, e-blasts, e-bulletins and online newsletters and providing them with up-to-date information about your program’s services and events.

What to do:

- Establish a list serve and invite all current and past volunteers to join.
- Disseminate information to the list serve about:
  - Support and resources available through your program.
  - Available cases with descriptions.
  - Upcoming trainings, events and pro bono awards.
  - Legal updates and appellate case synopses.
• Determine whether to make the list serve interactive to allow members to raise questions to and communicate with other members.
  ➢ Consider the availability of staff to administer an interactive list serve.
  ➢ Weigh the risk for breaches of confidentiality and other inappropriate uses of an interactive list serve against the value to your volunteers.

• Use e-blasts (emails to particular groups of individuals) to share information and news about your program.

• Publish monthly e-bulletins or online newsletters with articles about program activities and events, articles spotlighting volunteers and special cases, discussions about current events relevant to your program’s mission.
  ➢ Post the e-bulletins and online newletters on your website.
  ➢ Distribute them through e-blasts.
  ➢ Distribute them to your listserv.

• Consider using Facebook, Twitter, Linkedin and other social networking sites to communicate with your pro bono attorneys.

Ω

Helpful tip:
• The Pro Bono Resource Center administers the bi-weekly, statewide PBRC E-Bulletin available for posting case lists, notices about events and trainings, career opportunities, and other relevant notices from any pro bono program. For more information contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probono.md.org.
SUPPORT SERVICES AND
SUBSTANTIVE RESOURCES

BEST PRACTICE # 23

SUBSTANTIVE MATERIALS
AND RESOURCES

Provide a variety of substantive materials and resources to assist volunteer attorneys in their representation of pro bono clients.

Goal: Increase the effectiveness and efficiency of pro bono attorneys by providing them with substantive materials and resources that enhance their ability to represent their clients and improve the quality of pro bono services.

What to do:

- Prepare substantive manuals or handbooks addressing the areas of law most relevant for your program that include:
  - Summaries of case law and key statutory provisions.
  - Procedural guidelines and descriptions of proceedings.
  - Sample pleadings, motions, discovery requests, forms and other documents.
  - Client interview questionnaires.
Check lists and “to do” lists.

- Develop an online Legal Forms Library available to your volunteers by pass code that allows for online drafting of program specific documents.
- Create specialized manuals or handbooks for volunteers serving in advice and counsel clinics, client workshops and on legal hotlines.
- Send volunteers copies of new legislation and recent cases in relevant substantive areas.
- Engage retired attorneys and attorneys unable to provide direct representation in the drafting of substantive manuals and handbooks for your volunteers.
- Provide volunteers with a list of useful websites and on-line resources such as:
  - MDJustice.org—website for pro bono attorneys with substantive materials as well as access to HotDocs (automated custody and other forms).
  - FastCase service through the Maryland State Bar Association website (www.msba.org).
  - Peoples Law Library (www.peoples-law.org)—website for the public with excellent resources for pro bono attorneys as well.
  - MD Judiciary Case Search at casesearch.courts.state.md.us/inquiry/inquiry-index.jsp.

Helpful tips:

- **Sample Best Practice:** The Women’s Law Center of Maryland provides comprehensive manuals with relevant substantive law synopses to its Family Law Hotline and Employment Law Hotline volunteers.
- The Illinois Legal Aid Pro Bono Program has developed **Tips for Pro Bono Volunteers Assisting Low-Income Clients**, an excellent handout for volunteer attorneys covering a range of issues available at Appendix P.
- Free substantive materials are great recruitment tools to entice attorneys to accept pro bono cases.
Serving Client Needs

INTRODUCTION

The goal of a pro bono program is to match low-income clients with volunteer attorneys who will provide them with the highest quality legal services. To do so, it is critical that pro bono programs train their staff to treat clients with respect and to preserve client dignity in all interactions. Programs also should make every effort to facilitate the relationship between the client and the pro bono attorney. Communication is key. Providing clients with clear, accessible instructions for participation in the program, explaining the process once they have completed their application, and facilitating the introduction of the client to the attorney are all central components in that effort. While pro bono programs typically have minimal contact with clients beyond the intake and placement processes, they have the ability to help shape the attorney-client relationship and encourage trust between the client and the volunteer. Sensitivity to the challenges for clients living in poverty, from fear and distrust of the legal system to the inability to read, should inform all exchanges between program personnel and each individual who contacts the program seeking help.
A. PROMOTING POSITIVE CLIENT OUTCOMES

Best Practice # 24

CLIENT OUTREACH

Develop a variety of methods to publicize the availability of your program's pro bono legal services throughout the community.

Goal: Ensure that the clients you seek to serve are aware of your program's services and have access to the information necessary to apply for services.

What to do:

- Develop a Client Brochure for distribution throughout the community that describes:
  - The mission of your program.
  - The nature and extent of your services.
  - The experience of previous clients through quotes and photographs.
  - The process for applying for services, including:
    - Days and times of intake.
    - Income eligibility requirements.
    - Any limitations on the nature of cases accepted.
    - Any requirements regarding the procedural status of matters.
- Provide the Client Brochure to a wide variety of organizations that work with the clients you seek to serve, such as:
- Clerk’s Offices in the District and Circuit Courts.
- Department of Social Services divisions.
- Offices on Aging.
- Youth services bureaus and agencies.
- Housing assistance programs.
- Domestic Violence shelters.
- Veterans programs.
- Programs for the disabled.
- Homeless shelters.
- Drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers.
- Immigrant and day labor centers.

- Have the client brochure translated into the languages spoken by the immigrant communities in your area.

- Identify where the brochures will be placed in your community, including:
  - Food pantries and soup kitchens.
  - Churches, synagogues, mosques and temples.
  - Health Care Clinics.
  - Community Centers and Libraries.
  - Senior Centers.
  - Child Care and Youth Centers.

- Consider forming partnerships with local businesses such as grocery and convenience stores in low-income neighborhoods to make your Client Brochures available to their customers.

- Offer community legal education programs on a regular schedule that address legal issues of importance to your target client populations and provide information about your program’s services.

- Have your volunteers, staff and board members write articles, op-ed pieces and letters to the editor for publication in local newspapers to spread the word about your program.

- Publish a series of public service announcements in local newspapers and community newsletters, as well as in foreign language newspapers, that describe your program’s services and provide contact information.

- Arrange for public service announcements on local radio stations, including foreign language radio stations, describing your program’s services and providing contact information.

Helpful tip:

- **Sample Best Practice:** The Client Brochures published by the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence, and the Montgomery County Bar Foundation Pro Bono Program (in English and Spanish), are available at Appendix Q.
Best Practice # 25

INITIAL CLIENT CONTACT

Goal: Make certain that a client’s first contact with your program is a positive one that assures the client that the program will make every effort to assist them in finding pro bono counsel.

What to do:

- Establish an intake protocol that focuses on the client by explaining in clear, simple language the:
  - Services of your program.
  - Intake process and information they will need to provide.
  - Income eligibility guidelines used by your program.
  - Placement process and procedure.
  - Confidentiality.
  - Timeline for referring their case to a pro bono attorney.
  - Responsibilities of the client.
• Train intake staff and/or volunteers to conduct the intake procedure with:
  ➢ Patience and sensitivity regarding the emotional context of many legal problems.
  ➢ Patience and sensitivity when asking questions about income eligibility.
  ➢ Understanding of relevant substantive issues and procedural processes.
  ➢ Knowledge of interviewing techniques.
• Schedule intake with flexible hours to accommodate work and childcare.
• Make every effort to conduct the interview in the language of the applicant.
• Avoid lengthy delays for in-person intake like those that low-income clients regularly face from government bureaucracies.
• Confirm that the client understands the timeline for referrals and any next steps he or she must take at the conclusion of the interview.
• Explain the client grievance procedure.
• Notify rejected clients as soon as possible to protect client’s rights.
• Attempt to refer rejected clients to other programs or to a lawyer referral service as quickly as possible.

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Helpful tips:
- If none of your program staff speak the language of a client or of a significant percentage of your client population, engage the assistance of bilingual attorneys to conduct intake as volunteers.
- A detailed discussion of intake procedures and processes can be found in Chapter 4.
Best Practice # 26

CLIENT AGREEMENTS

Develop a Client Agreement that outlines the respective responsibilities of the client and the program and provides the client with a description of the case referral process and the client grievance procedure.

Goal: Provide the client with a written explanation of the program’s procedures and the terms upon which they agree to accept a referral to a pro bono attorney.

What to do:

- Prepare a Client Agreement in letter form that describes the relationship between the client and the program.
  - Use simple and clear language without legalese.
  - Explain the process of referral to a volunteer attorney.
  - Explain the nature of the relationship between the client and the program (e.g., whether or not an attorney-client relationship exists).
  - Include a statement about confidentiality and exchange of information with potential volunteer attorneys.

- Incorporate in the Client Agreement a discussion of the responsibilities the client assumes, such as:
  - Providing accurate information in the intake process.
  - Providing accurate financial information.
Keeping all appointments with the volunteer attorney.

Providing all information requested by the program in a timely fashion.

- Consider preparing a similar Client Agreement for participants in clinics, workshops and brief advice and counsel sessions.
- Have the Client Agreement signed by the client and a member of your program staff.
- Translate the letter if necessary.

Helpful tips:
- In pro bono programs where there is no attorney-client relationship established between the client and the program, a program might include the above information in a flier or brochure provided to the client at the conclusion of the intake process.
- A discussion of suggested terms for a Client Agreement form can be found in Best Practice # 35.
Best Practice # 27

REFERRING CLIENTS TO VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS

Ensure that your case placement and referral protocol prioritizes timely and appropriate referrals and facilitates the relationship between the client and the pro bono attorney.

Goal: Avoid disadvantaging a client by failing to place their case in a timely fashion with a suitable pro bono attorney.

What to do:

- Establish a priority list for cases with filing deadlines, hearings scheduled or other time limits that could prejudice a client if not met.
- Create a schedule for reviewing files with deadlines and a protocol for notifying a client within a time certain when it is unlikely a pro bono attorney can be found to handle their matter.
- Establish a process for transferring the client’s file to the pro bono attorney that is efficient and facilitates quick action by the attorney, for example by:
  - Faxing all intake forms in the file to the volunteer attorney followed by originals with documents, pleadings, etc.
Sending the entire file by overnight mail to the volunteer attorney.

- Determine whether your placement protocol should require the volunteer attorney or the client to make the first contact after the case is referred, considering that:
  - Requiring action by the client establishes the client’s commitment to the case.
  - Having the pro bono attorney make the first contact provides time to review the case and contact the program with questions or concerns before speaking with the client.

- Establish a policy regarding the number of attempts to place a case or the amount of time for a case to be in your program system for placement before notifying the client that your program cannot assist them.

- Make every effort to refer the client to another program or resource if your program is unable to assist them.

Helpful tips:

- *Sample Best Practice:* The pro bono client referral letter used by the Maryland Disability Law Center is available at Appendix R.
- A detailed discussion of placement and referral protocols can be found in Chapter 4.
CHAPTER 3

PROMOTING POSITIVE CLIENT OUTCOMES

Best Practice # 28

CLIENT FEEDBACK AND GRIEVANCES

Goal: Gage client satisfaction regarding program policies and procedures and assure that client complaints are heard and addressed.

What to do:

- Develop a client feedback or evaluation form that allows clients to assess their experience with the program and their pro bono attorney at the conclusion of their case. (Best Practice #48)
- Include in the client feedback form questions regarding:
  - The client’s treatment by program staff.
  - The client’s experience with the program’s procedures.
  - The client’s experience with their pro bono attorney.
  - The client’s overall satisfaction with your program’s services.
Develop a protocol for handling client grievances to address:

- Client complaints about treatment by program staff.
- Client complaints about being denied assistance.
- Client complaints about the performance of their pro bono attorney.

Keep the grievance procedure simple while assuring that the client is heard and the complaint is given a full and fair review.

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Helpful tips:

- Sample Best Practice: The Community Law Center's Pro Bono Project Client Survey is available at Appendix S.
- A detailed discussion of client feedback forms and grievance procedures can be found in Chapter 4.
- Sample grievance procedures are available on the ABA Pro Bono Center website, www.abanet.org/legalservices/probono.
B. COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Best Practice # 29

LOW-INCOME CLIENTS

Train your staff to communicate effectively with low-income clients by educating them about the barriers and challenges that exist for low-income clients interacting with the legal system.

Goal: Assure that program staff has the understanding and skills necessary to communicate clearly and work effectively with low-income clients.

What to do:

- Provide client sensitivity training for program staff to address common communication challenges that arise when working with low-income clients, such as:
  - Clients’ distrust of your program based on a belief that it is part of the social services bureaucracy with which they regularly interact.
  - Clients’ feelings of intimidation dealing with the legal system and lawyers.
  - Clients’ confusion and misunderstanding about legal terms and procedures.
  - Hurdles clients face due to lack of affordable child care and transportation.
Hurdles clients face due to the inability to read or due to functional illiteracy.
Clients' lack of understanding of the attorney-client relationship and confidentiality.

- Develop a protocol to address:
  - Methods for discussing with clients the role of your pro bono program within the legal system in a way that allays fears and misunderstandings.
  - Approaches for discussing with clients legal terms and procedures in simple, non-technical language.
  - Methods for discussing your program's confidentiality obligations and the safeguards in place to assure client confidentiality.
  - Approaches to addressing client illiteracy in a way that is respectful and maintains client dignity.
  - Methods for addressing transportation and child care issues to accommodate clients' needs whenever possible.

- Consider collaborating with other pro bono and legal services programs to conduct a client sensitivity training for staff.

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Helpful tips:

- Pro Bono Net has information available online addressing issues relevant to working with low-income clients at www.probono.net.
- The Pro Bono Resource Center can provide information and facilitate the planning of a client sensitivity training for the staff of pro bono programs. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Best Practice # 30

CLIENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Communicate with non-English speaking clients through bilingual staff or trained volunteer interpreters in a language spoken and understood by the client in all interviews and communications with the client.

Goal: Ensure that non-English speaking clients receive the same quality of services from your program as other clients by providing appropriate interpretation and translation of documents.

What to do:

- Conduct a needs assessment to determine the languages most often spoken by non-English speaking clients.
- Hire bilingual staff to work with immigrant clients who speak those languages.
- Recruit volunteer attorneys and/or interpreters to work with non-English speaking clients from:
  - Specialty bars in Maryland such as the Hispanic Bar Association and the Asian-Pacific Bar Association.
  - Community organizations working with immigrants in, for example, the Hispanic or Korean communities.
Social service agencies that work closely with immigrant communities.

- Provide training for volunteer interpreters to ensure that they:
  - Understand the role and duties of interpreters.
  - Have access to legal dictionaries for the language in which they are interpreting.
  - Are aware of cultural differences in language use (e.g., common Spanish terms have very different meanings in Latin America than they do in Spain).

- Avoid using family and friends as interpreters whenever possible since they may not provide neutral translations and may inhibit complete and truthful responses from clients.

- Recruit volunteers to translate forms and documents into languages used regularly by your non-English speaking clients.

- Develop an interpreter’s policy setting forth the protocol and standards for volunteer interpreters in your program, including their obligation to maintain client confidentiality.

- Provide guidance for your volunteer attorneys to assist them when working with interpreters.

Helpful tips:

- The Maryland Court Interpreters website has information regarding the Maryland Code of Conduct for Interpreters and the Registry of Court Interpreters (for possible pro bono interpreter candidates).
- *Working with Interpreters*, guidelines for pro bono attorneys developed by the Volunteer Lawyers Network of Minnesota, is available at Appendix T.
- Online legal terminology glossaries in a wide variety of languages are available on the Minnesota Court Interpreter website at www.mncourts.gov/?page=461.
- An article for non-profits on how to work with interpreters is available at www.nonprofitmanagement.suite101.com/article.cfm/the_dos_and_donts_of_interpreting.
COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Best Practice # 31

CLIENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Goal: Ensure that clients living with disabilities can access your program and receive the same quality of services as other clients.

What to do:

- Assess the accessibility of your program services to clients with a variety of disabilities.
- Take all reasonable steps to assure that clients with physical disabilities can gain entrance to your program for in-person intake in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Provide alternative opportunities for in-person intake if your building is not accessible to persons with physical disabilities such as holding intake at an alternative location or providing a full intake interview by telephone.
- Establish a protocol for working with clients who are visually impaired that includes:
  - Pro bono services of a braille translator for written communications.

Develop methods for overcoming the obstacles to communicating with clients living with disabilities such as hearing, speech or vision loss or impaired cognitive ability, as well as those with physical disabilities.
Use of telephone, computer transmitted or recorded conversations to share information regarding the client's application for services.

Use of large type for all written documents sent to clients with limited sight.

- Develop a protocol for working with clients who are hearing or speech impaired that includes:
  - Use of a pro bono sign language interpreter or lip reader.
  - Use of a computer to communicate visually and exchange information.
  - Use of Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) to communicate by telephone.

- Establish a protocol for working with clients with cognitive impairment that effectively addresses their needs, including:
  - Providing trainings for program staff and volunteer lawyers to discuss appropriate interview techniques and communication methods for clients who are cognitively impaired.
  - Providing guidance for determining when a client is incapable of acting in his or her own interest and requires the appointment of a guardian.

- Conduct a special recruitment campaign to target pro bono attorneys with skills such as sign language or braille translation.

Helpful tips:

- The Maryland Disability Law Center is an excellent resource for information and training materials for working with disabled clients. Contact MDLC at 410-727-6352 or 800-233-7201.
- An ABA article on working with cognitively disabled clients is available at www.abanet.org/genpractice/magazine/1999/jul-aug/zenc1.html.
Policies and Procedures for Handling Cases

INTRODUCTION

The design of pro bono programs varies significantly in Maryland. There are independent pro bono referral organizations, bar foundation pro bono programs, pro bono divisions of legal services organizations, and informal pro bono referral systems through rural bar associations and Local Pro Bono Committees. The key to success in each is the same, however; there must be a pro bono manager or coordinator, a person responsible for overseeing and/or conducting intake, financial eligibility and merits screening, placement and referral, and tracking of cases. Then there are the essential policies and procedures related to each stage of this process, no matter the size or design of the program. These include policies regarding case acceptance, conflict of interest and confidentiality; protocols for addressing income eligibility screening, placing and transferring cases, as well as tracking and closing cases; and forms such as volunteer attorney agreements, retainer agreements and volunteer feedback forms. This chapter addresses each of these and more to help pro bono programs best serve clients and support and enhance the work of their volunteers.
A. ACCEPTANCE OF CASES

BEST PRACTICE #32

CLIENT ELIGIBILITY POLICY

Develop a written client eligibility policy that clearly prioritizes the substantive areas, issues and client populations your volunteers will serve, describes the nature of the services to be provided and outlines the criteria a prospective client must meet to be eligible for services.

Goal: Craft a written client eligibility policy that reflects the organization’s mission and policy goals and guides and informs the client intake procedure.

What to do:

- Work with the board of directors or program governance body to develop a client eligibility policy that:
  - Identifies the client populations your program will serve.
  - Lists the substantive areas of law in which your program will accept cases.
  - Describes the type and nature of services your program and your volunteers will provide.
  - Takes into account volunteer expertise, interests and need for training.
Develop client eligibility guidelines listing criteria for acceptance, such as:

- Income and financial eligibility (organizations receiving Maryland Legal Services Corporation grantee funding must apply MLSC income eligibility guidelines or federal legal aid guidelines).
- Residence in a particular county or region.
- Status, such as age, gender, sexual preference, disability, or health.
- Substantive areas, such as bankruptcy, consumer law, disability law, domestic violence, elder law, employment, family law, health, housing, immigration law, landlord/tenant, low-income taxpayer, public benefits, record expungements and veterans benefits.

Include additional criteria for case acceptance, such as:

- Legal merits of the case.
- Impact on client’s life if accepted or rejected.
- Procedural status of the case.
- Availability of qualified volunteers to handle the matter.
- Other legal resources available to the client.
- Impact, if any, on the client community.

Address the impact of a change in financial or other eligibility on the continuation of representation.

Share client eligibility policy with program volunteers.

Helpful tip:

- Maryland Legal Services Corporation income eligibility guidelines are available at Appendix C.
- Maryland Legal Aid Bureau income eligibility guidelines are available at Appendix D.
ACCEPTANCE OF CASES

BEST PRACTICE # 33

INTAKE AND ELIGIBILITY SCREENING — PROCEDURE

Establish an intake and eligibility screening procedure that allows for a fair and expeditious assessment of a client’s eligibility and provides appropriate training for all participants in the intake process.

Goal: Streamline the intake process to allow for a careful yet efficient determination of whether the client meets eligibility standards and the case will be accepted for placement.

What to do:

- Determine the intake design model to be used in your program, taking into account the availability of staff and considering the following options:
  - Brief telephone screening after which clients are mailed or emailed detailed intake forms to complete and return to the program.
  - Online intake forms available for completion by client on program website.
  - Telephone interviews during which volunteers or staff complete all intake forms and request income documentation.
  - In-person intake at which volunteers or staff interview clients and complete all client intake forms.
Hybrid model in which telephone screening establishes income and substantive eligibility followed by an in-person interview.

Hybrid model in which online intake form is screened for eligibility and followed by telephone or in-person interview.

- Determine who will be responsible for conducting client intake, such as:
  - Staff attorneys.
  - Paralegals.
  - Non-legal support staff.
  - Volunteer attorneys.
  - Non-attorney volunteers.

- Determine who will be responsible for conducting the merits assessment and deciding if a case will be accepted for placement.

- Provide for attorney review if non-attorney staff conducts merits assessments.

- Establish protocols for notifying applicants when a case has not been accepted for placement:
  - Based on a pre-intake screening for income and substantive eligibility.
  - Subsequent to full intake and merits assessment.

- Establish protocols for recording and maintaining data regarding rejected cases.

- Provide staff with materials for referring rejected cases to other service providers.

- Train all individuals conducting intake on:
  - Explanations regarding scope of program services, placement process and role of volunteer attorneys.
  - Income eligibility standards and assessment.
  - Substantive law issue spotting.
  - Interview techniques.
  - Cultural sensitivity.
  - Techniques for communicating with low-income clients and clients with disabilities.

- Reevaluate eligibility guidelines regularly to adjust for changes in client need, volunteer attorney interest or availability of training opportunities to increase the number of qualified volunteers in a particular substantive area.

Helpful tips:
- A discussion of protocols for conflicts checks is provided at [Best Practice # 36](#).
- A discussion of issues related to communication challenges and sensitivity to client needs in the intake process is provided in Best Practices #29–31.
ACCEPTANCE OF CASES

BEST PRACTICE # 34

INTAKE AND ELIGIBILITY SCREENING — FORMS

Develop an intake and income eligibility form that provides detailed information about the client, a statement of the facts and identification of the legal issues, and also allows for streamlined record keeping and compilation of data.

Goal: Facilitate fair and thoughtful intake and eligibility assessments by developing an efficient and thorough intake form.

What to do:

- Develop a client intake form that requests all necessary information tailored to the eligibility requirements of your program, including:
  - Contact information: Name, address, telephone numbers (home, work, cell), email address, alternative contact person if no phone.
  - Identifying information: Prior or additional names, date of birth, place of birth, length of time in Maryland, race/ethnicity, gender, social security number, marital status, names and ages of children.
  - Communication information: ability to read and write in English, languages spoken, literacy in other languages, need for interpreter.
Employment information: name of employer, dates of employment, position and duties.


Assets information: cash, savings, automobiles, house, pension, other.

Court proceedings: name of court, initiating party, opposing party, address of opposing party, relationship of opposing party to applicant, and opposing counsel.

Prior/current representation: name of former or current attorney.

Include a section on the form for a statement of the facts; on forms completed by clients, provide a narrative section that asks a question such as “Why do you think you need an attorney?”

Include a section on the form for identification of legal issues:
- For forms completed by intake personnel, provide a check-off list of relevant issues.
- For forms completed by clients, ask for a brief description of the assistance they are seeking from your program.

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Helpful tip:
- Sample Best Practice: Several client application forms used by Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service to obtain client intake and income eligibility information are available at Appendix U.
ACCEPTANCE OF CASES

BEST PRACTICE # 35

CLIENT/PROGRAM AGREEMENTS

Goal: Establish a clear understanding of the relationship between the client and the program and the responsibilities of a client participating in the program.

What to do:

- Determine whether an attorney-client relationship is established between your program and the client based on consideration of the following factors:
  - Extent of the confidential client information received during the intake process.
  - Extent of legal advice (as opposed to legal information) provided to the client during the intake process or after.
  - Mentoring relationship between the program and the pro bono attorney during client representation such as providing advice or strategizing.
  - Co-counsel relationship between a program staff attorney and the volunteer.

Provide clients with an explanation of the services of the program and the duties of a client participating in the program such as the Client Agreement described in Best Practice # 26.
- Tracking the case substantively during the pro bono representation.

- Provide the client with a letter for signature or a brochure (depending on the nature of the relationship between the program and the client), including the following information:
  - A description of the relationship between the client and the program.
  - An explanation of the process of referral to a volunteer attorney.
  - A statement about confidentiality and exchange of information with potential volunteer attorneys.
  - A description of the client’s responsibilities to the program, such as:
    - Providing accurate information in the intake process.
    - Providing accurate financial information and supporting documents.
    - Responding immediately to contact by the pro bono attorney and keeping all appointments.
  - A statement regarding attorney's fees and the pro bono nature of the representation.
  - A description of the court costs and fees for which the client is responsible.
  - A description of the client grievance procedure.

- Have the letter translated into the primary languages spoken by your program's immigrant clients.

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Helpful tip:

- Sample Best Practice: The Client/Program Agreement developed by Jewish Community Services and the initial client contact letters used by the Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence (which contains the terms of their client/program agreement) and Montgomery County Bar Foundation Pro Bono Program are available at Appendix V.
Goal: Ensure early in the intake process that there are no conflicts of interest that adversely impact the representation of a client or expose a client’s confidential information to opposing counsel.

What to do:

- Review the ethical principles underlying conflicts of interest rules in the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct to determine the degree of risk for conflicts of interest arising from your referral of clients to pro bono attorneys, including:
  - Rule 1.6: Prohibiting disclosure of information about a client unless the client consents after consultation.
  - Rule 1.7: Prohibiting representation of a client that is directly adverse to another client.
  - Rule 1.10(a): Imputing conflict of interest in a case of one attorney to all attorneys in a firm.
- Consider that, according to the ABA, a strict reading of the ethical rules constrains a program from referring both sides of a case to program volunteers unless consent is
obtained from both parties and staff believe neither party will be adversely affected.

- Include in your Client/Program Agreement or letter a statement signed by the client acknowledging that the program may have represented someone connected with the case in the past and waiving any conflict of interest from prior representation.
- Consider situations where both sides of a case should not be referred to pro bono attorneys within your program, such as:
  - When your program provides direct legal advice to clients.
  - When your program provides direct legal advice, strategizing, mentoring or other assistance to pro bono attorneys during the course of their representation.
- Examine the Rules carefully to determine if there is a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest when a staff attorney in your organization represents an opposing party in a case.
  - Limit the information collected at intake to names, addresses, issues and income eligibility.
  - Refer to a pro bono attorney who is solely responsible for the case.
  - Collect no confidential information during tracking or follow-up on the case.
- Consider entering only non-identifying information from forms generated at brief advice and counsel clinics, pro se clinics or other short-term clinics or workshops that serve large numbers of client into your data base and then shredding all forms containing identifying information.
- Consider the following situations where it is unlikely a conflict would arise from referring adverse parties to different program volunteers:
  - The representation of the client is solely in the hands of the volunteer.
  - The program does not provide advice, strategizing or mentoring on the case.
  - Client confidences are protected from disclosure to an adverse party’s pro bono attorney.
- Establish a conflicts of interest screening procedure using your case management system or an adversary cross-reference file.
- Consider the nature of your program and the availability of other free legal services in balancing the need to avoid conflicts and the need to provide services.

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Helpful tips:

- Maryland Ethics Opinions on conflicts of interest and pro bono are available at Appendix W.
- Volunteer Lawyers Network of Minnesota has developed a Conflict of Interest Policy and a set of Illustrative Hypotheticals for training pro bono program staff about conflicts of interest issues available at Appendix X.
ACCEPTANCE OF CASES

BEST PRACTICE # 37

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICIES

Establish a confidentiality policy that outlines the procedures that program staff must follow to prevent an unauthorized disclosure of confidential client information.

Goal: Train program staff on the need to protect client confidentiality at all stages of the intake, case placement and case tracking process.

What to do:

- Instruct all employees and intake volunteers that they are prohibited from disclosing client information to anyone who is not a staff member or a pro bono attorney considering or involved in the case unless authorized by the client.
  - Educate program staff regarding the parameters of Rule 1.6 of the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct regarding confidentiality of client information.
  - Stress that the need to protect client confidentiality extends to potential clients as well as clients.
- Assure that all intake screenings, by telephone and in-person interviews, are conducted in a manner that ensures protection both of client information and client identity.
- Instruct program staff that the confidential information includes name, address, and contact information such as phone number or email.
• Make program staff aware of the following situations that risk unauthorized disclosure of confidential client information:
  ➢ Discussion of cases in the office when visitors or other clients are present.
  ➢ Exposure of open case files or intake sheets when visitors or other clients are present.
  ➢ Disclosure to judges or opposing counsel seeking information about the services a client is receiving or the client's financial eligibility.
  ➢ Disclosure to funding sources seeking information about services provided or financial eligibility.

• Establish a confidentiality process for case placement that limits descriptions or synopses of case information sent to prospective pro bono attorneys by:
  ➢ Using client initials or no name at all.
  ➢ Providing city or county information but no address.
  ➢ Excluding any identifying information such as place of employment and membership in a particular group or organization, as well as information about amounts of income, child support or alimony received.
  ➢ Sending client intake sheets with detailed client information only to pro bono attorneys who express interest in the case.

Helpful tip:

• Sample Best Practice: The Center for Economic Progress Midwest Tax Clinic has developed a Confidentiality Policy for Pro Bono Attorneys available at [Appendix].
B. PLACEMENT OF CASES

**BEST PRACTICE # 38**

**PRO BONO ATTORNEY REGISTRATION FORMS**

Develop a volunteer attorney registration form that elicits detailed information to help with case placement and to ascertain the attorney’s interests and competency in specific practice areas.

**Goal:** Use the pro bono attorney registration form to collect comprehensive information about the volunteer in a format that is easy to access for use by program staff and for data collection.

**What to do:**

- Create a pro bono attorney registration form that requests the following information:
  - Attorney name, mailing address, firm, office phone, cell phone, email address, fax number.
  - Primary areas of practice.
  - Areas of law (list program priorities) in which willing to accept cases.
  - Areas of law in which willing to accept cases with training.
  - Jurisdictions in which willing to accept cases.
  - Languages spoken and degree of fluency.
  - Fluency in Braille and sign language.
➢ Willingness to participate in the following:
  o Brief Advice and Counsel Sessions.
  o Family Law Pro Se Clinic.
  o Client Workshops.
  o Volunteer Training.
  o Mentoring.
  o Community Education.
  o Client Intake Process.
➢ Date of admission to the Maryland Bar.
➢ Statement of good standing with no disciplinary actions or current grievance procedures.

- Include a statement that your program provides professional liability insurance.
- Post the pro bono attorney registration form on your website for online registration or in pdf format.
- Include the pro bono attorney registration form in your program recruitment brochure.
- Attach the pro bono attorney registration form to all email newsletters, e-blasts or e-bulletins.
- Disseminate the pro bono attorney registration form widely during recruitment campaigns, as well as at pro bono awards ceremonies, local bar association events, and all other recruitment opportunities.

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Helpful tip:
- Sample Best Practice: The pro bono attorney registration forms used by the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland, Homeless Persons Representation Project, House of Ruth Maryland and Community Legal Services of Prince George’s County, as well as the online registration form used by Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service are available at Appendix Z.
PLACEMENT OF CASES

BEST PRACTICE # 39

ATTORNEY QUALIFICATIONS

Exercise vigilance in checking attorney qualifications to ensure that clients are receiving quality legal service from competent attorneys.

Goal: Recruit attorneys who are competent and sensitive to client needs.

What to do:

- Require attorneys to affirm that they are licensed in Maryland and are in good standing as part of the pro bono attorney registration process.
- Check the names of all new volunteers against the Maryland Attorney Grievance Commission’s online list of sanctioned attorneys.
- Use your program tracking system to monitor potential problems.
- Follow up when there are two or more client complaints by seeking information about the attorney from local judges or from board members.
- Contact the attorney to discuss client complaints and suggest ways to avoid future problems.
- Provide additional training for the attorney in the appropriate substantive area.
- Provide client sensitivity training for the attorney.
• Develop a protocol for terminating volunteer attorneys that includes:
  ➢ Taking steps to safeguard current clients to the extent possible without interfering with the attorney-client relationship.
  ➢ End referrals to the attorney in the problem substantive areas.
  ➢ Cease all referrals to the attorney.
  ➢ Consider notifying the volunteer attorney that they will no longer be referred cases.
  ➢ If notification of termination is given, provide a mechanism for the attorney to be heard.
• Clearly note in the case management system that the attorney should not be called for cases in a given substantive area or should not be called at all for future cases.

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Helpful tip:
• Information regarding attorneys sanctioned by the Maryland Attorney Grievance Commission from 2006 to the present is available at www.courts.state.md.us/attygrievance/sanctions.html.
PLACEMENT OF CASES

BEST PRACTICE # 40

REFERRALS TO PRO BONO ATTORNEYS

Develop a placement protocol that facilitates the best match of volunteer attorneys with clients and provides volunteer attorneys with full and complete information about the case.

Goal: Match volunteer attorneys with clients and cases that best utilize the attorney’s expertise and complements the attorney’s interests to enhance volunteer satisfaction with your program.

What to do:

- Educate your program volunteers about local client need, the lack of available legal services and the nature of the cases your program refers, as well as the support and resources available through your program.
- Have a strong client acceptance policy that assesses the legal merits of a case and impact on the client’s life.
- Make every effort to match the case with the volunteer attorney’s interests and expertise.
- Do not place cases with immediate deadlines unless an attorney has volunteered to take urgent cases.
- Refer cases to new volunteers as quickly as possible after they have registered.
- Provide volunteer attorneys with the following information:
➢ A full description of the facts, the legal issues, and the procedural status of the case.
➢ Full disclosure of any problems or challenges in the case of which the program is aware.
➢ Enough information regarding the client’s identity for the attorney to run a conflicts check.

● Develop a variety of placement models in addition to having program staff make telephone calls to volunteers, such as:
  ➢ Volunteer “peer to peer” telephone calls by board members or other volunteer attorneys to place cases.
  ➢ Email blasts, list serves or e-bulletins that provide a list of available cases with synopses that do not violate client confidentiality.
  ➢ Providing free trainings in exchange for accepting one or two pro bono cases.
  ➢ Pre-arranging with volunteer attorneys to automatically receive a new case when one is closed or except one case every six months.

● Understand the case to be placed and how it matches with the attorney’s needs and their history with your program.

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Helpful tip:
▪ The Pro Bono Resource Center’s bi-weekly PBRC E-Bulletin is available to disseminate pro bono case synopses statewide. Encourage your program volunteers to join the PBRC E-Bulletin list. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
PLACEMENT OF CASES

BEST PRACTICE # 41

TRANSFERRING CLIENT FILES TO VOLUNTEER ATTORNEYS

Develop a protocol for transferring client files to volunteer attorneys that is efficient and facilitates quick action by the attorney.

Goal: Enhance the ability of the volunteer attorney to review the file, accept the case and make contact with the client in a timely fashion.

What to do:

- Establish a process for transferring the client’s file to the pro bono attorney as soon as possible after case placement by:
  - Faxing all intake forms in the file to the volunteer attorney followed by originals with documents, pleadings, etc.
  - Sending the entire file by overnight mail to the volunteer attorney.
- Include in the material sent to the attorney:
  - Relevant documents, including correspondence, pleadings, court notices, contracts, pay stubs, tax returns, etc.
  - Program’s Sample Retainer Agreement or engagement letter. [Best Practice #43]
  - Relevant forms, sample pleadings, court cost and filing fee waiver forms, regulations and substantive law synopses.
Include in the packet sent to the attorney the following:
- Volunteer Attorney Agreement. (Best Practice #42)
- Case Closing Form. (Best Practice #46)
- Client Satisfaction Survey. (Best Practice #48)
- Attorney Feedback Survey. (Best Practice #47)

Determine whether your placement and referral protocol should require the volunteer attorney or the client to make the first contact after the case is referred, considering that:
- Requiring action by the client establishes the client’s commitment to the case.
- Having the pro bono attorney make the first contact provides time to review the case and contact the program with questions or concerns before speaking with the client.

Determine whether your placement and referral protocol should include a deadline for volunteer attorneys to accept or decline a matter prior to a first meeting with the client.

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Helpful tips:
- Sample Best Practice: The transfer letters to Judicare attorneys used by the Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence and to pro bono attorneys used by the Maryland Disability Law Center are available at Appendix AA.
- Client-centered considerations related to placing cases and transferring files are addressed in Best Practice #27.
- Additional information on retainer agreements and attorney’s fees policies is provided in Best Practice #43 and #44.
PLACEMENT OF CASES

BEST PRACTICE # 42

VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY AGREEMENTS

Include a Volunteer Attorney Agreement in the materials sent to each pro bono attorney when transferring a client file describing your program and outlining the division of responsibilities between the attorney and the program.

Goal: Provide pro bono attorneys with the information necessary for them to understand clearly their relationship with your program and make full use of your program’s support and resources.

What to do:

- Include in the Voluntary Attorney Agreement a detailed description of the policies and procedures of your program, including:
  - Client eligibility standards.
  - Case placement procedures.
  - Case closing procedures.
  - Attorney’s fee policy.
  - Court costs and filing fees policy.
  - Client feedback and grievance procedures.
• Include in the Agreement information regarding available support and resources such as:
  ➢ Training programs.
  ➢ Sample forms and pleadings.
  ➢ Substantive materials resources.
  ➢ Litigation funds.
  ➢ Malpractice insurance.
• Delineate in the Agreement the degree of responsibility the program assumes for the case, such as providing a co-counsel or mentor.
• Stress the requirement of a written retainer agreement.
• Describe the attorney's obligation to keep the program informed of the progress of the case and to complete the case closing forms.
• Describe the attorney's obligation to:
  ➢ Keep the client informed of the status of the case.
  ➢ Return phone calls in a reasonable time.
  ➢ Check for legal issues beyond the scope of representation and refer client back to program.
  ➢ Respond to all deadlines and provide diligent representation.
• Describe attorney feedback surveys and forms.
• Determine whether the Voluntary Attorney Agreement will be:
  ➢ Signed by the program and the attorney.
  ➢ A letter stating that acceptance of the case constitutes acceptance of the terms.
  ➢ A brochure that states acceptance of a case constitutes acceptance of all the terms in the brochure.

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Helpful tip:
• The provisions of a Volunteer Attorney Agreement may also be incorporated into a Pro Bono Attorney Manual or Handbook.
Goal: Assist pro bono attorneys in establishing the attorney-client relationship and facilitate communication between attorney and client about their duties and responsibilities to each other.

What to do:

- Provide a sample/form retainer agreement in the materials sent to the attorney with the client file.
- Require all attorneys to send the program a copy of a signed retainer agreement.
- Include in your program's retainer agreement the following provisions:
  - Scope of assistance, e.g., specific subject matter or trial level representation only.
  - Confidentiality obligations of attorney.
  - Client's right to determine objectives and participate in key decisions regarding the case.
  - Policy regarding attorney's fees and statutory fees.

Provide your volunteer attorneys with a sample retainer agreement or engagement letter that establishes the parameters of the attorney-client relationship and outlines responsibilities, including payment of court costs, filing fees and other expenses of representation.
> Policy regarding responsibility of client to pay court costs, filing fees and other costs of representation.
> Client’s obligation to notify attorney immediately of any change in circumstance or contact information.
> Client’s obligation to return attorney calls and emails and keep all appointments.
> Client’s obligation to assist with the preparation of the case such as:
  - Locating witnesses.
  - Locating documents or physical evidence.
  - Cooperating with discovery requests.
  - Keeping records and maintaining calendars or logs.
  - Signing any necessary releases or waivers.
> Client’s right to terminate representation.
> Attorney’s right to terminate representation, including, but not limited to:
  - False statements about client’s income.
  - Client’s failure to cooperate.
  - Client’s violation of a court order.
  - Client’s behavior raises ethical issues.
  - Lack of legal merit to the case.
> Impact on representation if client loses eligibility for pro bono services.

- Prepare translations of program’s retainer agreement in the languages most often spoken by your program’s immigrant clients.

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Helpful tip:
- Sample retainer agreements and engagement letters for pro bono representation and Judicare cases are available at Appendix A.
PLACEMENT OF CASES

BEST PRACTICE # 44

ATTORNEY’S FEES POLICY

Develop a concise statement of your program’s policy on attorney’s fees, Judicare fees and awards of statutory fees to be included in your Client Agreement, Volunteer Attorney Agreement and Sample Retainer Agreement.

Goal: Make it clear to volunteer attorneys and clients that pro bono service is without fee or expectation of fee, or at a substantially reduced fee in Judicare cases, and that attorneys are encouraged to seek statutory fees when permitted by law.

What to do:

- Include in your attorney’s fees policy the language from Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct that pro bono publico is rendering legal services “for no fee or expectation of fee, or at a substantially reduced fee,” and state clearly that a client has no obligation to pay a fee for legal representation by a pro bono attorney to whom they are referred by your program.

- Include a separate provision in your policy if your program participates in Judicare setting forth the terms of payment under the Judicare program and any requirement by your program that an attorney accept a pro bono case for each Judicare case referred.
• Note in your policy that Maryland has many fee shifting statutes and that pro bono attorneys are encouraged to seek statutory fees in appropriate cases.

• Note in your policy that pro bono attorneys should not seek statutory attorney’s fees when the source of those fees is the client’s award, such as in Social Security Disability cases.

• State in your policy that all or a percentage of any award of statutory attorney’s fees shall be contributed to your program.

• Include your attorney’s fees policy in your Client Agreement, Volunteer Attorney Agreement and Sample Retainer Agreement.

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Helpful tips:

• The Court of Appeals Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service has stated that an award of statutory fees in a case accepted “for no fee or expectation of fee” does not change the pro bono nature of the service rendered. Discussion available at www.courts.state.md.us/probono/faq.html.

• In Henriquez v. Henriquez, 413 Md. 287 (2010), the Court of Appeals upheld an award of counsel fees payable directly to the House of Ruth Maryland in a child custody, support and visitation proceeding, holding that attorney’s fees may be awarded to a non-profit legal services organization even though the client had not “incurred” the fees. The Court cited with approval cases from other states authorizing similar awards to individual pro bono attorneys.
C. TRACKING AND CLOSING CASES

BEST PRACTICE # 45

CASE TRACKING AND FOLLOW-UP

Establish a case tracking system to obtain information about the status of cases, maintain contact with pro bono attorneys, identify problems and offer assistance, and ensure that program staff maintains accurate records for all cases.

Goal: Assure that pro bono attorneys have access to resources available through your program while representing clients and maintain up-to-date records about the status of your cases for funding and reporting purposes.

What to do:

- Contact attorney by telephone and/or email between 30 and 45 days after transferring client case file to confirm representation and request copy of retainer agreement.
- Contact attorney three to six months after case placement (depending upon the type of case) and in six month intervals thereafter to obtain information regarding:
  - Action taken to date on case.
  - Action needed to complete matter.
  - Problems with client or subject matter of case.
  - Anticipated closing date.
• Develop case tracking/update forms sent by email with telephone follow-up where attorney fails to respond in order to reduce staff time.

• Follow-up all reports of difficulties with client or substantive matters with telephone calls and offers of assistance, including:
  ➢ Mentors.
  ➢ Substantive materials.
  ➢ Form pleadings.
  ➢ Intervention with client regarding lack of communication or cooperation.

• Record information obtained from case tracking forms in your program’s case management system.

• Use case tracking information in the case placement process to determine when to contact volunteer attorneys about accepting a new or an additional case.

• Use case tracking information for reports to funders, grant proposals and other requests for data.

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Helpful tip:

• Sample Best Practice: The Community Law Center has made its case tracking forms available on its website to allow pro bono attorneys to respond online. The Community Law Center Attorney Volunteer Report Form is available at [Appendix AC](#).
TRACKING AND CLOSING CASES

BEST PRACTICE # 46

CLOSING CASES

Adopt a case closing protocol that ensures all necessary information is collected from the attorney and that client and volunteer attorney feedback surveys are provided.

Goal: Make use of the case closing process not only to obtain relevant data but also to obtain feedback regarding client and attorney satisfaction.

What to do:

- Follow case tracking protocol to contact attorney at regular intervals and determine whether case has been closed. (Best Practice #44)
- Offer to resend case closing form or provide case closing form on your website for online completion of cases.
- Use case closing form to obtain the following information:
  - Date case closed.
  - Work performed and outcome.
  - Benefit achieved for client.
  - Court case file number.
  - Copies of court decisions or judgments.
  - Number of hours spent on case.
  - Comments regarding case.
• Ensure that all data collected from the case closing form is entered into your case management system.
• Send Volunteer Attorney Feedback Survey to attorney or make available online on your website. (Best Practice #46).
• Urge attorney to provide client with Client Satisfaction Survey if the case is in the process of closing. (Best Practice #47).
• Send Client Satisfaction Survey to client if case has been closed.

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Helpful tips:

- Sample Best Practice: Case closing forms developed by Community Legal Services of Prince George’s County, Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS), the Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence and Mid-Shore Pro Bono are available at Appendix AD.
- Consider making case closing forms available on your website to allow attorneys to respond online or by downloading the forms and returning them by email. The online forms used by MVLS and Mid-Shore Pro Bono are included in Appendix AD.
Develop a Volunteer Attorney Feedback Survey that seeks information about the pro bono experience of your volunteer attorneys and provides an opportunity for volunteers to offer comments and suggestions.

Goal: Determine the degree of satisfaction pro bono attorneys experience working with your program and identify areas where program policies and procedures or staff performance could be improved.

What to do:

- Craft a Volunteer Attorney Feedback Survey that provides quantifiable information as well as space for comments and suggestions.
- Include in the Volunteer Attorney Feedback Survey questions regarding the following:
  - Why volunteer chose to perform pro bono.
  - Why volunteer chose to accept case or provide service through your program.
- Overall rating of pro bono experience.
- Effectiveness of program trainings.
- Ease and efficiency of program referral process.
- Helpfulness of program staff.
- Usefulness of substantive materials provided by program.
- Effectiveness of mentoring or supervision received.
- Impact of pro bono experience on:
  - Developing new lawyering skills.
  - Increasing understanding of poverty and low-income clients.
  - Networking and meeting judges and other attorneys.
- Likelihood of recommending that a colleague volunteer with your program.
- What attorney valued most about pro bono experience.

- Include the Volunteer Attorney Feedback Survey in materials sent to pro bono attorney when transferring client file.
- Email the Volunteer Attorney Feedback Survey when sending case closing form.
- Provide an online version of the Volunteer Attorney Feedback Survey on your website.

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Helpful tip:
- Sample Best Practice: The Community Legal Services and Volunteer Lawyers Program of Arizona has developed a Volunteer Attorney Feedback Survey available at Appendix AE.
BEST PRACTICE # 48

CLIENT SATISFACTION

Goal: Gauge client satisfaction with your program and the representation they received from their pro bono attorney in order to address problems and improve services.

What to do:

- Craft a Client Satisfaction Survey that seeks information regarding your program, such as:
  - How the client learned of the program.
  - How the client first contacted the program (e.g., telephone, email, brief services clinic).
  - Type of services client received.
  - Client’s satisfaction regarding the following:
    - Treatment by program staff.
    - Promptness of response to inquiries.
    - Explanation of program services.
    - Assistance handling any problems with pro bono attorney.
  - Client’s suggestions for improving the program.
Whether client would recommend the program to a friend or relative.

- Obtain information regarding the client’s pro bono attorney such as:
  - Amount of time between receipt of referral letter and contact by attorney.
  - Accessibility of attorney and willingness to answer questions.
  - Attorney’s ability to explain legal options.
  - Respect and concern attorney showed for client.
  - Amount of time attorney spent on case.
  - Outcome or result of case.
  - Overall quality of pro bono attorney’s representation.

- Include Client Satisfaction Survey in materials sent to pro bono client when client’s file is transferred.
- Include Client Satisfaction Survey when send pro bono attorney closed case form.
- Mail Client Satisfaction Survey to client at close of case and include a stamped self-addressed envelope.
- Consider sending Client Satisfaction Surveys to all clients with cases closed in a given period (e.g., calendar year).
- Consider conducting a telephone survey of clients with cases previously closed during a given period to obtain the information requested on the client survey.

Ω

Helpful tip:

- Sample Best Practice: The Catholic Charities Immigration Legal Services has a one-page client satisfaction survey available in English and Spanish; the Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence and Community Law Center provide more extensive surveys. All are available at Appendix AF.
BEST PRACTICE # 49

CLIENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Establish a protocol for addressing client grievances that arise from denial of services, complaints about treatment by program staff or complaints about legal services provided by program volunteers.

Goal: Assure that a client or rejected client with a complaint is heard and the complaint is given a full and fair review.

What to do:

- Develop a protocol for handling client grievances that provides for levels of review and addresses:
  - Client complaints about treatment by program staff.
  - Client complaints about being denied assistance.
  - Client complaints about the performance of program volunteers.
- Address minor complaints regarding program staff with a telephone call to the client.
- Address minor complaints about a pro bono attorney with a telephone call to the attorney. [Caveat: The program has no authority to order a pro bono attorney to take or refrain from any actions and may not interfere with the attorney-client relationship.]
• Notify the pro bono manager or the program director about grievances regarding denial of service, serious staff infractions or complaints about a pro bono attorney as soon as possible and schedule a meeting with the pro bono manager or director. [Caveat: Client should sign an authorization form to allow access to confidential information if necessary.]

• If an informal resolution is not possible, refer the issue to the board of directors.
  ➢ Require that complaint be put into writing.
  ➢ Develop a protocol for a hearing before a member of the board of directors.
  ➢ Require the client to sign a statement authorizing disclosure to the board and waiving attorney-client privilege.

• Note that the board of directors cannot order the attorney to take or refrain from any action or interfere with the attorney client relationship.

• Offer the attorney training prior to assigning a new case.

• Refer the client to outside assistance if it appears the grievance arises to the level of attorney malpractice.

• Notify clients in the Client Agreement and during the intake process that there is a grievance procedure when the client is denied service and seeks to challenge the denial.

• Maintain records of all grievances.

Helpful tip:

- **Sample Best Practice**: The Volunteer Lawyers Network of Minnesota has developed a Client Grievance Policy, which is available at Appendix AG.
CHAPTER 4

D. SHORT-TERM PRO BONO POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE # 50

PROTOCOLS FOR LIMITED SCOPE SERVICES

Establish protocols for the short-term, limited scope pro bono services provided by your program such as advice and counsel clinics, client workshops, pro se clinics and hotlines.

Goal: Outline the nature of the services and the procedures for each type of short-term, limited scope pro bono service provided by your program.

What to do:

- Draft a protocol for each of the limited scope services provided by your program that addresses:
  - The scope and nature of the services provided, for example:
    - For advice and counsel sessions: the subject matter limitation (if any), the length of time for each session, and the nature of the services provided such as identifying legal problems, providing information about the law and the relevant legal processes and providing a next steps or to-do list.
    - For client workshops and pro se clinics: the subject matter limitation (if any), the provision of written information for clients on the substantive law such
as legal fact sheets, the types of services provided such as letter writing, drafting pleadings, filling out forms and making phone calls, and the need to provide written summaries or to-do lists for the client.

- The types of venues and organizations with which to partner, such as:
  - Libraries.
  - Community centers.
  - Churches.
  - Other legal services organizations.

- Procedural issues such as program staffing, set-up to ensure confidentiality, timekeepers, etc.

- Process to prioritize waiting clients.

- Process for determining income eligibility.

- Availability of program forms, substantive manuals, legal fact sheets and other materials for volunteer attorneys to provide to clients.

- Access to telephones, computers and the Internet for volunteers.

- Security of confidential information.

- Availability of interpreters.

- Develop a client intake form that obtains the specific information necessary to facilitate your volunteer attorneys’ efficient use of time with clients.

- Develop a Client Acknowledgement Form to serve as a limited-scope engagement agreement for the client to sign. [Best Practice #51]

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Helpful tip:

- Sample Best Practice: The Short-term Pro Bono Client Intake Forms developed by Civil Justice and the Pro Bono Resource Center for the Foreclosure Solutions Workshop and by Community Legal Services of Prince George’s County for its Family Law Project in Langley Park (in English and Spanish) are available at Appendix AH.
SHORT-TERM PRO BONO POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE # 51

CLIENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORMS

Provide clients participating in advice and counsel sessions, workshops and other limited scope programs with a description of the program and an explanation of the limitations on the services provided by volunteer attorneys.

Goal: Obtain a signed statement from each participating client stating that they understand the nature and limits of the services provided and will be responsible for proceeding on their own.

What to do:

• Customize Client Acknowledgment Forms to address each limited scope service offered by your program.
• Have each Client Acknowledgment Form state that the client understands and agrees that:
  ➢ They will receive brief legal help on the topic listed below (provide check off boxes for volunteer attorney to complete).
  ➢ No fee will be charged.
  ➢ All information they provide will remain confidential.
  ➢ All information they provide must be truthful and accurate.
 Volunteer attorney will not become client's attorney.
 Volunteer attorney will not provide ongoing help or appear in court.
 All follow-up actions discussed with volunteer attorney are client's responsibility, including filing court documents and attending hearings.
 Client waives conflict of interest if opposing party is later represented by attorney's law firm.

- Include a statement that client may seek additional services from your program through the normal intake process.
- Include a signature and date line for client and attorney.
- Provide client with a Client Satisfaction Survey at the conclusion of the counseling session.

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Helpful tip:
- Sample Best Practice: The Short-term Pro Bono Client Satisfaction Form developed by Civil Justice and the Pro Bono Resource Center for the Foreclosure Solutions Workshop is available at Appendix A.
SHORT-TERM PRO BONO POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE # 52

ATTORNEY RESPONSIBILITY AGREEMENTS

Provide volunteer attorneys participating in advice and counsel sessions, workshops and other limited scope programs with a description of the services they are expected to provide and the responsibilities they agree to fulfill.

Goal: Assure that pro bono attorneys participating in limited scope service understand the parameters of the services they are to provide and the protocols for doing so.

What to do:

- Adapt Attorney Responsibility Forms to address each limited scope service volunteer attorneys perform for your program.
- Include a statement that the pro bono attorney agrees to:
  - Provide legal advice.
  - Provide brief services such as write a letter, make a phone call, obtain information, fill out forms or draft pleadings.
  - Provide written information to the client about the relevant law and legal processes (e.g., legal fact sheets provide by the program).
➤ Put in writing attorney's legal and factual analysis of the case.
➤ Provide an honest assessment of the merits of the case.
➤ Discuss the legal options available and consequences of each.
➤ Discuss the legal consequences of any actions the client might take.
➤ Provide a to-do list in writing setting forth next steps the client should take.
➤ Ensure the client is capable of understanding the attorney's instructions and is able to proceed further on their own.
➤ Refer the client to your program or another legal services provider if the matter is too complex for the client to handle adequately.
➤ Alert the client to legal problems outside the scope of the services provided that may require legal assistance.
➤ Complete all program forms and collect signed Client Acknowledgment Form to return to program staff.

• Determine whether to require the attorney to sign the Attorney Responsibility Agreement.
• Develop a Client “Follow-up Checklist” for the volunteer attorney to provide to clients at the conclusion of the counseling session.
• Offer the attorney the opportunity to assist the client further in the matter.

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Helpful tips:

➤ Sample Best Practice: The Short-term Pro Bono Client Checklist developed by Civil Justice and the Pro Bono Resource Center for the Foreclosure Solutions Workshop is available at Appendix A.
➤ A statewide list of legal services programs to use for making referrals is available at www.peoples-law.org.
CHAPTER 5

Operational and Personnel Policies

INTRODUCTION

As noted previously, there are a wide variety of pro bono programs in Maryland. Some are independent pro bono referral organizations, while others operate as bar foundation pro bono programs or pro bono divisions of legal services organizations. Depending upon the nature of the program, there is a range of operational issues that may be of concern to a particular program. For example, record keeping for a small, informal program in a rural area may involve a simple Excel database, whereas a medium to large program requires a case management system to track clients and volunteers, collect data and generate a variety of reports. Likewise, personnel policies for a staff of two or three will be less detailed and comprehensive than personnel policies for a large program. On the other hand, sound financial policies are essential to the effective operation of all pro bono programs. The following best practices address issues such as record keeping and retention, data compilation, case management systems, personnel policies, fiscal management, program evaluation and employee grievances for a wide range of pro bono programs.
A. RECORD KEEPING POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE # 53

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Develop a protocol to collect the information your program should obtain from every pro bono attorney who registers and/or volunteers to accept a case or provide other pro bono service.

Goal: Obtain the comprehensive information necessary to generate reports on a wide variety of issues regarding your volunteers and the services they provide in a format that allows for ready access to the data.

What to do:

- Determine the types of information about your pro bono attorneys most useful to your program for case placement, referral and tracking.
- Use the Pro Bono Attorney Registration Form described in Best Practice #38 to obtain the following identifying information about each new volunteer:
  - Attorney name, mailing address, firm, office phone, cell phone, email address, fax number.
  - Primary areas of practice.
  - Areas of law in which willing to accept cases.
  - Areas of law in which willing to accept cases with training.
  - Jurisdictions in which willing to accept cases.
  - Languages spoken and degree of fluency.
  - Fluency in Braille and sign language.
  - Willingness to participate in the following:
Brief Advice and Counsel Sessions.
Family Law Pro Se Clinic.
Client Workshops.
Volunteer Training.
Mentoring.
Community Education.
Client Intake Process.

- Determine the type of information necessary for your program to track and assess the services provided by each volunteer attorney, to present pro bono awards, and to evaluate the performance of your program overall, including:
  - Date of admission to Maryland Bar.
  - Annual verification of good standing.
  - Date attorney joined program.
  - Total pro bono hours.
  - Annual pro bono hours.
  - Number of cases or matters handled.
  - Type of services provided.
  - Number of times contacted but unavailable.
  - Training and/or support services received.
  - Client complaints.

- Use the data collected to conduct statistical analyses and generate reports to your board of directors, funders and government agencies.

- Ensure continuity of access to information during staff changes by maintaining complete records.

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Helpful tip:
- Sample Pro Bono Attorney Volunteer Registration Forms are available at Appendix Z.
Best Practice # 54

Client Information

Goal: Establish procedures for obtaining comprehensive data regarding clients and individuals seeking your program’s services to aid in case screening, referral and tracking, in addition to providing demographic and other information about your client population and the services provided to them.

What to do:

- Assess the nature of the client information most useful to your program for case screening (including conflicts checks and income eligibility determinations), case referral and case tracking.
- Use the Client Intake Screening Form described in Best Practice #34 to obtain information tailored to the eligibility requirements of your program.
- Establish a protocol for entering client intake information into a computer database or case management system.

Collect detailed information about your clients (as well as the applicants your program is unable to serve) to facilitate the compilation and analysis of data needed for reports to your governing body and to your present and future funders.
Determine the extent of information to be maintained for rejected applicants, considering:

- Need for conflicts checks.
- Need to address rejected applicant complaints.

Use the case tracking protocol in Best Practice #45 and the case closing protocol in Best Practice #46 to obtain additional information regarding each case including:

- Date matter opened.
- Date referred.
- Name of pro bono attorney.
- Date accepted.
- Number of contacts with attorney per tracking protocol.
- Services provided to client.
- Outcome of client representation.
- Client complaints.
- Date matter closed.
- Number of hours spent on case.
- Client Satisfaction Survey response.

- Consider entering only non-identifying information for large numbers of clients receiving only short-term pro bono services such as brief advice and counsel sessions or clinics to avoid unnecessary conflict of interest concerns.

- Use information to assess performance of program and generate data for statistical analysis and reports.

Helpful tips:

- Sample Client Intake and Eligibility Screening Forms are available at Appendix U.
- Sample Case Tracking and Case Closing Forms are available at Appendix AC and AD.
RECORD KEEPING POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE # 55

CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Adopt a case management system that allows you to record, retain and retrieve information about volunteers, clients and the services provided to clients with the utmost efficiency and efficacy.

Goal: Maximize your ability to manage data internally and to provide statistics and reports to your board or governing body, current and future funders and government agencies seeking information about your program.

What to do:

- Assess the need of your program for a case management system, considering the following:
  - Number of volunteers.
  - Number of clients served annually.
  - Range of services provided by your volunteers.
  - Need for statistical reports for board of directors or governing body.
  - Need for data and statistical reports to provide to funding sources and government agencies.
- Consider adopting a case management system to analyze and prepare aggregated data regarding:
  - Number of clients served.
  - Substantive areas of law.
  - Type of services provided.
● Outcome of client representation.
● Demographics of client population.
● Number of volunteers.
● Number of volunteer hours donated.

• Use case management system to prepare reports for board or governing body to assess:
  ➢ Performance of program and achievement of goals.
  ➢ Compliance with regulations and obligations to funders.
  ➢ Development of strategic plans and long-range fundraising and development strategies.

• Use case management system for supervision and management of staff.

• Use case management system to prepare presentation reports for current and potential funders and/or government agencies.

• Establish computer back-up procedures and processes for archiving digital documents.

Helpful tips:


▪ Materials from the 2010 Equal Justice Conference on using case management software for supervision and program management are available at www.abanet.org/legalservices/ejc/workshop_preview_2010.html.

▪ Free trial downloads for a variety of report-design software programs, are available at www.downloads32.com/report-creation-software.html.
B. LONG-TERM RECORD RETENTION POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE # 56

CLIENT, CASE AND PRO BONO ATTORNEY INFORMATION

Establish a system and timeline for retaining digital and paper documents related to clients, cases and volunteer attorneys.

Goal: Preserve important records and documents that may be relevant to funding reports, investigations and future litigation.

What to do:

- Identify the types of client-related documents and forms generated by your program that should be preserved, such as:
  - Client Intake and Eligibility Forms. (Best Practice #34)
  - Client/Program Agreements. (Best Practices #26 and #35)
  - Retainer Agreements. (Best Practice #43)
  - Case Closing Forms. (Best Practice #46)
  - Short-term pro bono data sheets such as Client Acknowledgement Forms. (Best Practice #51)
- Identify other case related documents in client files to be preserved, such as:
  - Court orders and pleadings.
Wills, powers of attorney and other testamentary documents.
Deeds and leases.
Criminal expungement records.

- Consider best practice of retaining all client/case related documents for minimum of 5 years from case closing date.
- Consider best practice of retaining records from brief services such as advice and counsel sessions and workshops for three months.
- Determine the types of pro bono attorney records and documents generated by your program, such as:
  - Volunteer Attorney Agreements. (Best Practice #42)
  - File Referral Forms and Letters. (Best Practice #41)
  - Forms generated by your case management system with attorney contact info, names of clients, cases, services provided, etc.
- Develop a record retention policy to address the specific needs of your program.

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Helpful tips:
- Sample Best Practice: Volunteer Lawyers Network of Minnesota has developed a Record Retention Policy and Chart available at Appendix AK.
- Maryland Ethics Opinion 2005-01 permits attorneys to destroy closed files five years after termination of representation.
- Note that files retained digitally may require previous versions of software for access.
LONG-TERM RECORD RETENTION POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE # 57

FINANCIAL, GOVERNANCE AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

Institute a system and timeline for retaining documents related to your program’s fiscal management, administration, human resources and governance.

Goal: Retain important documents that are necessary to maintain the financial and organizational integrity of your program and to prepare for audits.

What to do:

- Determine the categories of documents that are essential to the management and governance of your program, such as:
  - Finances and bookkeeping.
  - Taxes.
  - Insurance.
  - Leases and mortgages.
  - Human resources.
  - Governance documents.
  - General correspondence.
- Identify the documents in each category and the retention time for each category or document, for example:
Financial documents retained for seven years, including:
  o Payroll records.
  o Bank statements and deposit slips.
  o Check registers and cancelled checks.
  o Payroll records.
  o Ledgers and balance sheets.
  o Audited financial statements.
  o Contracts with vendors and suppliers.

Tax documents retained for seven years, including:
  o IRS Form 990s and all attachments.
  o Federal and Maryland tax exempt determination letters—retain permanently.

Leases and mortgages—seven years after termination.

Insurance policies retain permanently; others retain for seven years, such as:
  o Group disability records.
  o MOSHA safety reports.
  o Accident reports and claims.

Human resource documents retention times vary, such as:
  o Employee personnel files—retain permanently.
  o Employment applications—three years.
  o Withholding tax statements—seven years.
  o Timecards—three years.

Governance documents to retain permanently:
  o Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.
  o Board/Governing Committee’s Minutes and Agendas.

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Helpful tip:
  Volunteer Lawyers Network of Minnesota Record Retention Policy and Chart are available at Appendix A.
C. FISCAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE # 58

FINANCIAL SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES

Adopt sound financial policies and procedures that comply with standard accounting principles for nonprofit organizations and obtain maximum benefit from limited resources.

Goal: Ensure the financial integrity of your program by adopting a strong financial management and fiscal operations system that assures appropriate budgeting, bookkeeping and accounting of funds.

What to do:

- Develop written financial management and fiscal operation policies to address issues such as:
  - Preparation of annual operating budget.
  - Cash flow management.
  - Bookkeeping and accounting systems (preferably using software program designed for nonprofits) addressing, at a minimum:
    - Payroll.
    - Accounts receivable.
    - Accounts payable.
    - Check issuance.
• Bank deposits and transfers.
• Financial controls and separation of duties.
• Grant management.
• Preparation of monthly financial statements, including at a minimum:
  • Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet)
  • Statement of Activities (Income Statement)
  • Statement of Cash Flow
• Annual audits or reviews.
• Long-range financial planning.
• Conduct risk management assessment.
• Purchase appropriate insurance policies, such as:
  • General liability.
  • Director and officer liability.
  • Fire, theft and casualty.
  • Worker's compensation and occupational safety.

Helpful tips:

▪ There are many guides to financial management for nonprofit organizations available online, including the Basic Guide to Nonprofit Financial Management, which provides numerous links to websites addressing issues such as bookkeeping and budget preparation, financial statements, activities in yearly accounting cycles and financial reporting, available at http://managementhelp.org/finance/np_fnce/np_fnce.htm.

▪ Maryland Nonprofits, an association of over 1600 nonprofit organizations in Maryland, has published Standards for Excellence: An Ethics and Accountability Code for the Nonprofit Sector, which includes 23 Educational Resource Packets addressing a wide range of issues for nonprofits. These include packets on financial planning and monitoring and the development of financial policies, and are available at www.marylandnonprofits.org/html/standards/documents/EdPacketOverviewDetailMaryland-Nov2009.pdf.


▪ Numerous software programs are available to assist nonprofits in fiscal management. Examples include QuickBooks Nonprofit 2010 and Sage Nonprofit Accounting Software. An assessment of various bookkeeping and accounting software programs for nonprofit organizations is available at www.theprogressiveaccountant.com/reviews/not-for-profit-accounting-software-2010.html.

▪ A review of 18 grants management software programs for nonprofits is available at www.solpath.org/results.html.
Helpful tips (continued):

- The National Center on Nonprofit Enterprise (NCNE) provides reviews of newly published material on nonprofit financial management available at www.nationalcne.org.
Comply with all federal and state tax laws governing nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations, including the governance and management reporting requirements of IRS Form 990.

Goal: Fulfill tax and reporting requirements to assure compliance with all applicable laws and to avoid audits.

What to do:

- Ensure that your program is in compliance with IRS requirements for tax-exempt nonprofit organizations, including:
  - Filing annually Form 990 (Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax), 990-EZ or 990-N (E-Postcard for small nonprofits).
  - Filing Form 990-T (Exempt Organization Business Income Tax Return) for unrelated business income when necessary.
  - Payment of all applicable payroll and employment taxes.
- Comply with all Maryland requirements for nonprofit organizations, including:
  - Filing annually MD Form COR-92, together with IRS Form 990 or 990-EZ with Maryland Secretary of State.
Filing annually MD Form 1 with the Personal Property Division of the Department of Assessment and Taxation.
Filing MD Form 500 if filed IRS Form 990-T for unrelated business income.
Payment of all state payroll and employment taxes.
- Review the governance and management reporting requirements of IRS Form 990 regarding adoption of the following written policies:
  - Executive Compensation Policy.
  - Conflicts of Interest Policy. (Best Practice #36)
  - Investments Policy.
  - Fundraising Policy.
  - Governing Body Minutes and Records Policy.
  - Document Retention and Destruction Policy. (Best Practices # 56 and 57)
  - Whistleblower Policy.
  - Auditor Independence Policy.
- Consider adopting any or all of the above policies appropriate to the size of your program.
- Consider posting Form 990 on your website as recommended by the IRS.

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Helpful tips:
- IRS Form 990, revised in 2008 to increase transparency and disclosure of nonprofits, requires extensive reporting on a program’s governance and management policies and is made available for public review.
FISCAL MANAGEMENT
POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE # 60

FINANCIAL DUTIES OF PRO BONO MANAGER/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hold the pro bono manager/executive director responsible for administering the financial policies adopted by the board of directors by applying sound principles of nonprofit fiscal management and accounting and maintaining well-kept financial records and reports.

Goal: Provide the treasurer and members of the board with a complete and accurate accounting of the program’s finances and budget projection to facilitate both short-term and long-term financial planning.

What to do:

- Have the pro bono manager/executive director oversee the ongoing financial management of the program.
- Include in duties of pro bono manager/executive director responsibility for:
  - Receiving, processing and dispensing funds.
Paying obligations in a timely fashion and maintaining receipts and supporting documents for all expenditures.

Maintaining or supervising maintenance of general ledger and supporting records.

Complying with internal controls and separation of duties protocol established by board/governing body to safeguard the program's assets.

Managing grants and keeping donor restricted funds separate from general operating funds.

Entering into contracts and exercising sound judgment when purchasing goods and services from vendors.

Investing funds in accordance with the board/governing body's investment policy.

Maintaining inventory records of program assets.

Include in duties of pro bono manager/executive director responsibility for preparing or overseeing preparation of:

Monthly financial statements, including at a minimum:
  - Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet).
  - Statement of Activities (Income Statement).
  - Statement of Cash Flow.

Annual operating and capital budgets.

Projections of future income and expenditures for long range financial planning.

Preparation of Annual Report, including:
  - Statement of program mission and activities.
  - Names of board of directors and management staff.
  - Summary Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) audited if audit conducted.
  - Summary Statement of Activities (Income Statement) audited if audit conducted.

Include in duties of pro bono manager/executive director responsibility for:

Monitoring compliance with tax obligations and reporting requirements. (Best Practice #59)

Working with accountant chosen by board of directors/governing body on annual audit or report.

Helpful tips:

- Information on the role of the executive director of a nonprofit organization, including financial duties, is available at www.managementhelp.org/np_progs/ceo/ceo.htm.
- Additional information on fiscal management of a nonprofit organization is provided in Best Practice #58, “Helpful Tips.”
D. PERSONNEL POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE #61

WRITTEN EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Develop written personnel policies that address key employment issues clearly and concisely, are communicated to all employees and are reviewed regularly for compliance with state and federal laws.

Goal: Adopt the number and type of personnel policies appropriate for the size and complexity of your program and ensure fair and consistent application of those policies for all employees.

What to do:

- Formulate written personnel policies that set forth the essential rules and procedures governing employees, including:
  - A job description for each position within the organization.
  - Weekly schedule and time commitments for full-time, part-time, and temporary employees.
  - Compensation policy for full-time, part-time and temporary employees.
  - Leave and vacation policies, including:
    - Annual vacation leave.
    - Annual holidays.
- Sick leave.
- Personal leave.
- Parental and family leave.
- Bereavement leave.
- Leave for jury duty.
- Severe weather policy.
- Payroll and time-keeping procedures.
- Reimbursement policy for travel and expenses.
- Description of employee benefits, including:
  - Health insurance.
  - Disability insurance.
  - Worker’s Compensation insurance.
  - Retirement plans.
- Performance evaluation policy, including:
  - Defined goals and measure of performance against program outcomes and professional standards.
  - Employee self-evaluation as a component of the process.
- Termination policy and clear statement of “at will” employment status.
- Employee grievance procedure.
- Obtain a signed statement from each employee acknowledging receipt of the personnel policies.

Helpful tips:
PERSONNEL POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE # 62

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOKS

Incorporate all employment policies into an Employee Handbook that includes not only the key personnel policies set forth in Best Practice #61, but also policies related to diversity, harassment, employee safety and other critical workplace concerns.

Goal: Provide employees with a clear and complete summary of all applicable personnel policies to enhance employee relations and to protect your program against unfounded employment claims.

What to do:

- Introduce the Employee Handbook with a discussion of the history and mission of your program, as well as a description of all current services and programs.
- Include in the Employee Handbook a statement regarding fair employment practices and your commitment to diversity and non-discrimination.
- Include in the Employee Handbook the employment policies discussed in Best Practice #61.
- Formulate a Non-Harassment Policy that prohibits harassment based upon:
  - Gender or sexual preference.
  - Race or ethnicity.
  - Religion.
• Include in the Non-Harassment policy a complaint procedure for claims and a non-retaliation provision for reporting harassment.

• Formulate a Whistleblower Policy that protects an employee from:
  ➢ Reporting actions reasonably believed to violate a law or regulation.
  ➢ Reporting actions reasonably believed to constitute fraudulent accounting, auditing or other financial practices.

• Consider including other policies to cover issues such as:
  ➢ Drug and alcohol abuse.
  ➢ Confidentiality of work products and files.
  ➢ Conflicts of interest.
  ➢ Personal use of computers, email and other office technology.

• Include a statement describing the “at will” nature of all employment relationships.

• Obtain a signed statement from each employee acknowledging receipt of the Employee Handbook.

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Helpful tips:
- The National Council of Non-Profit Associations Model Whistleblower Policy is available at Appendix A.
PERSONNEL POLICIES

BEST PRACTICE # 63

POLICIES RELATED TO TAX-EXEMPT STATUS

To protect your program’s tax-exempt status, consider adopting personnel policies that address the reporting requirements of IRS Form 990 even if your program has no Employee Handbook or written Personnel Policy.

Goal: Examine the benefits of written personnel policies that address the reporting requirements of IRS Form 990.

What to do:

• Review the management reporting requirements of IRS Form 990 regarding adoption of the following personnel policies:
  ➢ Executive Compensation Policy.
  ➢ Conflicts of Interest Policy. (Best Practice #36)
  ➢ Whistleblower Policy.
  ➢ Expense Reimbursement Policy.

• Consider adopting any or all of the above policies appropriate to the size of your program.
Helpful tip:

- See Best Practice #59 for a full discussion of IRS Form 990.
Collaborating with the Bar, the Bench and the Community

INTRODUCTION

The three “Cs,” collaboration, cooperation and coordination, are as essential to a successful pro bono program as the three “Rs” discussed in Chapter 1 (recruitment, retention and recognition). Developing positive working relationships with local judges, local bar associations, other legal services providers and community organizations enhances the status of a program and provides multiple opportunities to improve client services and the pro bono experience of volunteers. Chief Judge Robert M. Bell and the Court of Appeals of Maryland Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service have strongly encouraged members of the Maryland judiciary to participate in pro bono, and Maryland judges regularly collaborate with pro bono programs by participating in recruitment, training and recognition events for pro bono lawyers. The impact of their participation cannot be overstated, and pro bono programs should not hesitate to seek the support and involvement of local judges.

Likewise, local bar associations are key to the success of pro bono programs, providing a source of volunteers as well as support and resources for trainings and awards events. Involving bar leadership in pro bono projects and events enhances the credibility of a pro bono program and assures attorney participation. Other legal services providers are also invaluable partners for pro bono programs, for the success of the legal services...
delivery system in any city, county or region depends upon the cooperation and coordination of all the legal services providers. By forming true collaborative relationships with other providers, pro bono programs can maximize service to clients and avoid duplicative efforts. Finally, working closely with community organizations is vital to a successful pro bono program, as community organizations can provide support and resources as well as easy outreach to the very clients pro bono programs are designed to serve.
A. COLLABORATING WITH THE BAR AND THE BENCH

BEST PRACTICE # 64

PARTNERING WITH THE LOCAL BAR ASSOCIATION

Involve the local bar association in recruitment campaigns, training events, fundraising, pro bono awards ceremonies, and the development of substantive resources for your volunteers.

Goal: Engage local bar leadership in every aspect of your program to benefit from the bar’s infrastructure and assure that attorneys in your legal community understand the value of participating in pro bono and are encouraged to do so.

What to do:

• Invite prominent members of local bar associations to serve on your board of directors.
• Enlist bar leadership to serve as faculty at pro bono trainings.
• Engage the local bar association in pro bono recruitment campaigns to:
  ➢ Write letters to members and colleagues urging them to become a volunteer.
  ➢ Conduct a phone-a-thon to make phone calls to colleagues to encourage them to volunteer.
• Give presentations about the pro bono recruitment campaign at bar association meetings, section council meetings, and bar-sponsored social events.
• Co-sponsor an event for new admittees and/or young lawyers to promote your program and recruit new pro bono attorneys.
• Send a letter to retired and transitioning attorneys explaining the attorney emeritus rules and pro bono opportunities in the area, including mentoring, training and other short-term pro bono options.
• Publish articles in bar journals and newsletters about your program and the value of the pro bono experience.

• Engage the local bar association to co-sponsor your annual pro bono awards ceremony.
• Request the local bar leadership to pass a resolution encouraging members to meet the aspirational goal of fifty hours of pro bono service annually.
• Engage bar members in preparing substantive materials to assist your volunteers.
• Request the local bar leadership to assist with fundraising by:
  ➢ Providing a bar dues check-off to contribute to your pro bono program.
  ➢ Co-sponsoring a fundraising event such as a golf tournament or cocktail party.
• Partner with the local bar association in a mentoring program for young lawyers.

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Helpful tip:

BEST PRACTICE # 65

ENGAGING LOCAL JUDGES

Include local judges in your program’s recruitment campaigns, training events, pro bono awards ceremonies, and the development of substantive resources for your volunteers.

Goal: Enhance the institutional stature and credibility of your program by engaging judges to participate in a wide variety of your program’s activities.

What to do:

- Invite judges of the Circuit Court and District Court to serve as members of your board of directors.
- Engage judges to serve as faculty members at pro bono trainings whenever feasible.
- Enlist the aid of judges to give presentations on the need for attorneys to provide pro bono service through your program at bar association meetings, bar section meetings and other gatherings of lawyers.
- Work with your Local Pro Bono Committee to help engage local judges in your pro bono program.
- Request the judges of the Circuit Court and District Court to participate in a letter writing campaign to recruit new pro bono attorneys.
• Invite judges to present awards to outstanding pro bono attorneys at your program’s awards ceremonies and recognition programs.
• Create a list of volunteer attorneys from which judges may appoint pro bono attorneys to represent litigants appearing before them.
• Request the County Administrative Judge to send an annual letter to all new admittees encouraging them to meet their pro bono responsibilities under Rule 6.1 and providing information on pro bono opportunities.
• Encourage judges to write articles for the local bar journals and newspapers on the value of the pro bono service through your program.

Helpful tips:
- A sample letter from an administrative judge encouraging pro bono participation is available at Appendix AM.
- By nominating judges from your county or region for statewide awards for their work on behalf of pro bono, you encourage other judges to participate in your pro bono program. Available awards include those made by the Pro Bono Resource Center (application available at Appendix M and online at www.probonomd.org/2011_Awards.html), and the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (applications available at www.mlsc.org/awards.html).
- By seeking to have your executive director or a board member appointed to your Local Pro Bono Committee, you will increase your program’s interaction with and access to local judges.
COLLABORATING WITH THE BAR AND THE BENCH

BEST PRACTICE # 66

WORKING WITH YOUR LOCAL PRO BONO COMMITTEE

Collaborate with your Local Pro Bono Committee by participating in joint projects, sharing information and data, and partnering on recognition events and other pro bono promotions.

Goal: Become a principal player in the development and expansion of pro bono in your county or region by actively engaging in the work of your Local Pro Bono Committee.

What to do:

- Request a meeting with your Local Pro Bono Committee to:
  - Discuss your program, staff, mission, and client population.
  - Identify obstacles and challenges to the provision of pro bono services in your area.
  - Identify areas of need for your program that the Local Pro Bono Committee may be able to address (e.g., access to interpreters for non-English speaking clients).
• Collaborate with your Local Pro Bono Committee on projects such as:
  ➢ A joint Pro Bono Recruitment Campaign. (Best Practice #8)
  ➢ Events for National Pro Bono Week.
  ➢ An Annual Pro Bono Awards Ceremony. (Best Practice #13)
  ➢ Mentoring Programs. (Best Practice #21)
  ➢ A county-wide or regional Legal Fair. (Best Practice #58)

• Seek to have your executive director, pro bono manager or a board member appointed to your Local Pro Bono Committee to assure your program's involvement at all levels of the pro bono effort.

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Helpful tip:

- A list of the Chairs of the Local Pro Bono Committees for each county or region and their contact information is attached as Appendix A.
COLLABORATING WITH THE BAR AND THE BENCH

BEST PRACTICE # 67

JOINT PROJECTS WITH THE BAR AND BENCH

Work with local judges and bar leaders on joint projects such as developing a “What to Expect in Court” information sheet for pro bono and pro se litigants involved in a variety of court actions.

Goal: Strengthen your program’s relationships with local judges and bar leaders while improving the ability of pro bono and pro se litigants to understand and navigate the court system.

What to do:

- Form a committee of local judges, bar leaders, court clerks and members of the Local Pro Bono Committee to develop the “What to Expect in Court” information sheets.
- Identify the types of information sheets to be developed; examples include:
  - “What to Expect in District Court”—a general description of District Court processes and procedures, do’s and don’ts for litigants, how to behave while in court, etc.
  - “What to Expect in Small Claims Court/Traffic Court/Rent Court”—created as separate forms or
included as part of the District Court general information form.

- “What to Expect in Domestic Violence Court”—one information sheet created to cover both District Court and Circuit Court domestic violence procedures.
- “What to Expect in Circuit Court”—a general description of Circuit Court processes and procedures, do's and don'ts for litigants, how to behave while in court, etc.
- “What to Expect in Family Court”—focused on the special procedures in divorce, child custody, child support and visitation cases.

• Topics to include in the “What to Expect in Court” information sheets include:
  - Locating the court and the clerk’s office.
  - Filing fees.
  - Jurisdictional limits, venue and statutes of limitations.
  - Explanations of pleadings and pleadings forms.
  - Checklists of necessary documents.
  - Tips for gathering evidence.
  - Types of relief available.
  - Enforcing judgments.

• Develop a procedure with Circuit and District Court Clerk’s Offices for distributing the information sheets to pro se litigants and pro bono clients at the time of filing initial pleadings.

• Make the information sheets widely available at courthouses, Self-Help Clinics, pro bono programs, legal services organizations, social and human services agencies and county libraries.

• Develop other joint projects with local judges, bar leaders and your Local Pro Bono Committee such as “Right of Way” protocols for attorneys representing pro bono clients, Legal Fairs and Law Day events.

• Include your Local Pro Bono Committee on all joint projects with the bench and the bar to increase participation and enhance the stature of the project.

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Helpful tips:

- Sample Best Practice: The Eastern Shore Regional Library has developed materials on what to expect in District Court proceedings which are available on the Peoples Law Library website at www.peoples-law.org/self_help/district_court/.
- The Peoples Law Library website has many additional materials helpful for the preparation of “What to Expect in Court” information sheets available at www.peoples-law.info/Home/PublicWeb.
B. WORKING WITH LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

BEST PRACTICE # 68

PARTNERING WITH LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDERS

Coordinate with other pro bono programs and legal services providers to maximize services to clients, conduct trainings, share resources such as interpreters and conduct outreach to the client community.

Goal: Develop close working relationships with other pro bono programs and legal services providers to create a creative and supportive legal services community.

What to do:

- Hold joint training programs on shared substantive issues, cultural sensitivity and working with immigrant clients.
- Conduct a joint legal needs study.
- Work with the Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service and your Local Pro Bono Committee to hold a Pro Bono Summit of all legal service providers in your county.
or region to share information and explore possible collaborations.

- Plan an agenda that includes the following topics:
  - Program, staff and client base of each participating organization.
  - Pro bono components of each participating organization.
  - Impact of the economic downturn on legal services in your region.
  - Impact of changing demographics on legal services in your region.
  - Issues regarding representation of non-English speakers and lack of interpreters and translators.
  - Areas of unnecessary duplication of services.
  - Possibilities for collaborations, partnerships and sharing of resources.

- Conduct a Legal Fair for your client community (Best Practice #70).

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Helpful tips:

- The Court of Appeals Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service can assist in the planning of a local Pro Bono Summit. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/ 800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org).

- The Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service coordinates regional meetings with Local Pro Bono Committee and pro bono service providers. For more information, contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/ 800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.

- An article on multi-cultural practice and working with interpreters is available on the State Bar of Wisconsin website at www.wisbar.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&CONTENTID=83124&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm.
CHAPTER 6
WORKING WITH LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

BEST PRACTICE # 69
JOINT PRO BONO ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

Partner with other pro bono programs and legal services organizations to conduct a joint Pro Bono Advertising Campaign and get the word out about available pro bono legal services to the low-income residents in your community.

Goal: Create a multi-faceted advertising campaign that provides information about the services of all the local pro bono programs and legal services providers in your area.

What to do:

- Create a Pro Bono Advertising Campaign committee composed of local pro bono program and legal services staff and members of your Local Pro Bono Committee.
- Prepare a brochure or flyer listing information for the pro bono and legal services providers in your community such
as the Maryland Lawyers Care Brochures developed by the Pro Bono Resource Center.

- Include for each program:
  - Location and contact information.
  - Description of application process, including:
    - Days and times of intake.
    - Income eligibility requirements.
    - Any limitations on the nature of cases accepted.
    - Any requirements regarding the procedural status of matters.

- Obtain the pro bono help of bi-lingual attorneys to translate the brochures into the language most commonly spoken by immigrants in your community.

- Identify where the pro bono brochures will be placed in your community, including:
  - Food pantries and soup kitchens.
  - Homeless shelters.
  - Churches, synagogues, mosques and temples.
  - Immigrant and day-laborer centers.
  - Battered women’s shelters.
  - Senior centers.
  - Child care and youth centers.
  - Alcohol and drug rehabilitation centers.
  - Community centers and libraries.

- Consider forming partnerships with local businesses such as grocery stores and convenience stores in low-income neighborhoods to make the pro bono brochures available to their customers.

- Provide the pro bono brochures to a wide variety of government and social service agencies that work with the clients you seek to serve, such as:
  - Clerk’s Offices in the District and Circuit Courts.
  - Department of Social Services.
  - Offices on Aging.
  - Youth services bureaus and agencies.
  - Housing assistance programs.
  - Domestic Violence shelters.
  - Veterans programs.
  - Programs for the disabled.

- Develop a series of public service announcements for local newspapers to advertise the types of legal services available in your area, including pro bono programs, courthouse pro se clinics, workshops and legal information seminars.

- Partner with local radio stations, including foreign language radio stations, to develop public service announcements informing the public of the pro bono services available.
Helpful tips:

- The Pro Bono Resource Center has developed Maryland Lawyers Care Brochures for each county in Maryland which can be updated and used for the Pro Bono Advertising Campaign. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379 / 800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
- A copy of a sample Maryland Lawyers Care Brochure is available at Appendix A0.
WORKING WITH LEGAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

BEST PRACTICE # 70

LEGAL FAIRS

Collaborate with other pro bono programs and legal services providers to conduct a Legal Fair providing legal information talks on a variety of substantive areas as well as brief advice and counsel sessions for individuals with a volunteer attorney.

Goal: Combine forces to hold a Legal Fair that reaches the client community and spotlights the services of all the local pro bono providers and legal services providers.

What to do:

• Form a “Legal Fair Committee” comprised of local pro bono program and legal services staff, members of your Local Pro Bono Committee and volunteer attorneys to begin the initial planning of the Legal Fair.
• Determine whether the Legal Fair should have a target population, such as a specific immigrant group or the residents of a particular area of your county or region.
• Seek co-sponsorship from the local bar association, community groups, and local businesses.
• Solicit volunteer attorneys to make presentations during the information sessions on such topics as:
  ➢ Family law.
  ➢ Employment.
  ➢ Foreclosure prevention.
  ➢ Consumer issues and bankruptcy.
  ➢ Elder law.
  ➢ Landlord-tenant.
  ➢ Immigration.

• Solicit volunteer lawyers to be presenters during legal information sessions and to meet with clients in individual advice and counseling sessions.

• Identify a centrally located site accessible by public transportation for the Legal Fair such as a library, community center, church or local social services office with space for individual counseling sessions as well as a large parking lot for outdoor information sessions.

• Reach out to local high school, college and law school groups to staff the Legal Fair for sign-up, traffic control, etc.

• Advertise the Legal Fair to your targeted group or throughout the community with public service announcements and flyers placed in community centers, places of worship, food pantries, soup kitchens and homeless shelters.

• Arrange for translators for non-English speakers and others with disabilities to provide maximum access.

• Contact local media to provide news coverage of the Legal Fair.

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Helpful tip:
• The Pro Bono Resource Center can assist in the planning of a Legal Fair. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Develop relationships with the community organizations and social service agencies that regularly serve your clients and collaborate to share information and expand services.

Goal: Forge partnerships with community organizations to gain important allies in the provision of services and a reliable source of information regarding changing client need.

What to do:

- Make contacts and develop relationships with social service agencies, community centers and other community organizations that regularly serve your clients.
- Host a Community Forum for social services and community organizations to educate their staff about the availability and nature of pro bono and low-bono legal services in your area.
- Organize a Community Forum planning committee comprised of members of your local community partners.
legal services organizations and your Local Pro Bono Committee.

- Identify the agencies and organizations to be included on the invitee list, including:
  - Department of Social Services divisions.
  - Office on Aging and senior centers.
  - Youth services bureaus and agencies.
  - Housing assistance programs.
  - Domestic Violence shelters.
  - Veterans programs.
  - Programs for the disabled.
  - Homeless shelters.
  - Drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers.
  - Half-way house programs.
  - Immigrant and day laborer centers.

- Partner with the local bar association or a local law firm to provide funding for invitations, programs and materials.

- Identify a free venue for the program, such as a courthouse meeting space, school auditorium or community center hall.

- Prepare a program including speakers from the pro bono and legal services organizations in your area to present information about their program and services.

- Invite a local judge, the local bar president or a local politician to present the keynote speech.

- Distribute Maryland Lawyers Care Brochures to all participants. (See Best Practice #69)

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**Helpful tip:**

- The Pro Bono Resource Center can assist in the planning of a Community Forum. Contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/ 800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
INTRODUCTION

Pro bono programs in rural areas face a host of unique challenges in reaching and serving pro bono clients. Key among them is the fact that there is often a small and limited pool of attorneys practicing in the county. In Somerset County, for example, there were sixteen members of the bar in 2009, only six of whom were in private practice; the remainder were judges or government lawyers in the State's Attorney's or Public Defender's Office. In Garrett, Allegany and Washington Counties in Western Maryland, mountains and forests create natural barriers that hinder the delivery of legal services, particular in the winter when roads are impassable due to snow, ice and flooding. Public transportation is frequently non-existent or quite limited in rural communities, whether in the mountains or in the coastal regions of Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore, and low-income clients frequently live on poorly paved and poorly marked roads. Pro bono programs frequently serve multiple counties and multiple court systems, requiring volunteer attorneys to travel significant distances to serve their pro bono clients.

In 2000, The American Bar Association launched a Rural Pro Bono Delivery Initiative to study the special needs of low-income rural clients and the obstacles faced by the programs that serve them.
The goal of the ABA Rural Pro Bono Delivery Initiative was to develop and promote successful models for pro bono delivery to the rural poor. In 2003, the Rural Pro Bono Initiative published a manual, *Rural Pro Bono Delivery: A Guide to Pro Bono Legal Services in Rural Areas*, as a resource for pro bono programs, legal services providers and bar associations in rural jurisdictions. The ABA manual is an invaluable tool for pro bono programs in rural communities and is available online at [www.abanet.org/legalservicesprobono/rural_delivery.html](http://www.abanet.org/legalservicesprobono/rural_delivery.html). A Clearinghouse Library on rural pro bono delivery is also available at the same website.

What follows are several Best Practices developed especially for rural pro bono programs. It should be noted that many of the preceding Best Practices are equally effective when adopted by pro bono programs in rural jurisdictions as well as in urban areas.
SPECIAL ISSUES FOR RURAL AREAS

BEST PRACTICE # 72

INNOVATIVE PROJECTS FOR RURAL PRO BONO PROGRAMS

Adopt one or more of the following innovative projects to address the special challenges facing pro bono programs in rural areas such as geography and lack of public transportation.

Goal: Overcome the barriers that prevent pro bono clients from accessing your program’s services by implementing creative programs that enhance community outreach.

What to do:

- Establish an “Ask a Lawyer in the Library” program at public libraries throughout your region by:
  - Partnering with the chief librarians and county associations of librarians to develop a format and schedule for “Ask a Lawyer in the Library” programs at library branches.
  - Conducting brief advice and counsel sessions with a volunteer lawyer for 15 minutes to address:
    - Limited substantive topics such as family law or immigration.
    - General civil legal issues.
Establishing regular schedules for “Ask a Lawyer in the Library” programs at lunchtimes or on Saturdays to provide access to legal services in areas easily accessible to the public.

Providing brochures and flyers with information about your program and other available legal services at libraries throughout your region.

Launch a mobile self-help clinic modeled on the courthouse family law self-help clinics by:

- Adapting a donated mobile home or bookmobile to provide library and Internet services.
- Providing self-help materials, including pro se pleadings and forms and information regarding court procedures.
- Taking the mobile self-help clinic to outlying areas where public transportation is limited.
- Establishing a well-published schedule of times and locations for the mobile self-help clinic.
- Utilizing volunteer attorneys and paralegals to staff the mobile self-help clinic.

Provide outreach to migrant farm workers, immigrant poultry workers and other targeted groups through law student rural service trips by:

- Partnering with law schools to provide service opportunities through your program for students during school breaks.
- Using program staff, volunteer lawyers and law faculty to supervise students and conduct trainings.
- Developing and disseminating employment rights education materials.
- Conducting “Know Your Rights” seminars at community and church functions.
- Conducting outreach within the target communities by working with local community advocates.

Helpful tips:

- **Sample Best Practice:** The Anne Arundel County Law Library developed an “Ask a Lawyer in the Law Library” program at the Anne Arundel County Circuit Court that was highly successful and was expanded to county libraries in the Annapolis area. Information about the Anne Arundel County program is available at 410-222-1387 or library@circuitcourt.org.
- Alternatively, the Prince George’s County Bar Association conducts regular “Ask a Lawyer” programs at the Bowie Gymnasium and the Takoma Park Community Center. Information is available from Community Legal Services of Prince George’s County at 301-864-8353.
Helpful tips (continued):


- Information regarding law school service projects and migrant farm workers outreach programs is provide at pp. 32 and 44, respectively, of the ABA manual, *Rural Pro Bono Delivery: A Guide to Pro Bono Legal Services in Rural Areas*, available at www.abanet.org/legalservices/probono/aba_rural_book.pdf.
SPECIAL ISSUES FOR RURAL AREAS

BEST PRACTICE # 73

EXPANDING PRO BONO OPTIONS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Goal: Broaden the reach of the limited number of attorneys available for pro bono work in rural areas by creating local and urban partnerships.

What to do:

- Engage key community stakeholders in the pro bono effort by:
  - Targeting local town mayors, county council members, community and religious leaders and directors of social services agencies for membership on your governing board.
  - Involving those mentioned above in your program's pro bono outreach projects (Best Practice 24) and program collaborations (Best Practices #64–71).

Address the challenge of lawyer demographics in rural areas by engaging key community stakeholders, forging unusual partnerships and building urban-to-rural bridges.
• Create creative, cross-sector partnerships to expand client access by working with:
  ➢ Religious groups such as Knights of Columbus or Hadassah.
  ➢ Community organizations such as Kiwanis Clubs or the local Chamber of Commerce.
  ➢ Leaders of organizations for adolescents such as Boy and Girl Scouts of America or 4-H Clubs.
  ➢ Local government agencies such as farm bureaus and dairy councils.
• Build urban-to-rural bridges by partnering with:
  ➢ Large law firms in the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan area to provide pro bono attorneys for special projects in a wide variety of substantive areas, including elder law, bankruptcy and consumer issues and/or to underwrite projects such as a mobile self-help center.
  ➢ Urban pro bono programs such as the Pro Bono Resource Center, Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, Community Legal Services of Prince George’s County and the Montgomery County Bar Foundation Pro Bono Program to conduct joint projects and programs.
  ➢ Law schools in the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan area to provide rural service projects. (Best Practice #72)

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Helpful tip:
• Information regarding use of urban resources in rural areas can be found in the ABA manual, Rural Pro Bono Delivery: A Guide to Pro Bono Legal Services in Rural Areas, available at www.abanet.org/legalservices/probono/aba_rural_book.pdf.
SPECIAL ISSUES FOR RURAL AREAS

BEST PRACTICE # 74

UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY AND EXISTING RESOURCES

Make use of technology and existing resources to recruit and train pro bono attorneys, place cases and communicate with your pro bono community.

Goal: Reduce the impact of geographic and demographic barriers in rural areas by using technology and existing resources to reach your volunteer community.

What to do:

- Use e-blasts, list serves and e-newsletters to recruit and support pro bono attorneys, as well as place cases by:
  - Providing volunteers with information about available cases, up-coming trainings, recognition events and changes in substantive law. (Best Practice #22)
  - Providing pro bono attorneys with information regarding available resources and special cases spotlighting volunteers.
- List available cases, notices about upcoming events and trainings and career opportunities on the Pro Bono Resource Center's bi-weekly statewide E-Bulletin.
• Expand your audience for volunteer training by using technology such as Webcasts and Webinars to make trainings available online, 24/7. [Best Practice #19]

• Contact the Pro Bono Resource Center to arrange for a training for volunteer attorneys in your county or region as part of ongoing pro bono projects in the following substantive areas:
  ➢ Foreclosure Prevention.
  ➢ Consumer Bankruptcy.
  ➢ Special Education and School Disciplinary Hearings.
  ➢ Criminal Record Expungements.
  ➢ Veterans Benefits.

• Contact the Pro Bono Resource Center to plan a training program in a wide variety of substantive areas, including family law, consumer law, elder law, immigration law, tax and employment law.

• Use your website as well as e-blasts and e-newsletters to advertise the availability of existing resources, such as:
  ➢ Malpractice insurance.
  ➢ Litigation funds.
  ➢ Fee waivers for pro bono clients. [Best Practice #20]

Helpful tips:

• Pro Bono Resource Center trainings are available free or for a reduced fee to attorneys who agree to accept at least one pro bono case or provide a designated number of hours of pro bono service. For more information, contact PBRC at 410-837-9379/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probono.md.org.

• Information regarding malpractice insurance, the MLSC Litigation Fund administered by the Pro Bono Resource Center and fee waivers for pro bono clients is available from PBRC at 410-837-937/800-396-1274 or pbrc@probonomd.org.
INTRODUCTION

The importance of having an active and engaged governing board or advisory committee for a pro bono program cannot be overstated. Whether the program is an independent non-profit corporation with a board of directors, or part of a larger legal services organization with an advisory committee, a governing body is necessary to adopt and oversee broad program policies, regularly review program operations, participate in volunteer recruitment and fundraising, and support program activities. Fiscal oversight, review of contracts and fulfillment of legal obligations, and review of the program's compliance with regulations and laws are all key governance functions. In addition, it is the duty of a governing board to develop a pro bono program's mission statement as well as refine it over time, and to develop a strategic plan. Given these duties, the make-up of the governing body should reflect a broad spectrum of the legal community, including judges and corporate counsel, as well as members of the community at large, and should rotate on a regular basis. Having an engaged, active and participatory governing body is a major component in the success of a pro bono program.
Goal: Attract a broad level of support for your program within the legal community and the community at large by engaging a range of individuals who are leaders in the community to participate as active members of your Board.

What to do:

- Seek to attract Board members from the legal community who are racially and ethnically diverse and bring a broad range of perspectives, including:
  - Bar association leaders.
  - Judges and masters.
  - Legal services representatives.
  - Attorneys in private practice.
  - Corporate counsel.
  - Government attorneys.
  - Pro bono attorneys.

Form a board of directors or advisory board/governing committee (hereinafter “Board”) whose members reflect a broad spectrum of the legal community, are committed to the pro bono mission and bring energy and enthusiasm to their board positions.
➢ Attorneys with disabilities.

• Invite a range of individuals from the community at large to serve on the Board who bring the skills necessary for competent Board governance, including:
  ➢ Business owners.
  ➢ Bankers.
  ➢ Accountants.
  ➢ Social workers.
  ➢ Teachers.
  ➢ Members of the client community.

• Have a minimum of five, and preferably seven or more, members of the Board.

• Adopt a protocol for rotating leadership of the Board to avoid having the program become too closely identified with a few individuals.

• Adopt limits to consecutive terms for Board members to assure a continuous cycle of new individuals with fresh ideas and energy.

• Develop an orientation program for new Board members that provides information such as:
  ➢ History of the pro bono program.
  ➢ Role, structure and functioning of the Board.
  ➢ Unmet legal needs of the community.
  ➢ Program priorities.
  ➢ Duties and obligations of Board members.

• Provide ongoing training for Board members in areas such as budgeting and accounting oversight and developments in legal services and pro bono.

• Formulate written policies for attendance at Board meetings and participation in Board activities as well as methods for addressing noncompliance of these obligations.

• Develop written policies for expectations regarding Board members’ participation in fundraising, committee service and program activities.

• Emphasize that Board members serve without compensation.

• Set forth any policy for reimbursement of Board member expenses in writing.

Ω

Helpful tips:

▪ There are numerous online resources regarding recruitment of non-profit board members; specific guidelines for recruiting new board members are available at www.managementhelp.org/boards/recruit.htm and for recruiting and vetting non-profit board members at www.bridgestar.org/Library/RecruitingBoardMembers.aspx.

PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

BEST PRACTICE # 76

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF GOVERNING BOARDS —
GENERAL

Adopt Bylaws for the Board that clearly outline the protocols for conducting Board business, the oversight and planning obligations of Board members, and a conflicts of interest policy for Board members.

Goal: Ensure the Board’s compliance with the legal and ethical obligations of nonprofit organizations in Maryland.

What to do:

- Enact Bylaws that set forth Board policies to:
  - Meet on a monthly or, at a minimum, quarterly basis.
  - Record minutes of each meeting accurately reflecting discussions, decisions and actions taken.
  - Require a quorum for a binding vote on proposed Board actions.
- Establish management and personnel policies to assure that adequate human and fiscal resources are available to fulfill the program’s mission.
- Engage in short-term and long term planning regarding your program’s services.
• Review the program’s mission statement every 3–5 years, considering whether:
  ➢ The mission statement needs to be revised or modified to adapt to changing circumstances.
  ➢ Whether the program or its structure needs to be modified to adapt to changing circumstances.
  ➢ Services or programs need to be discarded or added to reflect the changing needs of your target client population.
• Adopt a policy addressing Board conflicts of interest that includes a statement to be signed by each Board member that:
  ➢ Sets forth the fiduciary duties of Board members of care, loyalty and obedience (to laws and regulations).
  ➢ Identifies the types of conduct or actions that could potentially create a conflict of interest.
  ➢ Sets forth procedures for addressing actual or potential conflicts of interest.
  ➢ Provides for disclosure of each Board member of any personal or family member's interest in entity's conducting business with the program.
• Periodically conduct a review of the Board’s compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements for non-profit boards.

Ω

Helpful tips:
• Sample nonprofit bylaws are available at www.marylandnonprofits.org/html/support/05_07.asp.
BEST PRACTICE # 77

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNING BOARDS — FISCAL MATTERS

Establish a protocol to ensure that the governing board carries out its responsibility for maintaining the financial integrity of the pro bono program by employing appropriate fiscal management and review.

Goal: Keeping the pro bono program financially sound and in compliance with all regulations and laws governing non-profits.

What to do:

- Make it clear to all members that the Board is responsible for the financial management and oversight of the program.
- Establish a Finance Committee of the Board chaired by the Board Treasurer and responsible for addressing fiscal management.
- Adopt a protocol for the pro bono manager/executive director to report to the Board Treasurer and/or the Finance Committee.
- Outline the duties of the Finance Committee to include the following:
Conducting financial planning and management.

- Working with the pro bono manager/executive director to formulate an operating budget with sufficient funds to:
  - Meet all program priorities.
  - Pay program staff adequate salaries.
  - Furnish support and training to volunteers.
  - Conduct volunteer recruitment campaigns and recognition events.
  - Conduct community outreach.

- Providing input for proposed major expenses such as additional staff, equipment or office space.

- Developing written rules for individuals responsible for:
  - Purchasing, cash disbursements and receipts.
  - Payroll.
  - Check writing and credit card purchases.
  - Contracts. *(See Best Practice #58)*

- Determining the type and number of insurance policies to purchase for the program.

- Creating internal controls and separation of duties among program staff to assure protection of program assets.

- Periodically reviewing the compensation structure of the program.

Financial duties of the Board as a whole include:

- Approving the annual operating budget.

- Reviewing the monthly financial statements prepared by the pro bono manager/executive director for material variations between actual and budgeted revenues and expenses.

- Choosing an accountant to conduct the annual audit or review and prepare the management letter.

- Approving the annual audit or review and management letter.

- Reviewing and approving IRS Form 990.

- Periodically reviewing compliance with all laws and tax requirements for nonprofits.

Use budgetary oversight as a way to implement major policy decisions.

Helpful tips:

- IRS Form 990, Part XI, line 2c asks, “[D]oes the organization have a committee that assumes responsibility for oversight of the audit, review, or compilation of its financial statements and selection of an independent accountant?”


- The Nonprofits Assistance Fund of Minnesota has information about nonprofit audits available at www.nonprofitassistancefund.org/pages/FMN-Audits.
CHAPTER 8

PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

BEST PRACTICE # 78

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNING BOARDS — FUNDRAISING

Develop a fundraising plan that identifies your program’s fundraising goals, outlines a variety of fundraising strategies, and involves the active participation of all Board members.

Goal: Create a governing board composed of members committed to supporting your pro bono program financially both through personal donations and through the implementation of your fundraising plan.

What to do:

- Educate your Board members regarding their obligation to financially support your organization and to actively participate in all aspects of fundraising.
- Establish a Fundraising Committee responsible for developing the fundraising plan and identifying potential donors and funding sources.
- Develop a fundraising plan that:
  - Establishes fundraising goals in keeping with the Board’s strategic plan. (See Best Practice #80)
  - Identifies how much money needs to be raised and what programs and projects it will fund.
Creates a “story” that will motivate people to give and incorporates the story into the fundraising plan.

Identifies potential donors, including Board members, prior donors, volunteers, and foundations.

Adopts various types of fundraising campaigns such as annual giving, capital campaigns and planned giving through bequests or large gifts.

Identifies a variety of methods for fundraising such as:
  - Direct mail.
  - Telephone campaigns using volunteer callers.
  - Face-to-face solicitations for major gifts.
  - Fundraising events.
  - Facebook and Twitter fundraising campaigns.
  - Grant writing.

Creates a protocol for program staff to develop a fundraising data base, maintain records, process donations and provide acknowledgments in compliance with IRS regulations.

- Register with the Maryland Secretary of State to solicit charitable contributions as required under the Maryland Solicitations Act.

- Solicit funds on your website:
  - Include a “donate” button on your home page.
  - Provide your mission statement, program description and goals on your donation page.

- Register with any other state in which you solicit funds or from which you receive donations.

Ω

Helpful tips:
- The Maryland Office of the Secretary of State outlines the law governing charitable solicitations at www.sos.state.md.us/charity/MarylandSolicitationAct.pdf.
- The National Association of State Charity Officials (NASCO) has created a Unified Registration Form accepted by 38 states which is available at www.multistatefiling.org.
- There are many online resources available for charitable fundraising such as managementhelp.org and convivio.com.
Establish a protocol to ensure that the governing board carries out its core duties of oversight and review, development of policies, and participation in recruitment and fundraising by allocating specific responsibilities to working Board committees.

**Goal:** Ensure that the duties of the Board are carried out in a thorough and timely fashion by creating Board committees to fulfill specific duties.

**What to do:**

- Establish committees of the Board responsible for addressing the core duties of a non-profit governing board.
- Require each committee to be a *working* committee that actively fulfills its responsibility.
- Consider establishing committees with the following duties:
  - Board membership.
    - Identifying and recruiting potential board members.
o Identifying gaps in membership and recommending additional categories of members.
o Training and orienting new members.

➢ Staffing and personnel.
o Hiring of executive director.
o Assessing staffing levels and recommending additional staff as necessary.
o Ensuring that all proper employee policies are in place.
o Coordinating the annual review and evaluation of the executive director, including recommending bonuses and salary increase.

➢ Recruitment and recognition.
o Assessing recruitment needs.
o Coordinating a Pro Bono Recruitment Campaign with the executive director. [Best Practice # 8]
o Designing and implementing recruitment efforts that involve active board participation.
o Reviewing program support and resources for volunteers and considering additional support that might serve as an incentive to new volunteers.
o Working with Board members to recruit two new volunteers each year.

➢ Fundraising and development.
o Assessing and selecting fundraising strategies consistent with the program’s services.
o Examining and pursuing new funding sources.
o Exploring coordinated fundraising with other pro bono and legal services providers.

- Appoint committee chairs, schedule committee meetings on a regular basis, and outline the “job description” of each committee in writing.

Helpful tip:
Goal: Maximize the use of your program’s resources and expand and develop its programs and services by developing a strategic plan on a periodic basis.

What to do:

- Ensure that the Board, staff and volunteers are committed to the process of developing a strategic plan.
- Evaluate every aspect of your pro bono program to assess accurately what works and what does not work.
- Establish a committee of the Board responsible for initiating the strategic plan process.
- Include in the strategic plan the following elements:
  - Mission statement, consisting of:
    - Client population to be served.
    - Substantive area(s) of law in which to provide services.
    - Nature of services to be provided.
    - Policy goals.
    - Program priorities.
  - Specific goals to carry out the mission statement.

Develop a long term or strategic plan to identify your program’s goals, articulate the principles underlying the goals, formulate the strategies for achieving the goals, and devise a plan of action to implement the goals.
- Step-by-step process or work initiative to accomplish goals.
- Outline of service delivery models.
- Current staffing and planned changes to staffing.
- Strategies for volunteer recruitment, retention and recognition.
- Description of current support and resources for volunteers.
- Fundraising plan, including grants and donations.

- Use the strategic plan to create an action plan with:
  - Clearly assigned responsibilities.
  - Defined goals.
  - Target dates for accomplishing components of the plan.

- Obtain input regarding the program’s operation and mission from:
  - Clients.
  - Volunteers.
  - Judges.
  - Court personnel.
  - Local bar association leaders.
  - Legal services providers.
  - Community organizations.

- Use the strategic plan as a guiding principle to inform all decisions regarding program operation.

Ω

Helpful tip:
- Sample Best Practice: The Strategic Plan prepared by the Volunteer Lawyers Network of Minnesota is an excellent model and is available at Appendix A.
This Appendix to the *Best Practices Manual for Pro Bono Service Providers* has been formatted for ease of double-sided printing.
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MARYLAND ACCESS TO JUSTICE COMMISSION,
INTERIM REPORT, FALL 2009
IN THIS REPORT:

• About the Commission

• Access & Delivery of Legal Services

• Critical Barriers

• Definitions & Standards

• Public Education

• Safety, Accessibility & Convenience

• Self-Represented Litigants
Why Is It So Hard for Low-Income Persons to Get Legal Help in Civil Matters When They Need It?

No. of persons per lawyer in Maryland: 162.8

No. of poor persons per legal services lawyer or pro bono equivalent in Maryland: 455.7

Maryland Population (2008 estimate): 5,633,597
No. of Active Full-Time Lawyers in Maryland: approx. 34,600
Percent of Marylander’s below poverty (2007): 8.3%
Percent of Lawyers Employed in Legal Services Positions (2007): 1.5% of all lawyers (482 lawyers)
FTEs of Pro Bono Hours Provided by MD Lawyers: 534 FTEs

Sources:
Administrative Office of the Courts, Current Status of Pro Bono Service Among Maryland Lawyers, Year 2007 (October 27, 2008).

CHART 3: Legal Services Attorneys + Pro Bono FTEs
Why Is It So Hard for Low-Income Persons to Get Legal Help in Civil Matters When They Need It?

No. of persons per lawyer in Maryland: 162.8

No. of poor persons per legal services lawyer in Maryland: 970

Maryland Population (2008 estimate): 5,633,597
No. of Active Full-Time Lawyers in Maryland: approx. 34,600
Percent of Marylander’s below poverty (2007): 8.3%
Percent of Lawyers Employed in Legal Services Positions (2007): 1.5% of all lawyers (482 lawyers)

Sources:

Administrative Office of the Courts, Current Status of Pro Bono Service Among Maryland Lawyers, Year 2007 (October 27, 2008).

What Types of Cases do Legal Services Clients Need Help With in Maryland?

* * Other

Where do Legal Services Clients Live in Maryland?

MLSC Funded Legal Services Providers
RESIDENCE OF CLIENTS SERVED

Central Maryland: Carroll, Harford and Howard Counties
Eastern Shore: Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester Counties
Southern Maryland: Calvert, Charles and St. Mary’s Counties
Western Maryland: Allegany, Frederick, Garrett and Washington Counties.

APPENDIX B

Maryland Pro Bono Rules
Rule 16-901. STATE PRO BONO COMMITTEE AND PLAN

(a) Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service

(1) Creation

There is a Standing Committee of the Court of Appeals on Pro Bono Legal Service.

(2) Members

The Standing Committee consists of the following members appointed by the Court of Appeals:

(A) eight members of the Maryland Bar, including one from each appellate judicial circuit and one selected from the State at large;

(B) a maximum of three Circuit Court judges selected from nominees submitted by the Conference of Circuit Judges;

(C) a maximum of three District Court judges selected from nominees submitted by the Chief Judge of the District Court;

(D) the Public Defender or a designee of the Public Defender;

(E) a representative from the Legal Aid Bureau, Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland, and one other pro bono referral organization; and

(F) a member of the general public.

(3) Terms; Chair

The term of each member is three years. A member may be reappointed to serve one or more additional terms. The Court of Appeals shall designate one of the members as chair.

(4) Consultants

The Standing Committee may designate a reasonable number of consultants from among court personnel or representatives of other organizations or agencies concerned with the provision of legal services to persons of limited means.

(b) Functions of the Standing Committee

(1) Required
The Standing Committee shall:

(A) develop standard forms for use by the Local Pro Bono Committees in developing and articulating the Local Pro Bono Action Plans and making their annual reports;

(B) recommend uniform standards for use by the Local Pro Bono Committees to assess the need for pro bono legal services in their committees;

(C) review and evaluate the Local Pro Bono Action Plans and the annual reports of the Local Pro Bono Committees;

(D) collect and make available to Local Pro Bono Committees information about pro bono projects;

(E) at the request of a Local Pro Bono Committee, provide guidance about the Rules in this Chapter and Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Lawyers' Rules of Professional Conduct;

(F) file with the Court of Appeals an annual report and recommendations about the implementation and effectiveness of the Local Pro Bono Action Plans, the Rules in this Chapter, and Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Lawyers' Rules of Professional Conduct; and

(G) prepare a State Pro Bono Action Plan as provided in section (c) of this Rule.

(2) Permitted

The Standing Committee may make recommendations to the Court of Appeals concerning the appointment and reappointment of its members.

(c) State Pro Bono Action Plan

(1) Generally

Within three years after the effective date of this Rule, the Standing Committee shall submit to the Court of Appeals a State Pro Bono Action Plan to promote increased efforts on the part of lawyers to provide legal assistance to persons of limited means. In developing this Plan, the Standing Committee shall:

(A) review and assess the results of the Local Pro Bono Action Plans;

(B) assess the data generated by the reports required by Rule 16-903;

(C) gather and consider information pertinent to the existence, nature, and extent of the need for pro bono legal services in Maryland; and

(D) provide the opportunity for one or more public hearings.

(2) Contents

The State Pro Bono Action Plan may include a recommendation for increasing or decreasing the aspirational goals for pro bono public legal service set forth in Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Lawyers' Rules of Professional Conduct. The Plan should include suggestions for the
kinds of pro bono activities that will be most helpful in meeting the need for pro bono legal service throughout the State and should address long-range pro bono service issues.

Committee note: Examples of long-range issues that may be addressed include opportunities for transactional lawyers, government lawyers, business lawyers, and in-house counsel to render pro bono legal service; opportunities for pro bono legal service by lawyers who are unable to provide direct client representation; “collective responsibility” for pro bono legal service when a law firm designates certain lawyers to handle only pro bono matters; and encouraging pro bono legal service among law students and in the legal academic setting.

(d) Publication

The Clerk of the Court of Appeals shall cause the State Action Plan submitted by the Standing Committee to be published in the Maryland Register and such other publications as the Court directs and shall establish a reasonable period for public comment.

(e) Consideration by the Court of Appeals

After the comment period, the Court of Appeals shall hold a public hearing and take appropriate action on the Plan.

Source: This Rule is new.
Rule 16-902. LOCAL PRO BONO COMMITTEES AND PLANS

(a) Local Pro Bono Committees

(1) Creation

There is a Local Pro Bono Committee for each county.

(2) Members

The Local Pro Bono Committee consists at least two representatives nominated by legal services organizations and pro bono referral organizations that provide services in the county and selected by the County Administrative Judge and the District Administrative Judge, and no more than nine additional members, as follows:

(A) the District Public Defender for the county or an assistant public defender selected by the District Public Defender;

(B) at least three but no more than five lawyers, appointed by the president of the county bar association, who practice in the county and at least one of whom is an officer of the county bar association;

(C) at least one but no more than two persons from the general public, appointed jointly by the County Administrative Judge and the District Administrative Judge; and

(D) at least one but no more than two trial court judges, with the selection of any circuit court judge made by the County Administrative Judge and the selection of any District Court judge made by the County Administrative Judge with the concurrence of the Chief Judge of the District Court.

(3) Term

Each Committee shall establish a procedure for new membership, including articulating length of terms, to ensure member rotation and involvement.

(4) Chair

The County Administrative Judge shall appoint a member of the Committee to serve as temporary chair. The temporary chair shall convene a meeting at which the Committee shall elect a member to serve as chair. Each Committee shall establish a procedure by which its chair will be replaced.

(5) Full Membership
On at least an annual basis, the County Administrative Judge shall assess the composition of the Committee and take steps to ensure full membership of the Committee.

(6) Consultants

The Committee may designate a reasonable number of consultants from among court personnel or representatives of other organizations or agencies concerned with the provision of legal services to persons of limited means. Each consultant should be encouraged to attend meetings and participate as a member, providing input and assisting in the development and implementation of the plan, where appropriate, without being a voting member of the Committee.

(b) Duties of the Committee

The Local Pro Bono Committee shall:

(1) assess the needs in the county for pro bono legal service, including the needs of non-English speaking, minority, and isolated populations;

(2) determine the nature and extent of existing and proposed free or low-cost legal services, both staff and volunteer, for persons of limited means in the county;

(3) establish goals and priorities for pro bono legal service in the county;

(4) prepare a Local Pro Bono Action Plan as provided in section (c) of this Rule;

(5) in accordance with the policies and directives established by the Standing Committee or the Court of Appeals, implement or monitor the implementation of the Plan; and

(6) submit an annual report about the Plan to the Standing Committee by May 1.

(c) Local Pro Bono Action Plans

(1) Generally

The Local Pro Bono Committee shall develop, in coordination with existing legal services organizations and pro bono referral organizations that provide services in the county, a detailed Local Pro Bono Action Plan to promote pro bono legal service to meet the needs of persons of limited means in the county. The Plan shall be submitted to the Standing Committee within one year after creation of the Local Committee. The Local Pro Bono Committees of two or more adjoining counties may collaborate and form a Regional Pro Bono Committee with approval of the Administrative Judges of the counties that wish to collaborate. With the approval of the Standing Committee, a single joint Pro Bono Action Plan may be developed for two or more adjoining counties, by collaboration of the Local Pro Bono Committees.

(2) Contents
The Local Pro Bono Action Plan shall address the following matters:

(A) screening applicants for pro bono representation and referring them to appropriate referral sources or panels of participating attorneys;

(B) establishing or expanding attorney referral panels;

(C) continuing and supporting current services provided by existing pro bono and legal services organizations;

(D) a procedure for matching cases with individual attorney expertise, including specialized panels;

(E) support for participating attorneys, including

(i) providing litigation resources and out-of-pocket expenses for pro bono cases;

(ii) providing or supplementing legal malpractice insurance for participating attorneys;

(iii) providing legal education and training for participating attorneys in specialized areas of the law relevant to pro bono legal service, including consultation services with attorneys who have expertise in areas of law in which participating attorneys seek to provide pro bono service; and

(iv) recommending court scheduling and docketing preferences for pro bono cases;

(F) methods of informing lawyers about the ways in which they may provide pro bono legal service;

Committee note: Ways in which lawyers may provide pro bono legal service include assisting in the screening and intake process; interviewing prospective clients and providing basic consultation; participating in pro se clinics or other programs in which lawyers provide advice and counsel, assist persons in drafting letters or documents, or assist persons in planning transactions or resolving disputes without the need for litigation; representing clients through case referral; acting as co-counsel with legal service providers or other participating attorneys; providing consultation to legal service providers for case reviews and evaluations; training or consulting with other participating attorneys or staff attorneys affiliated with a legal service provider; engaging in legal research and writing; and, if qualified through training and experience, serving as a mediator, arbitrator, or neutral evaluator.

(G) coordinating implementation of the Plan with the courts, county bar associations, and other agencies and organizations;
(H) the number of hours of pro bono legal services needed annually to meet the
needs of persons of limited means in the county; and

(I) programs to recognize lawyers who provide pro bono legal services.

Source: This Rule is new.
Rule 16-903. REPORTING PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICE

(a) Required as a Condition of Practice

As a condition precedent to the practice of law, each lawyer authorized to practice law in Maryland shall file annually with the Administrative Office of the Courts a Pro Bono Legal Service Report on a form approved by the Court of Appeals. The form shall not require the identification of pro bono clients.

Committee note: The purpose of pro bono legal service reporting is to document the pro bono legal service performed by lawyers in Maryland and determine the effectiveness of the Local Pro Bono Action Plans, the State Pro Bono Action Plan, the Rules in this Chapter, and Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Lawyers' Rules of Professional Conduct.

(b) Designated Employee of the Administrative Office of the Courts

The Court of Appeals shall designate an employee of the Administrative Office of the Courts to oversee the reporting process set forth in this Rule.

(c) Mailing by the Administrative Office of the Courts

On or before January 10 of each year, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall mail a Pro Bono Legal Service Report form to each lawyer on the list maintained by the Clients' Security Trust Fund. The addresses on that list shall be used for all notices and correspondence pertaining to the reports.

(d) Due Date

Pro Bono Legal Service Reports for a given calendar year shall be filed with the Administrative Office of the Courts on or before February 15 of the following calendar year.

(e) Enforcement

(1) Notice of Default

As soon as practicable after May 1 of each year, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall give notice of the failure to file a report to each defaulting lawyer. The notice shall (A) state that the lawyer has not filed the Pro Bono Legal Service Report for the previous calendar year, (B) state that continued failure to file the Report may result in the entry of an order by the Court of Appeals prohibiting the lawyer from practicing law in the State, and (C) be sent by first class mail. The mailing of the notice of default shall constitute service.

(2) Additional Discretionary Notice of Default
In addition to the mailed notice, the Administrative Office of the Courts may give additional notice to defaulting lawyers by any of the means enumerated in Rule 16-811 g 3.

(3) List of Defaulting Lawyers

As soon as practicable after July 1 of each year but no later than August 1, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall prepare, certify, and file with the Court of Appeals a list that includes the name and address of each lawyer engaged in the practice of law who has failed to file the Pro Bono Legal Service Report for the previous year.

(4) Certification of Default; Order of Decertification

The Administrative Office of the Courts shall submit with the list a proposed Decertification Order stating the names and addresses of those lawyers who have failed to file their Pro Bono Legal Service Reports for the specified calendar year. At the request of the Court of Appeals, the Administrative Office of the Courts also shall furnish additional information from its records or give further notice to the defaulting lawyers. If satisfied that the Administrative Office of the Courts has given the required notice to each lawyer named on the proposed Decertification Order, the Court of Appeals shall enter a Decertification Order prohibiting each of them from practicing law in the State.

(5) Mailing of Decertification Order

The Administrative Office of the Courts shall mail by first class mail a copy of the Decertification Order to each lawyer named in the Order. The mailing of the copy of the Decertification Order shall constitute service.

(6) Rescission

If a lawyer files the outstanding Pro Bono Legal Service Report, the Administrative Office of the Courts shall request the Court of Appeals to enter an order rescinding its Decertification Order as to that lawyer. Upon entry of a Rescission Order, the Administrative Office of the Courts promptly shall furnish confirmation to the lawyer.

(7) Notices to Clerks

The Clerk of the Court of Appeals shall send a copy of each Decertification Order and Rescission Order entered pursuant to this Rule to the Clerk of the Court of Special Appeals, the Clerk of each circuit court, the Chief Clerk of the District Court, and the Register of Wills for each county.

(f) Certain Information Furnished to the Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service

The Administrative Office of the Courts shall submit promptly to the Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service a compilation of non-identifying information and data from the Pro Bono Legal Service Reports.
(g) Confidentiality

Pro Bono Legal Service Reports are confidential and are not subject to inspection or disclosure under Code, State Government Article, §10-615 (2)(iii). The Administrative Office of the Courts shall not release the Reports to any person or agency, except upon order of the Court of Appeals. Non-identifying information and data contained in a lawyer's Pro Bono Legal Service Report are not confidential.

Source: This Rule is new.
MARYLAND RULES OF PROCEDURE
THE MARYLAND LAWYERS' RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT
SECTION 6 — PUBLIC SERVICE

Rule 6.1. PRO BONO PUBLICO LEGAL SERVICE

(a) Professional Responsibility

A lawyer has a professional responsibility to render pro bono publico legal service.

(b) Discharge of Professional Responsibility

A lawyer in the full-time practice of law should aspire to render at least 50 hours per year of pro bono publico legal service, and a lawyer in part-time practice should aspire to render at least a pro rata number of hours.

(1) Unless a lawyer is prohibited by law from rendering the legal services described below, a substantial portion of the applicable hours should be devoted to rendering legal service, without fee or expectation of fee, or at a substantially reduced fee, to:

(A) people of limited means;

(B) charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental, or educational organizations in matters designed primarily to address the needs of people of limited means;

(C) individuals, groups, or organizations seeking to secure or protect civil rights, civil liberties, or public rights; or

(D) charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental, or educational organizations in matters in furtherance of their organizational purposes when the payment of the standard legal fees would significantly deplete the organization's economic resources or would otherwise be inappropriate.

(2) The remainder of the applicable hours may be devoted to activities for improving the law, the legal system, or the legal profession.

(3) A lawyer also may discharge the professional responsibility set forth in this Rule by contributing financial support to organizations that provide legal services to persons of limited means.

(c) Effect of Noncompliance

This Rule is aspirational, not mandatory. Noncompliance with this Rule shall not be grounds for disciplinary action or other sanctions.

COMMENT
The ABA House of Delegates has formally acknowledged “the basic responsibility of each lawyer engaged in the practice of law to provide public interest legal services” without fee, or at a substantially reduced fee, in one or more of the following areas: poverty law, civil rights law, public rights law, charitable organization representation, and the administration of justice. This Rule expresses that policy but is not intended to be enforced through the disciplinary process.

The rights and responsibilities of individuals and organizations in the United States are increasingly defined in legal terms. As a consequence, legal assistance in coping with the web of statutes, rules, and regulations is imperative for persons of modest and limited means, as well as for the relatively well-to-do.

The basic responsibility for providing legal services for those unable to pay ultimately rests upon the individual lawyer, and personal involvement in the problems of the disadvantaged can be one of the most rewarding experiences in the life of a lawyer. Every lawyer, regardless of professional prominence or professional workload, should find time to participate in or otherwise support the provision of legal services to the disadvantaged. The provision of free legal services to those unable to pay reasonable fees continues to be an obligation of each lawyer as well as the profession generally, but the efforts of individual lawyers are often not enough to meet the need. Thus, it has been necessary for the profession, the government, and the courts to institute additional programs to provide legal services. Accordingly, legal aid offices, lawyer referral services, and other related programs have been developed, and [others] more will be developed by the profession, the government, and the courts. Every lawyer should support all proper efforts to meet this need for legal services.

The goal of 50 hours per year for pro bono legal services established in paragraph (b) of this Rule is aspirational; it is a goal, not a requirement. The number used is intended as an average yearly amount over the course of the lawyer's career.

A lawyer in government service who is prohibited by constitutional, statutory, or regulatory restrictions from performing the pro bono legal services described in paragraph (b)(1) of the Rule may discharge the lawyer's responsibility by participating in activities described in paragraph (b)(2).

Code Comparison. — There is no counterpart of Rule 6.1 in the Disciplinary Rules of the Code. EC 2-25 states that “The basic responsibility for providing legal services for those unable to pay ultimately rests upon the individual lawyer. . . . Every lawyer, regardless of professional prominence or professional workload, should find time to participate in serving the disadvantaged.” EC 8-9 states that “The advancement of our legal system is of vital importance in maintaining the rule of law . . . and lawyers should encourage, and should aid in
making needed changes and improvements.” EC 8-3 states that “Those persons unable to pay for legal services should be provided needed services.”
APPENDIX C

MLSC Client Income Eligibility Guidelines
Maryland Legal Services Corporation

Client Income Eligibility Guidelines (50% of Maryland Median Income)
FY 2011 (July 2010 — June 30, 2011)

The following income levels are based on household income information contained in the Federal Register, May 12, 2010, Vol. 75, No. 91, which states that the median income for a Maryland family of four is $101,413.

The figures below reflect 50% of the median family income for the State of Maryland, and establish maximum income levels for client eligibility. These guidelines are not intended to preclude a program from using lower eligibility levels, i.e., 125% of federal poverty scale, if otherwise necessary for compatibility with other funding requirements or program policies.

Also, grantees may adopt adjunct policies for adjusting for such factors as fixed debts and medical expenses and other factors relevant to the client’s ability to pay for legal services. All adjunct policies must be submitted to MLSC for review prior to implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>Annual Income</th>
<th>Monthly Income</th>
<th>Weekly Income</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$26,367</td>
<td>$2,197</td>
<td>$507</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>$2,873</td>
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<tr>
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<td>$42,593</td>
<td>$3,549</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$50,707</td>
<td>$4,226</td>
<td>$975</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$58,820</td>
<td>$4,902</td>
<td>$1,131</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$66,933</td>
<td>$5,578</td>
<td>$1,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$68,454</td>
<td>$5,704</td>
<td>$1,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$69,975</td>
<td>$5,831</td>
<td>$1,346</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>$71,486</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>$73,017</td>
<td>$6,085</td>
<td>$1,404</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D

Maryland Legal Aid Bureau
Income Eligibility Guidelines
2011 – Legal Services Corporation’s Income Guidelines by Family Size

LSC publishes new guidelines a few weeks after HHS publishes the annual poverty income guidelines update (about February of each year); LAB adopts new eligibility guidelines after that.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Biweekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Yearly</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>$4,716</td>
<td>$56,588</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For each additional family member: Add $4,775

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>Annual Income</th>
<th>Monthly Income</th>
<th>Weekly Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>$71,496</td>
<td>$5,958</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>$73,017</td>
<td>$6,085</td>
<td>$1,404</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

Abbreviated Directory of Legal Services Programs
The Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland, Inc. (PBRC) is the statewide clearinghouse and coordinator of pro bono legal services. The Center's mission is to promote equal access to justice by coordinating and supporting volunteer civil legal services, providing resources and support for legal advocates for the poor, and promoting cooperation within the legal community.

As a separate non-profit organization which supports the Maryland State Bar Association, the Center works closely with legal services providers and local bar association pro bono projects throughout the state to help recruit pro bono attorneys. Volunteers are referred to pro bono programs according to the providers' needs and attorneys' interest and expertise. The Center also provides support services to volunteers and programs in the way of free or discounted training, pro bono court reporting services and recognition for pro bono contributions.

We have compiled a list of pro bono programs offering a wide range of opportunities for attorneys interested in providing free civil legal services to the disadvantaged. In addition to direct client representation, several programs offer pro bono opportunities through advice clinics, mediation, hotlines, mentoring and training services. Most programs provide malpractice insurance.

The support services offered by the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland include:
★ A Litigation Fund
★ An Email Announcement List which details volunteer, employment and training opportunities as well as special events occurring in the legal services community
★ Mentors
★ A variety of Trainings offered live, on video, or through webcasts
★ Technical Assistance

For more specific information on these pro bono programs and support services, or to volunteer please contact the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland, Inc. at

410-837-9379 or 800-396-1274.
pbrc@probonomd.org

JOIN THE CORPS OF VOLUNTEERS HELPING MARYLAND’S POOR
General Statewide Programs

Legal Aid Bureau
500 E. Lexington Street, Baltimore, MD 21202
Contact: Yoanna Moisides, Esq., Pro Bono Unit
410-951-7777 or 800-999-8904
www.mdlab.org

Works closely with Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service and other local bar affiliated projects by referring low-income clients to the programs as well as making direct referrals to attorneys. Also provides self-help materials through partner website www.peoples-law.org.

Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service
1 North Charles Street, Suite 222, Baltimore, MD 21202
Contact: Bonnie Sullivan, Esq., Executive Director
410-547-6537 or 800-510-0050 (clients) 410-539-6800 (administration)
www.mvlslaw.org

Refers cases in the areas of family law, bankruptcy, consumer, tort defense, wills, guardianship, landlord-tenant, deed change, name change, tax disputes and tax returns to attorneys in all jurisdictions of the state except, Allegany County, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County. The program also operates reduced fee programs and pro se clinics for divorce and bankruptcy.

Women's Law Center
305 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 201, Towson, MD 21204
Contact: Laure Ruth, Esq., Legal Projects Manager
410-321-8761
www.wlc-md.org

Experienced family law attorneys staff the Family Law Hotline and the Employment Law Hotline to provide free advice and counsel to weekly callers.
**Specialized Statewide Programs**

**Homeless Persons Representation Project**
1800 N. Charles Street, Suite 206 Baltimore, MD 21201  
**Contact:** Antonia Fasanelli, Esq., Executive Director  
410-685-6589 or 800-773-4340  
www.hprplaw.org

Provides legal advice and/or direct representation for homeless individuals and families in shelters and soup kitchens in a variety of civil matters. Also operates a referral program for case representation.

**House of Ruth Domestic Violence Legal Clinic**
2201 Argonne Drive, Baltimore, MD 21218  
**Contact:** Dorothy Lennig, Esq. Director Legal Clinic  
410-554-8463 or 888-880-7884 (legal office) 410-889-0840 (administration) 410-889-7884 (24-hr hotline)  
www.hruth.org

Provides counseling and direct representation to battered spouses in civil protection order proceedings and divorce and child custody cases.

**Public Justice Center**
1 North Charles Street, Suite 200, Baltimore, MD 21202  
**Contact:** John Nethercutt, Esq. Executive Director  
410-625-9409

Engages in systemic litigation and legislative work to correct abuses and ensure protection of the unrepresented, including victims of domestic violence, the disabled, children and migrant workers.

**CASA de Maryland Legal Services**
734 University Blvd. E.  
Silver Spring, MD 20903  
**Contact:** Kerry O'Brien, Esq. Director Legal Services  
301-431-4185  
www.casademaryland.org

Assists individuals with completing documents for obtaining citizenship; DED extension for naturalization, and relative petitions. Also provides translation services of various licenses and certificates from Spanish to English. Distributes food twice a month on Saturdays to needy families.
### Other Specialized Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland</strong></td>
<td>3600 Clipper Mill Road, Suite 350, Baltimore, MD 21211</td>
<td>Amy Cruice, Esq., Legal Program Administrator</td>
<td>410-889-8555; 443-524-2558</td>
<td>Group focuses on civil rights and civil liberties of Maryland residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Associated Catholic Charities of Baltimore - Immigration Legal Services – Esperanza Center</strong></td>
<td>430 South Broadway, Baltimore, MD 21231</td>
<td>Sophia Samuels Ellis, Esq., Pro Bono Managing Attorney</td>
<td>410-534-8015</td>
<td>Program provides counseling and legal representation for low-income persons with immigration-related problems (i.e. deportation, naturalization, green cards, and visas).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bar Association of Baltimore City Legal Services to the Elderly Program</strong></td>
<td>111 N. Calvert Street, Suite 631, Baltimore, MD 21202</td>
<td>Benjamin Grossman, Esq., Staff Attorney</td>
<td>410-396-1322</td>
<td>Program staff and volunteer attorneys provide advice and consultation, direct representation and education/outreach services. Volunteers speak to senior groups about legal topics affecting the elderly. Program staff and volunteers handle pro bono, non-fee generating civil cases, involving public benefits and pensions as well as consumer, health care, housing, guardianship and credit-related problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community Law Center</strong></td>
<td>3355 Keswick Road, Baltimore, MD 21211</td>
<td>Robin Jacobs, Esq.</td>
<td>410-366-0922; <a href="http://www.communitylaw.org">www.communitylaw.org</a></td>
<td>Works with community organizations to improve the economic viability and quality of life in their neighborhoods. Matches attorneys from the private bar with neighborhood organizations needing a variety of services including real estate transactions, tax sale foreclosure, economic development, zoning, liquor board appeals, drug nuisance abatement, and governance and compliance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Specialized Programs Cont'd

Civil Justice, Inc.  (reduced fee)
520 W. Fayette Street, #410, Baltimore, MD 21201
Contact: Philip Robinson, Executive Director
410-706-0174
civiljusticenetwork.org

As a consortium of solo and small firms throughout Maryland, Civil Justice refers cases to its members in a variety of practice areas which include family law, bankruptcy, consumer, tort defense, wills, guardianship, landlord-tenant, real estate, admiralty, intellectual property, criminal, administrative law, government relations, immigration, special education, small business set-up, predatory lending, environmental, disability rights, employment, personal injury, criminal, and national security.

Civil Justice, Inc. - First Time Home Buyer Project assists first time homebuyers in Baltimore City review various documents involved in the purchase of a home, in an effort to protect them against fraud and predatory lending.

Jewish Legal Services Clinic
5750 Park Heights Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21215
Contact: Deborah Hamburger
410-843-7305

Provides free brief legal consultation and advice on any non-fee generating legal matter through an evening walk-in clinic. May refer clients to attorneys for further representation. Russian translators available.

Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center
1001 Prince George's Blvd. Suite 750, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774
Contact: Russell Butler, Executive Director
301-952-0063 or 1-877-VICTIM-1

Assists victims of crime with information, advice, direct representation and legal referrals. Victim compensation and impact issues.

Maryland Disability Law Center
1800 North Charles Street, Suite 400, Baltimore, MD 21201
Contact: Lauren Kallins, Pro Bono Coordinator
410-727-6352 ext. 2503

Uses volunteers to represent children in special education cases and in school disciplinary proceedings. Also assists persons with developmental disabilities, mental illness and ADA compliance issues.
Other Specialized Programs Cont'd

**Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence**
P.O. Box 5, Denton, MD 21629  
**Contact:** Jeanne Yeager, Executive Director  
410-479-1149 or 800-929-4673 (24-hr hotline)  
www.mscfv.org

Provides assistance to victims of domestic violence, primarily with ex parte protective orders/peace orders. Refers clients to receive legal representation through a panel of reduced fee attorneys.

Assists Maryland crime victims with protection, compensation, victims' rights, and general advice and support through the criminal justice process.

**St. Ambrose Legal Services**
321 East 25th Street, Baltimore, MD 21218  
**Contact:** Vickie Gipson, Esq., Director of Foreclosure Prevention Division  
410-366-8550  
www.stambros.org

Handles cases involving improper predatory refinancing of home loans; fraudulent flipping of homes; home improvement fraud; and land installment agreements contracted fraudulently.

**The Veterans Consortium Pro Bono Program**
701 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 131, Washington, DC 20004  
**Contact:** Brian Robertson  
202-628-8164 or 888-838-7727

For lawyer Recruitment and Training – c/o National Veterans Legal Services, 1600 K Street, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20006  
**Contact:** Meg Bartley  
202-265-8305 ext. 110

Matches low-income veterans who need legal representation before the Court of Veterans Appeals on benefit issues.

**YWCA of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Legal Services**
1517 Ritchie Highway, Arnold, MD 21012  
**Contact:** Barbara Palmer  
410-626-7800  
www.annapolisywca.org

Provides counseling and direct representation to battered spouses in civil protection order proceedings and divorce and child custody project. Also places contested custody cases for low-income clients with private attorneys in reduced-fee program.
**Local Projects**

The following counties operate local bar-affiliated projects or a specialized pro bono program for that county. Most of the projects handle numerous civil legal issues including divorce, bankruptcy, wills, tort defense, debt collection, landlord/tenant, taxes, guardianships and income maintenance. A number of programs utilize volunteers for *pro se* assistance and/or staff community clinics that target underrepresented populations.

**Allegany Law**  
110 Greene Street, Cumberland, MD 21502  
**Contact:** Marcia Conrad, Esq. Executive Director  
301-722-3390  
alleganylaw@wirefire.com

Direct representation and *pro se* assistance.

**Community Legal Services of Prince George's County**  
P.O. Box 374, Riverdale, MD 20738  
**Contact:** Darielys Pinto  
301-864-4902  
www.clspgc.org

Legal matters handled include divorce, custody, visitation, guardianship, wills, defense of suits in tort or contract, and some landlord-tenant cases, etc.

Reduced fee referrals for protective orders and domestic cases.

**Harford County Bar Foundation – Lawyer Referral Service**  
18 Office Street, 1st Floor, Bel Air, MD 21014  
**Contact:** Cindy Lewis, Executive Director  
410-836-0123 or 410-879-3755 (Legal Aid Bureau)

Direct representation and community education.

**Mid-Shore Pro Bono Project**  
**Contact:** Sandy Brown, Executive Director  
216 East Dover Street, Bldg 300  
Easton, MD 21601  
410-690-8128  
www.midshoreprobono.org

Provides pro bono services in Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties in family law, domestic violence, housing and landlord/tenant matters, wills and related documents, and elder law.
Local Projects

Montgomery County, Maryland Bar Foundation Pro Bono Program
27 West Jefferson Street, Rockville, MD 20850
Contact: Clarice Ewing, Pro Bono Program Coordinator
301-762-5831
clarice@mcbfprobono.org

Direct representation; brief advice and counsel at community clinics; and pro se assistance.

Southern Maryland Center for Family Advocacy
P.O. Box 760, Hollywood, MD 20636
Contact: Laura Joyce, Director; Iris Shedrick, Supervisory Advocate
301-373-4141
www.smcfa.net

Direct representation; brief advice and counsel at homeless shelters; community education; and pro se assistance.

Whitman-Walker Clinic Legal Services
1701 14th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009
Contact: Dan Bruner, Esq., Program Director
202-939-7627
www wwclub

Provides comprehensive pro bono legal services to persons living with HIV/AIDS who live in the Washington, DC metro area and of Montgomery, Prince George's, Frederick, Charles and Calvert counties.

Staff and volunteers advise and represent people with HIV/AIDS and their families in a variety of civil legal matters.
Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland, Inc.
Free & Reduced Fee Trainings for Pro Bono Attorneys

The Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland (PBRC) coordinates training programs specifically geared toward pro bono attorneys, sponsoring its own classes and co-sponsoring courses with other providers. Training programs are offered at no cost or a reduced fee in exchange for a pro bono commitment in the topical area. Once an attorney takes a free or reduced fee training course, PBRC refers the attorney to a Maryland pro bono legal referral program for fulfillment of the pro bono commitment.

Training covers a broad range of topics including:

- family law
- housing  
- foreclosure prevention
- consumer bankruptcy
- special education
- veterans' benefits
- criminal records expungement

In addition to live training sessions, PBRC also offers webcast trainings that can be viewed online at a time and place convenient for attorneys. Thus, attorneys who are interested in a particular training course but who are unable to attend in person can still receive the training and provide pro bono services to those in need. Currently, webcasts are available (or soon to be available) in consumer bankruptcy, criminal records expungement, veterans' benefits and foreclosure prevention.

To register for trainings or for more information, contact:
Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland
520 West Fayette Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
410.837.9379; 800.396.1274
jlarrabee@probonomd.org
Please complete and return this form to us. Thank you!

Name _______________________________ Today's Date: ____________________________

Year Admitted to MD Bar: __________________________________________________________

Address: _______________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip: ____________________________________________________________________

County: __________________________________________________________________________

Firm/Org.: _______________________________________________________________________

Home Phone: __________________ Work Phone: __________________ FAX: __________________

E-mail: __________________________________________________________________________

How did you learn about us? ( ) website ( ) flyer ( ) listserv ( ) training ( ) conference

( ) newspaper ( ) colleague ( ) other ______________________________________

I am currently capable of providing pro bono legal services in the following areas:

( ) bankruptcy ( ) divorce ( ) public benefits
( ) child custody ( ) elder law ( ) real estate
( ) civil rights ( ) estate planning ( ) special education
( ) consumer ( ) guardianship ( ) tax
( ) disability ( ) immigration ( ) other (please specify)
( ) discrimination ( ) landlord-tenant

The following is a partial list of referral programs. We attempt to refer volunteers to programs based on their experience and location. However, if there is a particular agency to which you prefer to be referred, please let us know.

( ) Catholic Charities Immigration Services ( ) Mid- Shore Pro Bono Project
( ) Community Legal Services of Prince George's ( ) Montgomery Co. Bar Pro Bono Project
( ) Community Law Center ( ) St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center
( ) Homeless Persons Rep Project ( ) Women's Law Center
( ) House of Ruth Legal Clinic ( ) ___________ County Pro Bono Program
( ) Legal Services to the Elderly ( ) other (please specify)
( ) Maryland Disability Law Center
( ) Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service

The following training areas are ones in which I would like to receive training to provide pro bono services:

( ) bankruptcy ( ) divorce ( ) public benefits
( ) child custody ( ) elder law ( ) real estate
( ) civil rights ( ) estate planning ( ) special education
( ) consumer ( ) guardianship ( ) tax
( ) disability ( ) immigration ( ) other (please specify)
( ) discrimination ( ) landlord-tenant

I prefer to provide pro bono service in the following area(s):

( ) direct representation ( ) teach classes to other pro bono attorneys
( ) give brief advice / counsel individuals in shelters ( ) conduct public education seminars
( ) be a mentor to pro bono attorneys ( ) other (please specify):
( ) assist pro se clients in a pro bono clinic setting

If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Larrabee, Esq. at 800-396-1274 or 410-837-9379 or jlarrabee@probonomd.org.
APPENDIX F

List of Short-Term Pro Bono Opportunities
SHORT-TERM PRO BONO OPPORTUNITIES

HOTLINES:
Family Law Hotline
Experienced family law attorneys staff the hotline to provide brief legal advice and referral information on family-law related issues. Attorneys staff the hotline from their own offices.

Employment Law Hotline
Experienced employment attorneys staff the hotline to provide brief legal advice and referral information to anyone calling with employment issues.
To volunteer for either hotline, contact: The Women’s Law Center
305 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 201, Towson, MD 21204
Contact: Laure Ruth; lruth@wlcmd.org; 410-321-8761

CLINICS:
Jewish Legal Services Clinic
5750 Park Heights Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21215
Contact: Beth Land Hecht; blhecht@jcsbaltimore.org; 410-843-7456
Free brief legal consultation and advice on any non-fee generating legal matter through monthly evening walk-in clinics. Paralegals and law students assist with client intake.

Community Legal Services of Prince George’s County
P.O. Box 329, Hyattsville, MD 20781
Contact: Pro Bono Coordinator; 301-864-8354
Free brief legal consultation and advice on family law issues in a walk-in clinic setting.

Montgomery County, Maryland Bar Foundation Pro Bono Program
27 West Jefferson Street, Rockville, MD 20850
Contact: Mary Kay Canarte, Esq.; marykay@mcbfprobono.org; 301-424-2706
Free brief legal consultation and advice at community clinics; and pro se assistance.

SHELTER OUTREACH:
Homeless Persons Representation Project
300 Cathedral Street, Suite 204, Baltimore, MD 21201
Contact: Danielle Cover, Esq.; hpprprobono@hprplaw.org; 410-685-6589 or 800-773-4340
Provides legal advice and outreach for homeless individuals and families in a variety of civil matters in shelters and soup kitchens in the Baltimore and surrounding areas.

FORECLOSURE SOLUTIONS WORKSHOPS:
Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland, Inc.
520 West Fayette Street, Baltimore, MD 21201
Contact: Jennifer Larrabee, Esq.; jlarrabee@probonomd.org; 410-837-9379 or 800-396-1274
Free brief one-on-one legal advice for homeowners regarding their mortgage concerns. Attorneys interested in volunteering for foreclosure solutions workshops must first join Maryland’s Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project and take the basic training course. Download a registration form at http://www.probonomd.org/foreclosure-attorney-training.html.
APPENDIX G

Pro Bono Resource Center's
Pro Bono / Reduced Fee Litigation Fund
Reimbursement Request Form
PRO BONO / REDUCED FEE LITIGATION FUND

REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST FORM

Sponsoring agency must be funded by Maryland Legal Service Corporation. Reimbursement is subject to available funds at the time of request.

Sponsoring Agency: ______________________________________________________

Attorney: ______________________________________________________________

Firm: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip: _______________________________________________________

OFFICE EXPENSES

Mileage: _______ miles @ $.50/mile = $_____

Copies: _______ pages @ $.10/page = $_____

Faxes: _______ pages @ $1.00/pages = $_____

Postage: $_____

PROCESS SERVICE

Fee: _______ Company: ____________________________________________________

Fee: _______ Company: ____________________________________________________

Fee: _______ Company: ____________________________________________________

DEPOSITION (prior approval is required):

Fee: _______ Company: ____________________________________________________

EXPERT WITNESS (prior approval is required):

Fee: _______ Witness: ______________________________________________________

Total reimbursement: $__________________

The following expenses are not covered by this program:

- Appellate costs, generally. Call the PBRC office first to discuss the case.
- Court Costs (should be waived for a case taken through an MLSC funded organization. See Litigation Fund Guidelines)
- Real estate transfer or recordation fees.
- Single fees, depositions, witness expenses, etc. in excess of $1,500.
- Any aggregate request in excess of $1,500 must be cleared with PBRC in advance and will be allowed only in extraordinary circumstances.
- Bankruptcy filing fees.

Mail this completed form with receipts attached to:

LITIGATION FUND / PRO BONO RESOURCE CENTER OF MARYLAND

520 W. FAYETTE STREET, BALTIMORE, MD 21201
GUIDELINES GOVERNING REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

-Funds are available to Judicare and pro bono attorneys handling cases through MLSC funded agencies ONLY-

Note: These guidelines are subject to change. Please contact PBRC with any questions.

1. **MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE LIMIT**
   There is a cap of $1,500 per case whether single fee or aggregate. The request may be submitted but the maximum eligible reimbursement will not exceed the cap.

2. **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS**
   Reimbursement is subject to the availability of funds and is disbursed on a first come, first served basis.

3. **OFFICE EXPENSES**
   The expenses involved must be non-routine cash expenditures outside the normal scope of office operations. There will be no reimbursement for such items as the value of secretarial time, local phone calls, and minor numbers of copies made on office copiers or postage for routine correspondence. The following is the list of routine reimbursable items:
   - Mileage: $.50 per mile
   - Substantial photocopies: up to $.10 per page
   - Faxes: $1.00 per page
   - Registered mail will be covered.

**Expenditures of $200 or less:**
Non-routine cash expenditures totaling $200 or less are reimbursable by the PBRC Executive Director on the following basis:

(a) The attorney must submit a statement itemizing the expenditures, with supporting receipts, invoices, or billings of amounts payable.

(b) Documentation must be provided for any items covered by Guidelines 4 to 6 below.

(c) Total expenses under $10 will not be reimbursed.

**Expenditures over $200:**
Non-routine cash expenditures over $200, including fees for expert witnesses and deposition transcripts, require the same documentation as for smaller expenditures, but reimbursement will be made only upon the approval of the Litigation Fund Review Committee, pending availability of funds. Contact Andy Hagepanos at (410) 837-9379 or (800) 396-1274 to determine fund availability.
4. **COURT COSTS**
A Circuit Court will waive initial filing fees and costs in the case of a client’s indigency in accordance with Rule 1-325(a). If a waiver was granted at the beginning of a domestic relations case, a modified affidavit must be filed at the conclusion of the case to waive final fees and costs, including those of a master or examiner, in accordance with Rule 2-603(e).

At present, bankruptcy filing fees will not be reimbursed.

5. **SERVICE OF PROCESS**
All legal service programs are encouraged to seek pro bono or discounted services prior to requesting reimbursement. If not feasible, a company may be hired in your area for service of process. These costs may be reimbursed.

6. **DEPOSITIONS AND EXPERT WITNESSES**
Costs of expert witnesses are reimbursed only where the attorney supports the request with a statement that there were no less costly alternatives available that would have been acceptable under general standards of professional practice. Every effort should be made to negotiate a reduced fee from an expert witness. 
*Also see Item 1: Maximum Allowable Limit.*

7. **APPEALS**
Appellate costs will not be reimbursed without prior approval of the expenses by the Fund Review Committee.

8. **REAL ESTATE FEES**
Reimbursement will not be made for real estate transfer or recordation fees.

9. **ATTORNEY TIME**
Due to the limited nature of the fund, reimbursement will not be made for specialized attorney time.

**How to Request Reimbursement from the Litigation Fund**

Fill out a Reimbursement Request Form and attach all receipts/documentation of your expenses (as allowed in items 1-8 above), copies are acceptable. You can find this form 1) at the end of this document; 2) at your local MLSC funded pro bono referral program by request; or 3) at the Pro Bono Resource Center by request. Submit your request to A. Hagepanos at the below address.

**Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland**
520 West Fayette Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
ATTN: Pro Bono / Reduced Fee Litigation Fund
Sample Pro Bono Recruitment Letter
May 17, 2010

ATTORNEY
69 Franklin Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear ATTORNEY,

Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence (MSCFV) is a regional domestic violence program providing crisis and transitional services for victims of domestic violence in Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot Counties of Maryland. MSCFV services include:

* Shelter
* 24 hour hotline
* Crisis response
* Legal advocacy, direct legal representation in final protective orders and divorce and custody cases
* Support groups
* Abuser Intervention Program
* Public awareness programs.
* Transitional Program

All services are also provided in Spanish through MSCFV's Bilingual Program. You may also take a look at MSCFV's webpage: www.mscfv.org

This fiscal year (7/1/09 – 6/30/10), MSCFV has received funding for divorce and/or custody cases and Protective Order cases. The following grants enable our clients to obtain legal representation:

Maryland Legal Services Grant Program – This grant funding is through the Maryland Legal Service Corporation. MSCFV has received funding to assist 30 clients in their divorce and/or custody case. The attorney agrees to work at the $80/hour rate with a limit of $1,600. In extenuating circumstances this amount may be increased when funding is available. Clients must also meet income eligibility guidelines to receive these services.
Administrative Office of the Courts Protective Order Project – This grant allows MSCFV to obtain legal representation for clients for their protective order cases. Attorneys are paid a flat rate of $500.

I hope that you will be interested in working with us in the future. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to call.

Sincerely,

C. Sheila Orwig
Legal Program Coordinator
(410) 479-1149
sheila@mscfv.org

Enclosed:
2008-2009 Annual Report (English)
Domestic Violence Representation Project Pamphlet
Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence Pamphlets
Income Eligibility Chart
Yes! I would like to volunteer with HPRP. Contact me as provided below:

Name__________________________
Firm___________________________
Email__________________________
Phone Number___________________

Please send me information on:

☐ Vets Training
☐ Expungement Training
☐ Systemic Change Opportunities

For additional information, contact:
Danielle Cover
Director of Pro Bono Programs
Homeless Persons Representation Project, Inc.
1800 N. Charles Street, Suite 206
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-685-6589 x14
hprpprobono@hprplaw.org
**Mission**

HPRP's mission is to end homelessness in Maryland by providing free legal services, including advice, counsel, education, representation and advocacy, for low-income persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Our staff and volunteers pursue this mission by offering legal services through outreach in shelters, soup kitchens, welfare offices, community centers and on the street. Our direct representation informs broader-based systemic advocacy and impact litigation to address the root causes of homelessness.

**Current Pro Bono Programs**

Encompassing all of HPRP’s pro bono programs is the deep understanding that people who are homeless often cannot access legal services in a traditional manner. To provide the most comprehensive services to HPRP’s clients, volunteer attorneys reach our clients where they live and eat. Volunteers meet with clients in shelters, soup kitchens, community centers in addition to HPRP’s office.

**Veterans’ Benefits**

HPRP has recognized that there is an urgent need to assist homeless veterans. Many of our homeless veterans are those who have served in Desert Storm and in other arenas in the Gulf War, were injured during service, and are not receiving the benefits to which they are entitled. Under this task force, volunteer attorneys attend a 3-hour comprehensive training on Veterans’ Benefits cases and receive cases pre-screened by HPRP Staff. Volunteers are also provided with mentorship from HPRP’s Pro Bono Director and Staff Attorneys. This project is a wonderful opportunity to both learn a unique area of law and assist homeless veterans.

**Expungement**

The existence of a criminal record prevents many people from finding housing or gainful employment. Although expungement is a relatively simple process, it can mean the world of difference to HPRP’s clients. Representing a person in an expungement does not typically involve any litigation, but simply the analysis of the client’s criminal record, the preparation and filing of the Petitions in the Court, and the monitoring of the cases. Volunteers undertake a 2-hour training, meet with clients on a set schedule, and receive mentorship from HPRP’s Pro Bono Director.

**Systemic Cases**

HPRP’s Staff or volunteer attorneys occasionally identify systemic issues facing clients from their work on individual cases and elect to pursue class action suits or other collective means of legal redress. Although these cases are usually spearheaded by a Staff Attorney, it is common for HPRP to invite a firm or group of volunteer attorneys to co-counsel such cases. This work can be an invaluable tool for attorneys to gain both pleadings and trial experience.
APPENDIX J

Model Pro Bono Policy for Government Attorneys
MODEL PRO BONO POLICY FOR GOVERNMENT ATTORNEYS

Introduction

The Court of Appeals of Maryland Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service has prepared this Model Pro Bono Policy for Government Attorneys to facilitate the adoption of pro bono policies that encourage and support the pro bono work of attorneys employed by state, county and municipal governments in Maryland.

In 2002, the Court of Appeals amended Rule 6.1 of the Code of Professional Conduct by changing the definition of pro bono and providing for an aspirational goal of 50 hours of pro bono service annually for lawyers in full time practice. With this Rule change, together with the adoption of a mandatory pro bono reporting requirement pursuant to Rule 16-903, the Court of Appeals made it clear that pro bono service and/or a monetary contribution to legal services organizations was a professional responsibility of each Maryland attorney.

A number of government offices in Maryland have adopted pro bono policies, including the Office of the Attorney General, the Office of the Public Defender, the Baltimore City Solicitor’s Office and the Baltimore County Office of Law. For a variety of reasons, however, many government law offices have not permitted their attorneys to engage in pro bono legal service.

In developing this Model Pro Bono Policy, it is the intention of the Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service to assist and encourage government law offices to develop their own pro bono policies that address the particular needs of their offices. This Model Policy is a template. It includes provisions covering the key issues that may be included in a pro bono policy and addresses the primary concerns that government law offices may wish to consider as they develop their own pro bono policies. It is the hope of the Standing Committee that this Model Pro Bono Policy will be useful to government law offices throughout the state of Maryland as they develop and implement pro bono policies that encourage pro
The Pro Bono Representation Policy

Overview
Rule 6.1 of the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct addresses the professional obligation of all attorneys to provide pro bono publico legal services to people of limited means or agencies that serve people of limited means.

Given the growing need for such services, this Office has adopted this Pro Bono Representation Policy to encourage attorneys in this Office to actively engage in representing pro bono clients. Participation in pro bono service is voluntary and in addition to the official duties of the attorney in meeting the core responsibilities of this Office.

Attorneys are encouraged to volunteer to provide pro bono legal assistance to pre-screened clients in addition to their Office duties. The Office will provide central coordination of pro bono services including a conflicts review and a referral process. Reasonable secretarial and other support services are provided so long as the time used for pro bono work is secondary to the time needed to perform the core responsibilities of the Office.

1. The Pro Bono Committee/Coordinator
The Pro Bono Committee (Committee) is chaired by a supervisory attorney and consists of three attorneys from throughout the office. The function of the Committee is to centralize all pro bono services and provide whatever resources, including conflicts screening, which may be needed for attorneys to render necessary and appropriate legal services to pro bono clients.
During the pendency of a pro bono case, the Committee acts as liaison between the referral agency and the pro bono attorney and is a continuing legal resource for the attorney.

Alternate language for small offices: The Pro Bono Coordinator (Coordinator) is responsible for overseeing the pro bono work of attorneys in the Office and will act as a liaison between the referral agency and the pro bono attorney. The Pro Bono Coordinator will supervise conflicts screening within the Office and serve as a resource for attorneys rendering legal service to pro bono clients.

Model Pro Bono Policy for Government Attorneys
page 2
(a) **The Referral Process.** The Pro Bono Committee/Coordinator accepts clients from pro bono referral agencies that are funded by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC).

(b) **Case Screening.** The Pro Bono Committee/Coordinator accepts clients pre-screened for financial eligibility from MLSC agencies. The Committee/Coordinator then screens the case for legal issues that may have policy implications for the Office.

(c) **Conflicts Review.** The Pro Bono Committee/Coordinator screens for conflicts by running a conflicts check through the Office case management system as well as emailing Office attorneys regarding each case being considered for pro bono services.

1. If no conflict is identified, a case is assigned to an attorney who has volunteered to participate in the Pro Bono Program.

2. Where a conflict is identified that cannot be readily and ethically resolved by the Pro Bono Committee/Coordinator, the case is returned to the pro bono referral agency.

(d) **Case Assignment and Completion.** Once a case is successfully screened, a case description is sent to the attorneys in the Office and the case is assigned to an attorney on a first come, first serve basis.

1. Volunteer attorneys retain the case throughout their tenure in the Office.

2. Each attorney has the continuing professional responsibility to identify conflicts and to ensure there is no conflict of interest at the time the case is received or later. If a conflict should arise later, the matter is referred back to the Pro Bono Committee/Coordinator to resolve the issue, or if the conflict cannot be readily and ethically resolved, to return the case to the pro bono referral agency.

3. The attorney/client relationship continues if the attorney leaves the Office.
(4) Once a case is completed, the attorney notifies the Committee/Coordinator that the case is closed, provides the number of pro bono hours spent on the case, and submits a case disposition form to be sent to the pro bono referral agency by the Committee/Coordinator.

(e) **Pro Bono Leave Bank.** The Committee/Coordinator shall establish a Pro Bono Leave Bank into which all attorneys may contribute usable or unusable leave and compensatory time. When there is time accumulated in the Pro Bono Leave Bank, pro bono attorneys may use time in the Pro Bono Leave Bank for a pro bono case at the discretion of the Committee/Coordinator.

2. **Attorney Time**

Attorneys are encouraged to provide pro bono legal representation outside normal working hours, not in lieu of Office time. This does not mean that lawyers may not do pro bono work during normal working hours.

(1) Attorneys are still obliged to work the required hours each week.

(2) More than two hours of pro bono time during the workday is recorded as leave or compensatory time.

(3) Where an attorney needs to use extensive Office time within required Office hours to properly represent the client, (i.e. a trial or hearing):

   (a) The Office may allow an exception to the policy requiring the attorney to use leave time but the attorney must make up the lost Office time within a reasonable time thereafter.

   (b) The attorney may request the Committee to permit use of leave time contributed to the Pro Bono Leave Bank.

   (c) The attorney can request a flexible work schedule from a supervisor to make up the time needed for pro bono work.

   (d) Leave and compensatory time may be blended to provide for a flexible work schedule. A supervisor’s approval is required for such a flexible work schedule.
(4) All pro bono work must be recorded by date, case name, and number of hours on the attorney’s time sheet.

(5) To encourage pro bono service, time spent on pro bono work shall be considered in the annual evaluations of all attorneys in the Office.

3. **Attorney Capacity**
Attorneys have a professional obligation to make clear to third parties, particularly clients, that the attorney is not acting in any official capacity and that legal representation is not by the Office but is pro bono service rendered by the individual attorney.

   (a) Attorneys shall execute a Pro Bono Program Retainer Agreement for signature by the client.

   (b) Office space may not generally be used for meetings with a client or opposing counsel. The attorney may contact the Committee/Coordinator to determine where outside office space exists for their use.

   (c) All correspondence must be on official Pro Bono Program stationery provided by the Committee/Coordinator.

4. **Clerical Support**
Support staff may provide reasonable time and assistance to pro bono attorneys with the caveat that Office work has priority.

5. **Equipment and Office Resources**
Attorneys and support staff may use the following for pro bono work:

   (a) Telephone and email for incoming and outgoing calls and correspondence.

   (b) Lexis, WestLaw, FAX, copiers, computers.

   (c) De minimus items as paper, electricity, postage, etc.

6. **Expenses**
Filing fees, out of pocket expenses, transcripts, parking, and the costs of litigation
are not reimbursed by the Office. Requests for payment of such expenses may be made to the pro bono referral agency or to the litigation fund managed by the Pro Bono Resource Center where such costs are not waived by petition to the Court.

7. **Trust Fund Transactions**
Where a pro bono attorney is required to deposit client funds in a trust account, the Office does not hold the funds. The attorney must make arrangements with the pro bono referral agency to make use of an existing client trust account.

8. **Training.**
It is the responsibility of the pro bono attorney to obtain any training necessary to assure his or her competent representation of the pro bono client through the pro bono referral agency or other training programs.

9. **Professional Liability Insurance.**
All attorneys representing clients referred by MLSC funded programs are provided professional liability insurance. No attorney may provide pro bono service of any kind without professional liability insurance.

10. **Subject Areas of Law**
Rule 6.1 provides a general description of pro bono legal services. In this Office, pro bono legal work may be provided in civil matters, including the areas listed below. Criminal cases are specifically excluded. This list is not exclusive and may be changed at the discretion of the Committee/ Coordinator.

- Advance Directives
- Wills and Estate Planning
- Guardianships
- Bankruptcy
- Social Security
- Divorce
- Child Support
- Child Custody
- Domestic Violence Protective Orders
- CINA and other Child Representation Cases
- Landlord Tenant
- Records Expungement
- Veterans Benefits
- Tax
• Business Law or Incorporation
• Real Estate

11. **Short-Term Pro Bono Service.**
In addition to representing individual pro bono clients as discussed above, attorneys are encouraged to participate in short-term pro bono service. Short-term pro bono service includes participation in programs such as “Ask a Lawyer” brief advice and counsel sessions, clinics and workshops for self-represented litigants, hotlines, and community education programs. Short-term pro bono also includes serving as faculty in trainings for pro bono attorneys, mentoring pro bono attorneys and participation in recruiting and other outreach efforts for pro bono programs.

12. **Effective Date.**
This Pro Bono Representation Policy is adopted by the ______ Office of Law on __________ and is effective immediately.
Ways to Establish Effective Relationships with Volunteers (Checklist)
WAYS TO ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH VOLUNTEERS

1. Seek to understand WHY the person volunteered
   What motivates the person’s volunteer service?
   What does the person value? Feel passionate about?
   
   a. LISTEN!
      What does the volunteer say about what they’re seeking?
      What does the volunteer say after an assignment or case?
   
   b. ASK!
      If possible, talk with the volunteer after each assignment.
      Ask “What did you find rewarding about this?”
      Ask “Is this the way you’d like to volunteer again?”

2. Get to know volunteers well enough to know what supports will help the person be effective in helping the client.
   
   a. Seek feedback from all volunteers regularly.
      Consider using a QUESTIONNAIRE form to guide an interview to get to know the person better & can help obtain great stories
      Consider doing a SURVEY of volunteers in person, by phone, or by email & make it possible to respond anonymously
   
   b. Observe and inquire to find out each volunteer’s skill levels
   
   c. Observe and talk about volunteer’s “comfort zone”
   
   d. Listen for pet peeves and what to avoid
   
   e. Select assignments, cases and opportunities that are a good fit for the individual
   
   f. Offer information, reference materials, training, consultants, mentors, re-referral if necessary, etc. appropriate to the individual volunteer.
ESTABLISHED VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY INTERVIEW *

Full Name of Volunteer: 
Preferred Name: 
Phone: 
Email: 
Preferred Method of Communication: 
Employer/Firm: 

Interviewer: 
Date: 

Does your employer have a pro bono policy? If yes, what is it?

Usual areas of practice:

Experiences Volunteering:

When did you start volunteering with this program?
Did someone recommend it? If not, how did you learn of the program?
Why did you decide to get involved?
What were your first experiences volunteering with this program?
What has been most rewarding about volunteering?
Do you remember a client or case you especially enjoyed?
What is your favorite client story from your experiences as a volunteer?
In what different ways have you volunteered?
Can you estimate the amount of time you have spent as a volunteer with this program?

Interest in Future Volunteer Opportunities:

Are there other ways you would like to be involved in this program?
What type of service do you NOT want to be asked to provide as a volunteer?

* Excerpts from the October 29, 2009, NAPBPro Webinar Sample “Volunteer Interview” Form
In what ways could we help support your volunteer service?

Are you interested in receiving training in an area outside your normal practice areas?

Are you interested in volunteering as a mentor to other pro bono attorneys?

Is there additional information you would like to receive about the program?

**Appreciation for Volunteers and Impressions of this Program:**

What do you think is the best way we can show appreciation for our volunteers?

Who would be most proud of the volunteer service you've provided?

Do you belong to any legal, community or religious organizations that would be interested in learning of your pro bono service?

What would you say about this program to a friend or colleague who's reluctant to volunteer?

Do you have any suggestions for ways to improve this program?

**Personal Information:**

Would you be willing to provide a photo (digital or hard copy) for our archives?

Would you give us permission to use your comments or photo for our publications or on our website to publicize our services and help recruit volunteers?

Are you involved in other community service/volunteering on a regular basis?

Family (optional)?

Non-legal interests/hobbies (optional)?
APPENDIX M

2011 Maryland Pro Bono Service Awards
Nomination Form
2011 MARYLAND PRO BONO SERVICE AWARDS

The submission deadline for this application is April 1, 2011

The Maryland Pro Bono Service Awards are statewide awards honoring outstanding attorneys and non-attorneys who have made a significant contribution to the delivery of pro bono civil legal services to Maryland’s poor. The service may have been made through litigation, legal/legislative advocacy, or any other means that extend needed legal services to low-income persons.

Nominations will be accepted for the following categories:

- Individuals
- Members of the judiciary
- Pro bono agencies or programs
- Law firms
- Government or corporate legal departments
- Special projects
- Non-legal or organizational involvement

If someone you know has made an impact, please consider nominating them for one of these awards. The Awards are presented each year at the Maryland State Bar Association Annual Meeting in Ocean City and the nomination process is sponsored and staffed by the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland.

Please send this Nomination Form, the Narrative Description, and any supporting documentation (news clippings, testimonials, etc.) by mail, fax, hand-delivery, or e-mail to:

Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland
Attn: Ms. Diana Rogers
520 W. Fayette Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(410) 837 - 9379 * fax- (410) 385 - 2616 * email- drogers@probonomd.org

For questions please contact Diana Rogers at the Pro Bono Resource Center
Phone: (410) 837-9379 or (800) 396-1274
Award Descriptions and Eligibility Requirements

Individual (4 awards)
All four awards are dedicated to practitioners who have demonstrated outstanding commitments to pro bono service for those in need. The Lee A. Caplan Award is geared toward a solo or small firm practitioner who has rendered pro bono service over many years. The Alex Fee Award is sponsored by the Young Lawyers Section (YLS), and is given to a member of the YLS who is making a significant pro bono contribution either directly or through a pro bono organization.

Member of Judiciary
This award honors any judge or master who has contributed to the overall pro bono effort by encouraging participation among attorneys, or increasing access to the judicial system for legal services for low-income clients.

Pro Bono Program
This category includes all pro bono provider programs, legal services programs with pro bono components, and groups coordinated to deliver pro bono legal services to indigent clients.

Law Firm
This award recognizes innovative approaches to the delivery of free legal services and the encouragement of participation by the greatest number of attorneys relative to that firm's size. Both large and small firms will be evaluated by the level of commitment to pro bono service within the firm.

Government or Corporate Legal Department
Any public agency or private corporate department which incorporates pro bono legal services to the poor into its general practice will be eligible for this award.

‘Herbert S. Garten’ Special Project Award
This award recognizes an individual, group, firm, or ad hoc group that has initiated a special project that enhances the delivery of legal services for low-income persons and meets the above criteria.

Non-Legal or Organizational Involvement Award
This recognizes individuals or organizations providing non-legal services which have made a substantial contribution toward the delivery of pro bono legal services to low-income clients. Examples of those eligible for nomination include, but are not limited to, court reporters and printing companies that donate in-kind services, or accountants who assist on legal cases.
MARYLAND PRO BONO SERVICE AWARD NOMINATION FORM
Only one person/firm per form please

Nominee
Name (individual or Contact Name (firm):
________________________________________________________

Firm/Professional Affiliation (if any):
________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip: _____________________________________________________________________

Telephone: ___________________________ Email: ___________________________

Size of Nominee’s Firm, Organization, Department or Program: _______________________

Award Category (please choose one)

___ Individual

___ Solo/Small firm

___ Large firm

___ Alex Fee (YLS)

___ Lee A. Caplan

___ Member of Judiciary

___ Law Firm

___ Pro Bono Program

___ Government/Corporate Legal Department

___ ‘Herbert S. Garten’ Special Project

___ Non-Legal or Organizational Involvement

Nominated by:

Name: ___________________________________________________________________________

Firm: ___________________________________________________________________________

Address: _________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip: ___________________________________________________________________

Telephone: ___________________________ Email: ___________________________
Nominee’s Pro Bono Contribution

(Please answer all that apply)

The Program
Name of Program Worked Through (e.g., legal services, court, or pro bono program):

________________________________________________________________________

Number of Years Associated with the program: ____________

Number of Cases/ Clients Served by Nominee: ____________

Dates of Case/Pro Bono Project: From: ____________ Until: ____________

# of Hours Donated on Case: ____________

Project Value of Hours: ____________

The Nominee (please check all that apply):

___ Served as an effective advocate for low-income clients on a pro bono basis.

___ Demonstrated a dedication to the development and delivery of legal services to the poor through a pro bono program.

___ Assisted in meeting previously unmet legal needs or extending services to the underrepresented.

___ Participated in litigation or pursued the support/defeat of legislation in order to increase access to legal services by low-income people in Maryland.

The Description

As you write the narrative describing the nominee’s pro bono effort(s), please try to address the following points (no more than 5 pages maximum, please):

1. The specific type(s) of contribution made by the nominee;
2. The desired outcome of the pro bono effort(s), achieved or not;
3. The type of staff and resource support provided to the nominee;
4. The subsequent impact of the pro bono effort(s) on the clients and/or community;
5. How the nominee’s pro bono effort(s) helped expand access to the legal services for low-income people, and why the nominee’s effort(s) should be recognized.

Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland
An MSBA/Legal Services Partnership
APPENDIX N

Webcast Registration Forms
FORECLOSURE PREVENTION PRO BONO PROJECT
PRO BONO ATTORNEY FORECLOSURE MEDIATION TRAINING
WEBCAST REGISTRATION FORM

NAME ___________________________ HOME# ___________________________

EMPLOYER ______________________ WORK# ___________________________

STREET ___________________________ MOBILE# ___________________________

ADDRESS ___________________________

CITY/STATE/ZIP ___________________________

EMAIL ADDRESS: __________________________________________________________

CURRENT AREA(S) OF PRACTICE & YEARS IN AREA: ________________________________________

PREVIOUS AREA(S) OF PRACTICE & YEARS IN AREA: ________________________________________

LANGUAGE(S) OTHER THAN ENGLISH: __________________________________________

☑ FLUENT ☑ BASIC ☑ FLUENT ☑ BASIC

MARYLAND COUNTIES IN WHICH I WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER: ________________________________________

☐ I would like to view the Foreclosure Mediation Training via webcast.

☐ I am a member in good standing of the Maryland Bar. Year Admitted: ___________________________

☐ I received Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project Basic Training on or about ________________

☐ I agree to do the following in exchange for this free training (CHECK ONE OR BOTH):

☐ Provide pro bono representation to two homeowners in their mediation sessions; OR

☐ Provide pro bono representation to one homeowner in his/her mediation session

AND provide free brief legal advice to homeowners at one foreclosure solutions workshop.

SIGNATURE: ___________________________ DATE: ___________________________

Please return this form to:
Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland, Inc.
520 W. Fayette Street Baltimore, MD 21201
foreclosure@probonomd.org
Fax: (410) 385-2616
For more information please call (410) 837-9379 or (800) 396-1274
FORECLOSURE PREVENTION PRO BONO PROJECT
BASIC TRAINING WEBCAST REGISTRATION FORM

THE NEW FORECLOSURE PREVENTION 101 – A BEGINNER’S GUIDE

__ I am a member in good standing of the Maryland Bar ________ Year of Admission ________

Initial

__ I would like to volunteer for the Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project.
Please send instructions for accessing this webcast to the email address on this form.

__ I agree to do the following in exchange for this free training (CHECK ONE OR BOTH):
   __ Provide pro bono representation to two homeowners in their mediation sessions; OR
   __ Provide pro bono representation to one homeowner in his/her mediation session
       AND provide free brief legal advice to homeowners at one foreclosure solutions workshop.

NAME ___________________________ HOME# ___________________________

EMPLOYER ___________________________ WORK# ___________________________

STREET ADDRESS ___________________________ MOBILE# ___________________________

CITY/STATE/ZIP ___________________________

EMAIL ADDRESS: ________________________________________________________

LANGUAGE(S) OTHER THAN ENGLISH: ___________________________ FLUENT

BASIC

CURRENT AREA(S) OF PRACTICE & YEARS IN AREA:

PREVIOUS AREA(S) OF PRACTICE & YEARS IN AREA:

MARYLAND COUNTIES IN WHICH I WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER:

SIGNATURE: ___________________________ DATE: ___________________________
I am a member in good standing of the Maryland Bar ________ Year of Admission ________

I am a member of the Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project and took my Basic Training on or about ________

I would like to view this advanced training via webcast.

I agree to do the following in exchange for this free training (CHECK ONE OR BOTH):

__ Provide pro bono representation to two homeowners in their mediation sessions; OR
__ Provide pro bono representation to one homeowner in his/her mediation session

AND provide free brief legal advice to homeowners at one foreclosure solutions workshop.

Name ___________________________ Home# ___________________________ 
Employer _________________________ Work# _________________________
Street Address _____________________ Mobile# _________________________
City/State/Zip ______________________

Email address: ________________________________

Current Area(s) of Practice & Years in area: ________________________________

Previous Area(s) of Practice & Years in area: ________________________________

Language(s) Other than English: ________________________________

Maryland Counties in Which I Would Like to Volunteer:_________________________

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Please return this form to:

Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland, Inc.
520 W. Fayette Street  Baltimore, MD 21201  -or-  foreclosure@probonomd.org  -or-  Fax: (410) 385-2616
For more information please call (410) 837-9379 or (800) 396-1274.
APPENDIX O

Automatic Fee Waiver Memorandum and
Motion forWaiver in Circuit Court
MEMORANDUM

TO: Our Valued Volunteer Attorneys

FROM: Bonnie A. Sullivan
Executive Director

RE: Refusal of Intake Clerks to Accept the MVLS Waiver Memorandum as Proof of Indigency

Clients eligible for MVLS’ services are automatically entitled to a waiver of filing fees upon the demonstration of certain facts. Md. Cts. & Jud. Proc. Code Ann. §§ 7-201 and 7-202. For this reason, included in your packet are Memoranda to the Clerks of the Circuit and District Courts dated August 19, 2008, and signed by me, which you should complete and submit to the clerk along with your client’s Complaint. As provided in the referenced statutes, this Memorandum (when completed by you) should be sufficient to prove your client’s entitlement to the waiver.

Unfortunately, over the past few months, a number of volunteers have informed us that clerks in certain Circuit Courts (principally Baltimore City) have been refusing to accept the Waiver Memorandum as proof of indigency, despite the statutory mandate. Instead, they are requiring the client to file a motion for waiver pursuant to Maryland Rule 1-325, the rule that applies when the party does not qualify for services through a legal services provider such as MVLS.

Because this seems to be a recurring problem, we have included in your packet forms that you can use in the event you are required to file a motion for waiver in Circuit Court.

If you have any questions regarding these additional materials, or any other aspect of your representation, please do not hesitate to call our Director of Pro Bono Programs, Candie Deming, at 443-451-4061.

Thank you again for your generosity in helping MVLS make pro bono count.
MEMORANDUM

TO: Clerk of the Circuit Court

FROM: Bonnie A. Sullivan
Executive Director

DATE: August 29, 2008

RE: Waiver of Filing Fees and Costs for Pro Bono Client

Based on the Maryland Legal Services Corporation's eligibility criteria (income below 50% of the Maryland median), Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service has found the above-named client to be entitled to pro bono legal representation and has arranged for Attorney __________________ to provide that representation.

Section III (B)(I)(J) of the notes to Section 7-202 (Court Fees) of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article states:

“A clerk shall not collect a filing fee ... or other court cost in advance in: ... a case in which the plaintiff or petitioner is represented by counsel retained through a pro bono or legal services program that is recognized by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, if the program provides the clerk with a memorandum that names the program, attorney(s), and client(s), and that specifies that representation is being provided for client(s) meeting the financial eligibility criteria of the Corporation...” (emphasis added).

Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service is “a pro bono or legal services program that is recognized by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation” and this Memorandum “names the program, attorney(s) and client(s) and ... specifies that representation is being provided for [a] client [...] meeting the financial eligibility criteria of the [Maryland Legal Services] Corporation.”

Pro bono client ____________________________ has complied with the statutory requirements and is entitled to a waiver of costs and fees.
MEMORANDUM

TO: Clerk of the District Court

FROM: Bonnie A. Sullivan
Executive Director

DATE: August 29, 2008

RE: Waiver of Filing Fees and Costs for Pro Bono Client

Based on the Maryland Legal Services Corporation’s eligibility criteria (income below 50% of the Maryland median), Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service has found the above-named client to be entitled to pro bono legal representation and has arranged for Attorney ___________________________ to provide that representation.

Section 7-301 (Court costs) of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article states:
“(c) Civil Case – (3) The Court of Appeals may provide by rule for waiver of prepayment of filing fees and other costs in cases of indigency.”

The notes to Section 7-301 contain the “District Court of Maryland Civil Cost Schedule and Other Charges.” “District Court Administrative Regulation XIX – Civil Costs” is contained within the Civil Cost Schedule and provides:

“(2) Advance payment of costs shall not be required in a case in which the plaintiff/petitioner is represented by counsel ... retained through a pro bono or legal services program that is recognized by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation if the program provides the clerk with a memorandum that names the program, attorney(s), and client(s), and that specifies that representation is being provided for client(s) meeting the financial eligibility criteria of the Corporation...” (emphasis added).

Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service is “a pro bono or legal services program that is recognized by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation” and this Memorandum “names the program, attorney(s) and client(s) and ... specifies that representation is being provided for [a] client[ ] meeting the financial eligibility criteria of the [Maryland Legal Services] Corporation.”

Pro bono client ________________________________________ has complied with the statutory requirements and is entitled to a waiver of costs and fees.
IN THE
CIRCUIT COURT FOR

Plaintiff v. ______________________

Defendant

Case No. __________

MOTION FOR WAIVER OF PREPAYMENT OF COURT COSTS AND FEES

Plaintiff, ______________ by and through attorney, ________________ respectfully moves this honorable Court for an Order waiving the prepayment of court costs in this action, and for reasons states:

1. Plaintiff filed a Complaint for _______ (“Complaint”) in the Circuit Court for _______ on _______ 20____.

2. Attached to the Complaint is an August 19, 2008 Memorandum from Bonnie A. Sullivan, Executive Director of the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS), stating that “based on the Maryland Legal Services Corporation’s eligibility criteria (income below 50% of the Maryland median), Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service has found the above-named client to be entitled to pro bono legal representation” and identifying undersigned counsel as the pro bono attorney. Memorandum attached as Exhibit 1.

3. On _______, 20___, Plaintiff’s attorney received a telephone call from the _________ Clerk’s Office informing ____ that to qualify for a waiver of costs and fees, it would be necessary to file a Motion.

4. Plaintiff is indigent and unable to pay the court costs associated with these proceedings. Affidavit of Indigency attached at Exhibit 2.
5. MVLS referred Plaintiff to undersigned counsel to handle this case on a pro bono basis.

6. Undersigned counsel hereby certifies that Plaintiff’s Complaint for _____ is meritorious.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully moves this honorable Court to:

A. waive prepayment of all costs associated with these proceedings; and

B. award such other and further relief as the nature of _____ cause may require.

A Memorandum in Support of this Motion is attached hereto and incorporated herewith.

Respectfully submitted,

______________________________
Attorney for Plaintiff
IN THE
Plaintiff
v.
Defendant

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF MOTION FOR WAIVER OF PREPAYMENT OF COURT COSTS AND FEES

Plaintiff, ____________, by and through attorney, _________________, submits this Memorandum in Support of _____ Motion for Waiver of Prepayment of Court Costs.

Section 7-201 (Court Costs) of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland states: “the Circuit Court shall pass an order waiving the payment in advance [of court costs] if: (1) Upon petition for waiver, it is satisfied that the petitioner is unable by reason of poverty to make the payment; and (2) The petitioner’s attorney, if any, certifies that the suit, appeal or writ is meritorious.” Md. Cts. & Jud. Proc. Code Ann. §§ 7-201(b)(1) and (2) (2002).

Section III (B)(1)(J) of the notes to Section 7-202 (Court Fees) of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article states that the court clerk shall not collect surcharges or other filing fees in a case “in which the plaintiff or petitioner is represented by counsel retained through a pro bono or legal services program that is recognized by the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, if the program provides the clerk with a memorandum that names the program, attorney(s), and client(s), and that specifies that representation is being provided for client(s) meeting the financial eligibility criteria of the Corporation…. Notes to Section 7-202 attached as Exhibit 3.

Pursuant to the Maryland Legal Services Corporation (MLSC) income eligibility
guidelines, Plaintiff is entitled to free legal representation because ________ income is no greater than $_______ per month. Guidelines attached as Exhibit 4. In fact, Plaintiff’s income is only $____ per month and Plaintiff has submitted an affidavit to that effect. See Exhibit 2.

NOTE: IF YOUR CLIENT LOST A JOB FOR SOME REASON RELATED TO THE CASE AND/OR IS UNDEREMPLOYED, STATE THAT HERE. FOR EXAMPLE:

“Plaintiff’s income is so low because she recently lost her job. Her loss of employment is directly attributable to the Defendant, her husband, who, on two occasions, sought protective orders against Plaintiff. Although both were denied as being without merit, Plaintiff was required to miss work to attend the hearings and was terminated.”

In addition, Exhibit 1, the Memorandum from the Executive Director of Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS), states that the client is eligible for MVLS’ services. The Maryland Legal Services Corporation recognizes MVLS as a pro bono legal services provider. Finally, as required under the statute, Exhibit 1 identifies the attorney and the client. Accordingly, Plaintiff has complied with the statutory requirements and is entitled to a waiver of costs and fees.

For all of these reasons, Plaintiff respectfully requests that the prepayment of court costs and fees be waived.

Respectfully submitted,

____________________________
Attorney for Plaintiff
AFFIDAVIT OF INDIGENCY

1. I am over 18 and competent to testify to the facts contained herein.

2. I am indigent and cannot pay the court costs associated with this action.

2. My last employment was with _______ from _______ through _______.

3. The only income I receive is from _____ in the amount of $____ per month.

4. My assets are:

   Bank Accounts       $____
   (checking and savings)
   Furniture           $____
   Other               $____

5. My outstanding bills are:

   Rent                $____
   Telephone           $____
   Utilities           $____

6. My monthly expenses are:

   Rent/Mortgage       $____
   Utilities           $____
   Phone               $____
   Food                $____
   Child Care          $____
   Total               $____
7. My bills exceed my income, and I am therefore unable to pay the costs of these proceedings.

I, _______, the undersigned Plaintiff, do hereby affirm under the penalties of perjury that the above statements are true and correct.

Plaintiff
Upon consideration of Plaintiff’s Request for Waiver of Court Costs pursuant to Sections 7-201 and 7-202 of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, it is this _____ day of _________________, 20___, by the Circuit Court for __________, 

ORDERED that the costs and fees in this matter be, and the same hereby are, waived.

____________________________________
JUDGE
______________ Circuit Court

Copies to:
Attorney for Plaintiff
Attorney for Defendant
REQUEST FOR HEARING

Plaintiff, _______, by and through _________ attorney, ________, respectfully requests
a hearing on _________ Motion for Waiver of Prepayment of Court Costs.

Respectfully submitted,

______________________________
Attorney for Plaintiff
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this ____ day of _____, 20___, the undersigned sent the following to _________________________________, via first class mail, postage pre-paid.

- Motion for Waiver of Prepayment of Court Costs
- Memorandum in Support
- Affidavit of Indigency
- Request for Hearing
- Proposed Order

__________________________
Attorney for Plaintiff
REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF COURT COSTS AND MASTER’S FEE

Pursuant to Maryland Rule 2-603, Client ____________________________ herein Requests waiver of the outstanding court costs and Master’s fee in this matter. At the time suit was filed, _______________________________was eligible for legal representation through Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service and was referred to undersigned counsel on a pro bono basis.

As such, and pursuant to Sections 7-201 (Payment and waiver of costs) and 7-202 (Court fees) of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Plaintiff was granted an exception to the requirement of paying advance filing fees.

_______________________________remains unable to pay the costs necessary to Complete this case. Affidavit in Support of Waiver of Court Costs and Master’s Fees attached as Exhibit 1. For this reason, ________________________________seeks a waiver of court costs and the Master’s fee in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

____________________________
Attorney for Plaintiff
IN THE

Plaintiff

v.

Defendant

Case No.: __________

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF COURT COSTS AND MASTER’S FEE

1. I am over 18 and competent to testify to the facts contained herein.

2. I was granted a waiver of advance court costs based upon my inability to pay them.

3. I remain unable to pay these costs.

4. I am also unable to pay the Master’s fee.

I, ________________________________, do hereby affirm under the penalties of perjury that the above statements are true and correct.

[Client’s signature]

Sworn and subscribed to before me this ______________________day of __________, 20____

________________________
Notary Public

My commission expires: ___________________________
ORDER

Upon consideration of ______________________ ’s Request for Waiver of Court Costs and Master’s Fee and pursuant to Sections 7-201 and 7-202 of the Courts and Judicial Proceedings Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, it is this ________ day of ________________, 20____, by the Circuit Court for _______________________________, Ordered that the costs and Master’s fee in this matter be, and the same hereby are, waived.

______________________________
JUDGE
______________________________Circuit Court

Copies to:

Attorney for Plaintiff
Attorney for Defendant
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this ________________ day of_________, 20___, the undersigned sent the following to______________________________, via first class mail, postage pre-paid.

- Request for Waiver of Court Costs and Master’s Fee
- Affidavit in Support
- Proposed Order

__________________________________
Attorney for Plaintiff
APPENDIX P

Tips for Pro Bono Volunteers Assisting Low-Income Clients
As a pro bono volunteer, the challenges in representing low-income clients consist of more than learning a new area of the law, or gaining experience in client interaction. Representing a pro bono client may be vastly different from a corporate client, and a major hurdle can be the socioeconomic challenges themselves.

Clients may struggle with financial, cultural, educational, and/or emotional barriers, requiring more foresight and sensitivity by the volunteer. Following are a few issues you may encounter, as well as helpful tips in effective client assistance.

Client Intake

Your first meeting with the client may be the most important meeting. Aside from assessing the legal issues, it is also an opportunity to shape the volunteer/client relationship for the duration of the case.

Tip 1: Meet face-to-face with the client and conduct your own intake interview, even if the referring agency has already done so. Here’s why:

- It is a chance to build trust and rapport with the client;
- A thorough interview can uncover details or new information;
- Since the client may not have the same level of involvement as a paying client, a face-to-face meeting can help the client feel more invested in his or her case.

Tip 2: Set client expectations. Specifically, you should do the following:

- Go over the retainer agreement to make sure that the client understands your respective duties;
- Explain the limited scope of your assistance on the client’s legal matter. Clients may often have a host of legal and non-legal problems, so it is important to be clear on how you can assist them, and that you can refer them to other resources and agencies if requested;
- Be honest about your background. It may be helpful to explain to the client that you are working in an area outside of your area of legal expertise;
• It is important to address punctuality issues for appointments since clients may have difficulty with scheduled commitments;
• Stress the client’s responsibility to keep you informed about his or her contact information, and your policy on losing touch with the client (Example: If you do not hear from the client within x days of sending a letter requesting a response, you may withdraw from the case).

**Tip 3:** Get thorough contact information. Keep in mind the following:

• Clients may be difficult to reach — their phones may become disconnected, they may move frequently or have inconsistent work schedules. Get as many alternate phone numbers and emergency contacts as you can, whether it be through the client’s work, friends, or family;
• In the case of domestic violence clients, ask whether it is safe to contact the client at his or her residence, or to include the client's address on court pleadings.

---

**Scheduling**

Clients may have difficulty balancing their employment, child care, and financial hardships with the tasks involved in litigation. It is therefore important to think ahead and be as flexible as possible.

**Tip 1:** Ask clients about the best times they can be reached, as well as their work schedule in order to set court appearances during days off. This will lessen the impact on their employment.

**Tip 2:** Give plenty of advance notice to clients for appointments, with phone and written reminders. You may want to use certified mail (along with regular mail) to confirm that the client receives the notices.

---

**Financial Hardships**

Financial hardships may be a large contributor to communication and scheduling hardships.

**Tip 1:** At your first meeting with the client, give the client a stack of self-addressed, stamped envelopes. If your firm permits, provide public transportation assistance to the client (CTA fare card).

**Tip 2:** If you need documents from the client, give her advance notice so she can bring the documents to a meeting for you to copy.

**Tip 3:** Ask clients whether they may be bringing their children to an appointment or court appearance because of lack of child care resources. This way, you and they can prepare for the children's presence (toys for an office appointment, or court daycare facilities — check with the courtroom clerk).

**Tip 4:** Always ask the referring agency for resources or referrals for clients.
Communication

Imparting legal information may be challenging and more time-consuming, depending on the degree of the client's sophistication. It is important to be both patient and firm while counseling your client.

**Tip 1:** Beware the emotional response. Your role is to provide legal assistance to the client. If the client is struggling with emotional issues, you can firmly explain your limited role, and refer the client to counseling if necessary.

**Tip 2:** Be patient; try to explain clearly without “legalese” and without condescension.

**Tip 3:** For clients with disabilities or other hardships, you may want to limit the frequency that the client has to travel for meetings or court appearances. You may want to conduct phone conferences when possible, including reviewing documents or pleadings with the client over the phone, or giving them extra travel time.

**Tip 4:** Be culturally sensitive. Consider the following:

- For limited English proficient clients, make sure that they have interpreters who have a background in legal interpretation. It is generally not good practice to have the client's friend/relative interpret for them;
- Stress the confidential nature of your communications, as clients may fear reprisals from their ethnic community;
- Some clients may also have a fear of litigation or public disclosure of their legal issues. In fact, they may not want to bring in third parties as witnesses even if it may help the case. Counsel the client on the impact on the case, but recognize that it is ultimately the client's decision.

Understanding the challenges unique to pro bono assistance can facilitate what can be a very rewarding experience, recognizing that advocacy means not just legal representation, but being an amplifier for your client's voice to be heard.

Author: Grace Lim, Legal Aid Bureau of Metropolitan Family Services
Available at: http://www.illinoisprobono.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=home dsp_Content&contentID=6404
Last Updated: July 2008
APPENDIX Q

Client Brochures
PROVIDING FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO LOW-INCOME MARYLANDERS

Federal funding was about to be cut to the Legal Aid Bureau and a small group of Maryland attorneys wanted to help the state’s poor continue to have access to legal assistance in civil cases. With a staff of one and a modest budget, they launched MVLS in 1981.

Today MVLS is the state’s largest provider of pro bono civil legal assistance, having aided nearly 40,000 low-income individuals.

MVLS AT A GLANCE

Mission: To provide quality civil legal assistance to Marylanders with limited income.

Who is eligible for MVLS assistance: Maryland residents who earn no more than 50 percent of the state median income.

Geographic reach: Services in all Maryland counties and Baltimore City. (In Montgomery and Prince George’s counties, tax dispute assistance, school suspension, and denial of long-term Medicaid benefits are the only services offered.)

Kind of support: Free legal assistance in tax matters, divorce, custody and guardianship, landlord/tenant problems, consumer issues, and other civil legal cases.

Number of clients served: Close to 40,000 low-income individuals since 1981. We serve about 4,400 people each year.

Volunteer network: Currently 2,700 lawyers throughout Maryland.

Hours volunteered on behalf of clients: More than 250,000.

Estimated dollar equivalent of those services: Over $30 million.

Sources of funding: Government grants, grants from corporations and foundations, contributions from individuals, and IOLTA (Interest on Lawyers’ Trust Accounts).

Nonprofit status: MVLS is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

MVLS

One North Charles Street, Suite 222, Baltimore, MD 21201

Client Intake 410-547-6537
Administration 410-539-6800
1-800-510-0050
410-837-0431 (fax)
www.mvlslaw.org
WHO WE SERVE

Our clients are young and old, male and female, and come from every region and every racial and ethnic group in the state. Most are working poor or are trying to get a job, though some are unable to work because of disabilities or other circumstances. All are poor, earning no more than half of the state median income. Most earn far less.

MVLS’ VOLUNTEER NETWORK

MVLS’ statewide network of volunteer lawyers is diverse. Our volunteers come from firms with hundreds of attorneys, from single-lawyer practices, and from corporations and government. More than 3,000 lawyers and other legal professionals have donated their time to help MVLS clients.

MVLS VOLUNTEER MODEL: ONE CLIENT, ONE LAWYER

From the start, MVLS’ approach has been to match one client who’s facing a legal challenge with one volunteer lawyer who has the skills and expertise to help. We assist clients with a range of civil cases involving such issues as:
- Administration of uncontested small estates
- Bankruptcy (Chapter 7)
- Child custody and guardianship
- Consumer disputes (unfair business practices, fraud)
- Criminal record expungement
- Deed changes
- Divorce
- Landlord/tenant conflicts
- Name changes
- Public benefits denial
- School suspension
- Tax disputes and back taxes
- Uninsured motorists
- Wills

TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR MVLS SERVICES, CLIENTS MUST EARN NO MORE THAN***:

$22,873 for an individual
$36,948 for a family of three

***2007 figures

HOW CLIENTS QUALIFY

MVLS looks at a client’s income eligibility and at the case itself. An MVLS paralegal evaluates the case to see if it falls within our guidelines and to make sure the case has merit. Although we make every effort to match clients with lawyers, we can’t guarantee placement.

Once we determine that a client is eligible for representation, we tap our extensive volunteer network to match the client with a lawyer who’s right for the case. We monitor the case throughout and provide assistance whenever it’s needed.

THE LEGAL NEEDS OF THE STATE’S POOR CAN TAKE MANY FORMS. MVLS HAS LAUNCHED SPECIAL PROGRAMS TO MEET THEM.

One-on-one pro bono (free) assistance is MVLS’ core program and the one for which we’re best known. But it’s not the only service we offer. MVLS is also involved in partnerships and special projects to help needy individuals and the communities in which they live. These include:

- Adult Guardianship – Representation for disabled adults who are under public guardianship in Baltimore City.
- Children’s Law Project – Represents children in a broad range of family matters.
- Community Development Project – Assists nonprofit organizations working to strengthen and revitalize low-income communities in Maryland.
- Courthouse Clinics – Advice for individuals representing themselves in family law matters in Calvert, Howard, and Washington Counties.
- District Court Settlement Facilitation – Volunteer attorneys help resolve small claims without a trial, in Baltimore City.
- Family Law Reduced Fee Program – Low-cost representation ($50 per hour) in most counties for individuals with complex family law matters.
- Income Tax Preparation Clinic – Seasonal preparation of tax returns at no cost.
- Low Income Taxpayer Clinic – Resolves tax disputes with the IRS.
- Project REAL – Legal services integrated with medical care for families who are patients of the Harriet Lane Clinic of the Johns Hopkins Children’s Center and the Kennedy Krieger Institute.
- Self-Help Bankruptcy Training – Classes that teach individuals to represent themselves when filing for Chapter 7 bankruptcy.
- Welfare-to-Work Partnerships – Legal representation for people moving off welfare into the workforce.
WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE THROUGH THIS PROJECT?

Low income residents and immigrants of Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s and Talbot Counties who are victims of domestic violence are eligible.

The following assistance with civil cases will be provided:

• Advocacy & Accompaniment
  Legal Advocates can assist with:
  • Completing applications
  • Court preparation and support throughout the proceedings
  • Making referrals for Direct Representation on behalf of their clients.

ATTORNEYS PROVIDE:

• Direct Representation in Final Protective Order Hearings
• Direct Representation for the Modification of a Protective Order
• Direct Representation for divorce, custody and contested custody cases
• All contested custody cases, not just domestic violence cases, qualify.

Resources are limited. We are not able to help everyone who asks for direct representation. For non domestic violence cases contact Mid-Shore Pro Bono Project, 800-574-2249.
WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Domestic Violence may be physical, sexual or emotional abuse. It may come from a husband, wife, boyfriend, girlfriend, or even from the caretaker of an elderly person. You may be a victim of domestic violence if you have suffered:

- Beatings or physical attacks such as kicking, slapping, punching, or hair pulling,
- Threats with a weapon such as a gun or knife,
- Threats that cause you to fear for your life or to fear serious injury to yourself, your children, or other family members,
- Repeated, humiliating verbal attacks,
- Imprisonment in your own home or another place,
- Forced sexual contact or rape,
- Isolation from friends and family members.

NO ONE HAS THE RIGHT TO HARM YOU!
WE CAN HELP
24 HOUR HOTLINE
1-800-927-4673

Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence
P.O. Box 5
Denton, MD 21629

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR A PROTECTIVE ORDER?

You are eligible to file for a PROTECTIVE ORDER if you are being hurt or threatened by:

- A current spouse,
- Someone with whom you have a child in common,
- A cohabitant—someone you have lived with as a sexual partner for at least 90 days during the previous year (this includes homosexual and heterosexual relationships),
- A parent, stepparent, child, or stepchild you have lived with for at least 90 days within the past year, or
- Any person to whom you are related by blood, marriage, or adoption.

If you do not meet the eligibility criteria for a Protective Order, you may be eligible for a PEACE ORDER.

WHAT ACTIONS MUST HAVE BEEN COMMITTED AGAINST YOU?

The person who applies for a Protective Order (called the “Petitioner”) must have been a victim of abuse. The law defines abuse as:

- An act that caused physical harm
- An act that placed the person in fear of serious bodily harm,
- Assault in any degree,
- Rape or sexual assault, or attempted rape or sexual assault,
- False imprisonment - keeping someone in a place against his or her will, or
- Stalking.

3 TYPES OF PROTECTIVE ORDERS

- Interim—When courts are closed, District Court Commissioners may issue Interim Peace and Protective Orders which last until the Judge holds a temporary hearing.
- Temporary—Lasts for seven days unless extended by a Judge.
- Final—A Protective Order may last up to one year, with a possible extension; a Peace Order may last up to six months.

Note: The order goes into effect once the respondent is served by a law enforcement officer.
Where do I go if I need to speak to an attorney right away?

Go to our walk-in clinics at the following locations. **YOU MUST Sign-in at each location during the first half hour of service to speak to an attorney that evening.**

1. 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month
   Registration 6:00-6:30 pm
   (space is limited)
   Tel: 301-565-7675
   TESS Community Service Center
   8513 Piney Branch Road
   Silver Spring, MD 20901

2. 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month
   5:30 pm—8:30 pm
   Charles W. Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity
   11701 Georgia Ave 1st Floor
   Wheaton, MD 20902

3. 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month
   6:00 pm—8:30 pm
   Tel: 240-777-6950
   Charles W. Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity
   12900 Middlebrook Road
   Germantown, MD 20874

4. 1st and 2nd Thursday of each month
   5:30 pm—8:30 pm
   Tel: 240-777-8400
   3300 Briggs Chaney Road
   Silver Spring, MD 20904

What if I am not eligible for help through the Pro Bono Program?

The Pro Bono Program will try to refer you to another agency or program that may be able to help with your legal problem. **If your income is too high to qualify for free service through the Pro Bono Program**, you may be able to get a reduced fee attorney through the Lawyer Referral Service of the Bar Association of Montgomery County, MD at 301-279-9100. You may also contact the legal Aide Bureau for the State of Maryland at 1-888-215-5316.

**PRO SE PROJECT** - Low income County residents who want to proceed with a simple family law case without an attorney can get limited legal advice or general legal information from volunteer attorneys serving at the Pro Se Project. The Pro Se Project is a walk-in clinic located on the second floor of the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Maryland, located at 50 Maryland Ave, Rockville, MD.

You can contact the PRO BONO PROGRAM, at (301) 424-7651 on Monday through Thursday, from 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM.

The Montgomery County, MD, Bar Foundation, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) organization, contributions to which may be tax-deductible. The Pro Bono Program’s services are made possible through grants and contributions from the Maryland Legal Services Corporation, and the Division of Community Action of the Department of Health and Human Services of the Montgomery County Government.
The Pro Bono Program helps low-income residents of Montgomery County obtain **FREE LEGAL REPRESENTATION** or **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** in civil matters. Lawyers in private practice in the community volunteer to represent clients of the Pro Bono Program for free. The Pro Bono Program also operates several **legal advice clinics**, where low-income County residents can go to obtain free legal advice.

**Who is Eligible?**
Clients must meet ALL of the following criteria to be eligible:

- You must be a **resident of Montgomery County**
- You must **meet Maryland income eligibility guidelines**.
- You must need assistance in an **area of law** which volunteer attorneys in the pro bono program will handle.

**What types of cases does the Pro Bono Program handle?**

- Absolute Divorce (Separated 1 year)
- Separation Agreements
- Custody
- Adoption/Guardianship
- Simple Name Changes
- Bankruptcy (Simple Chapter 7)
- Limited Debt Collection Defense
- Private Landlord Tenant (NO HOC)
- Limited Immigration cases
- Limited Employment cases
- Wills and Powers of Attorney

**What cases are NOT HANDLED by the Pro Bono Program?**

- Emergency Cases
- Criminal and Traffic Cases
- Social Security, Unemployment, or Worker’s Compensation Cases
- Any Fee-Generating Cases
- Public Benefits
- Public Housing
- Alimony/Child Support/Visitation (*if not part of custody/divorce proceeding)
- Appeals
- Post Decree/Order or Enforcement or Modification Proceedings of Any kind

*The Pro Bono Program is committed to helping the residents of Montgomery County, MD. Individual circumstances may vary and in some cases we may not be able to assist everyone.*

**What is the Pro Bono Program?**

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- Public Housing
- Alimony/Child Support/Visitation (*if not part of custody/divorce proceeding)
- Appeals
- Post Decree/Order or Enforcement or Modification Proceedings of Any kind

**Will I get an attorney to represent me immediately?**

No. The Pro Bono Program depends on volunteers, so it may take several weeks to find an attorney available to represent you in Court. For this reason, the Program cannot help people who have emergency cases. You can get legal advice on a walk-in basis at the evening legal clinics listed in this brochure.

**What do I do if I need an attorney to represent me for free?**

- Call the Pro Bono Program at **(301) 424-7651** between the hours of 9:00a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday for an initial eligibility screening.
- If you appear to be eligible, the Pro Bono Program will mail you forms which must be completed and returned to us within ten days. You must include a **$25.00 processing fee** with your completed application.
- If you are determined to be eligible, after returning all the necessary information, the Pro Bono Program will place you on a waiting list for an attorney. When a volunteer attorney agrees to review your case, we will send you a letter with the attorney’s name and telephone number. You must contact the attorney and set up all appointments.

**What is the Pro Bono Program?**

The Pro Bono Program helps low-income residents of Montgomery County obtain **FREE LEGAL REPRESENTATION** or **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** in civil matters.
¿A dónde recuerdo si tengo que hablar con un abogado de inmediato?
Usted puede visitar nuestras clínicas legales listadas abajo sin cita previa. DEBERÁ inscribirse durante la primera media hora de servicios para poder hablar con un abogado esa misma tarde.

1. Primer y Tercer miércoles de cada mes.
   Horario de inscripción: 6:00-6:30 pm
   (Espacio limitado)
   Tel: 301-565-7675
   TESS Community Service Center
   8513 Piney Branch Road
   Silver Spring, MD 20901

2. Segundo y Cuarto miércoles de cada mes.
   Horario de inscripción: 5:30-6:00 pm
   Charles W. Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity
   11701 Georgia Ave 1st Floor
   Wheaton, MD 20902

3. Segundo y Cuarto martes de cada mes.
   Horario de inscripción: 6:00-6:30 pm
   Tel: 240-777-6950
   Charles W. Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity
   12900 Middlebrook Road
   Germantown, MD 20874

4. Primer y Segundo jueves de cada mes.
   Horario de inscripción: 5:30-6:00 pm
   Tel: 240-777-8400
   East County Regional Office
   3300 Briggs Chaneys Road
   Silver Spring, MD 20904

¿Qué pasa si no soy elegible para recibir ayuda a través del Programa Gratuito? El Programa Gratuito (Pro Bono) tratará de referir su caso a otra agencia o programa que pueda asistirlo con su problema legal. Si su salario o ingreso económico es demasiado bajo para que pueda calificar para servicios gratuitos, usted podrá recibir asistencia de un abogado a un precio reducido por medio del Servicio de Referencia de Abogados, llamando al (301) 279-9100. Usted también puede comunicarse con el Buró de Asistencia Legal (Legal Aid Bureau) del Estado de Maryland.

PROYECTO POR DERECHO PROPIO (PRO SE):
Residentes de bajos ingresos del condado que desean continuar con un caso de derecho familiar simple, sin la asistencia de un abogado, pueden obtener asesoría jurídica limitada o información legal general de abogados voluntarios que prestan sus servicios en el Programa Gratuito. El proyecto "Por Derecho Propio" o Pro Se es una clínica ambulatoria ubicada en el Segundo piso del tribunal de Circuito del Condado de Montgomery ubicado en 50 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850.

USTED PUEDE COMUNICARSE CON EL PROGRAMA GRATUITO LLAMANDO AL (301) 424-7651
LUNES A JUEVES
9:00 A.M. A 4:30 P.M.

La Fundación del Colegio de Abogados del Condado de Montgomery es una organización sin fines de lucro 501 (c) (3), y las contribuciones que recibe se pueden descontar de los impuestos. El Programa Gratuito presta servicios gracias a las subvenciones y contribuciones de la Corporación de Servicios Legales de Maryland, y de la División de Acción Comunitaria del Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos del gobierno del condado de Montgomery.

Si Usted Necesita Un Abogado Pero No Puede Pagar Los Honorarios …...

Es Posible Que Pueda Obtener Asistencia Legal Gratuita de Abogados Voluntarios por medio del PROGRAMA GRATUITO de la Fundación del Colegio de Abogados del Condado de Montgomery, Maryland, Inc.
**¿En qué consiste el Programa Gratuito?**

El Programa Gratuito (Gratuito) ayuda a residentes de bajos ingresos del Condado de Montgomery a obtener REPRESENTACIÓN LEGAL GRATUITA o ASESORÍA LEGAL GRATUITA en casos civiles. Abogados que practican privadamente en la comunidad trabajan como voluntarios para representar a clientes del Programa Gratuito. El Programa Gratuito también opera varias clínicas de asesoría legal donde residentes de bajos ingresos del condado pueden ir para obtener asesoramiento legal gratuito.

**¿Quién es elegible?**

Usted debe satisfacer TODOS los siguientes criterios para ser elegible:

- Debe ser residente del Condado de Montgomery.
- Ser cumplir con las pautas de elegibilidad de Maryland para personas de bajos ingresos.
- Debe necesitar ayuda en un área de derecho en la que ejercen abogados voluntarios del programa gratuito.

**¿Quién me representará?**

El Programa Gratuito lo enviará a un abogado voluntario. Este abogado revisará su caso y decidirá, en la opinión profesional de él o ella, si usted necesita representación o consejo legal. Si el abogado está de acuerdo con representarle, usted y el abogado firmarán un contrato de representación que especifica los servicios que se le prestará ese profesional.

**¿De qué casos se encarga el Programa Gratuito?**

- Divorcio Absoluto (Separación de 1 Año)
- Acuerdos de Separación
- Custodia
- Adopción/Tutela de Menores
- Cambios de Nombres
- Bancarrota (Chapter 7)
- Defensa Contra Deudas (Limitado)
- Problemas entre Inquilinos y Dueños *(NO HOC)*
- Inmigración (Servicios Limitados)
- Empleo (Servicios Limitados)
- Testamentos y Poderes

**¿De qué casos NO se encarga el Programa Gratuito?**

- Casos de Emergencia
- Casos Criminales y de Tráfico
- Compensación de Trabajadores y Beneficios de Seguro Sociales o Desempleo
- Casos que generen honorarios
- Casos de Beneficios Públicos
- Casos de Vivienda Pública
- Pensión Alimenticia* o Manutenpción de Menores* o Visitas* *(Si no forma parte de un caso de Custodia o Divorcio)*
- Apelaciones
- Cualquier procedimiento Posterior a Decreto, Orden u Orden de Cumplimiento de Ley, o Modificación.

**¿Qué necesito hacer si necesito representación legal gratuita?**

- Llame al Programa Gratuito al (301) 424-7651 de lunes a jueves dentro las horas de 9:00am - 4:30 pm para una entrevista inicial.
- Si parece ser elegible, el Programa Gratuito le enviará por correo formularios que deberá llenar y devolver al Programa, incluyendo un cheque para cubrir la tarifa de $25.00.
- Si después de revisar su aplicación se determina que usted califica, el Programa Gratuito añadirá su nombre a la lista de espera para asignarle un abogado. Cuando un abogado voluntario acuerda revisar su caso, le enviaremos una carta con el nombre y el número de teléfono del abogado. Usted deberá contactar al abogado y establecer todas sus citas.

**¿Obtendré un abogado que me represente inmediatamente?**

No. El Programa Gratuito depende de abogados voluntarios, así que pueden pasar varias semanas antes de que el Programa encuentre un abogado disponible para representarle en la Corte. Por esa razón, el Programa no puede ayudar a personas que tengan casos de emergencia. Usted puede obtener asesoría legal acercándose a las clínicas legales que se mencionan en este panfleto.
APPENDIX R

Referral Letter to Pro Bono Client
DATE

Title«First_Name»«Last_Name»
Address_Line_1
Address_Line_2
City, MD ZIP_Code

RE: «Child_1st_name» «child_last_name»

Dear «Title» «Last_Name»:

Thank you for contacting the Maryland Disability Law Center regarding «Child_1st_name»’s educational situation. MDLC will not be able to represent «Child_1st_name»; however, we are pleased to refer his/her case to our pro bono program which will try to locate a pro bono attorney who will handle his case at no cost to you. You should be aware that there is no legal right to an attorney in special education cases and while MDLC will make every effort to locate a pro bono attorney for you, we cannot guarantee that we will be successful. For this reason, we encourage you to also try to secure counsel on your own.

Please note, however, that I cannot release a referral to an attorney until you complete and return the enclosed Affidavit in the preaddressed envelope. You may also fax it to me at 410-727-6389. If we do not receive the affidavit within the next week, we will assume you are no longer in need of assistance from counsel and will assign a different case to the attorney should one become available.

We feel it is also important to inform parents that most of our pro bono attorneys are not special education attorneys, but rather lawyers who have agreed to become knowledgeable about special education law. It is also important that you understand that while MDLC asks its pro bono attorneys to commit to representing families through a due process hearing, if appropriate, we do not ask our attorneys to pursue appeals. If you wish to pursue an appeal, you will need to either negotiate with your pro bono attorney or retain other counsel.

We hope to be able to assist you through our pro bono program and wish you success in obtaining appropriate educational services for «Child_1st_name»’s.

Yours truly,

Lauren B. Kallins, Esq.
Pro Bono Coordinator

Enc: Affidavit
Preaddressed stamped envelope

1800 N. Charles St., Ste. 400 • Baltimore, MD 21201
410.727.6352 • Fax: 410.727.6389 • TTY: 410.727.6387 • www.mdclaw.org
APPENDIX S

Pro Bono Client Feedback Survey
Pro Bono Project Client Survey

To: Current and Recent Clients of the Pro Bono Project

From: Kelly Pfeifer, Supervising Attorney and Alyson Harkins, Outreach Coordinator

Please take a few moments to let us know how you feel about your experiences with the Pro Bono Project. Your response will help the Community Law Center and the Pro Bono Project improve practices and assist many more community and nonprofit organizations in the future. If you need help with this form, please contact Alyson Harkins at 410.366.0922 x15 or alysonh@communitylaw.org.

NOTE: If you wish to remain anonymous, do not fill in this section with identifying information.

Date:

Name of Organization:

Mailing Address (Include City, County, State and Zip Code):

Contact Person and Title:

Phone:

Email:

Pro Bono Attorney:

1. How did you find out about our Project?

☐ Another Client ☐ Another organization: ☐ Government Official/Agency

☐ Website ☐ Other Attorney ☐ Other: __________________________

2. When you first contacted us for help, how did you reach us?

☐ Telephone ☐ Email ☐ Came into office

3. When you first contacted the Pro Bono Project, with whom did you speak?

☐ Kelly Pfeifer ☐ Danielle Deckard ☐ Alyson Harkins ☐ Other Staff
4. Overall, how satisfied were you with the following services of the Pro Bono Project? (Please check one box for each question.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat Satisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Not Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The way in which you applied for our services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of time it took from when you first contacted the Project until your case was assigned to an attorney</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promptness of communications from your attorney</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of time your attorney spent with you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way your attorney explained your case and the legal options available to you</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparedness and thoroughness of your attorney</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of respect and concern your attorney showed for you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of time it took to finish your case</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome or result of your case</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. If you need help again, would you return to the Pro Bono Project?  
☐ Yes    ☐ Probably    ☐ Not sure    ☐ Probably not    ☐ No

6. Do you have anything else you would like to tell us? ____________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Please send this form back to us:

Alyson Harkins  
Community Law Center, Inc.  
3355 Keswick Rd.  
Baltimore, MD 21211  
410.366.7763 (fax), alysonh@communitylaw.org

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your response will help us improve our services.
APPENDIX T

Guidelines for Working with Interpreters
Working with Interpreters

June 2007

More and more of Hennepin County’s low-income population do not speak English well. This sheet provides information to help you work with interpreters.

The following points should be observed with using the services of an interpreter:

- Position the interpreter appropriately. Ask the client and the interpreter as to seating arrangements. It is usual for the interpreter to be seated next to the attorney so that the client can observe both the interpreter and the attorney simultaneously.

- Speak directly to the client as you would to any client. For example, say, “What is your legal issue?” rather than “What is his legal issue.”

- Speak clearly and at your usual pace and volume. It is easier for the interpreter to establish the context and (for interpreters for the deaf) a natural signing flow if you speak normally. The interpreter will tell you if it is necessary to change your rate.

- Focus your attention and eye gaze on the client, not the interpreter.

- Please do not ask the interpreter’s opinion. Interpreters are bound to a Code of Ethics which prohibits them from giving opinions about the legal matter for which they are interpreting. The court interpreter’s role is to interpret, and not serve as a ‘cultural broker’ for the attorneys or the court.

- Do not make asides you do not wish interpreted. The interpreter is ethically obligated to interpret everything that the client would have understood if he/she had understood (spoken) English.

- Give a little extra time for the client to answer any questions you have asked, as there is always a time lag as the interpreter interprets from spoken English into a different language. The degree of delay will vary with interpreters and the complexity of the material. This is especially important during group discussions. Depending on the situation, some interpreters will choose to interpret consecutively – that is, they will not begin interpreting until you have finished speaking. If this is the case, please speak or sign in short “chunks” so that the interpreter can more easily remember what you have said.

- For deaf clients, allow time for the client to take notes or read any printed material. It is impossible for a deaf person to watch an interpreter and read/write at the same time.
In order to ensure that you, the client, and the interpreter have a shared understanding of the extent of the interpreter’s professional services, we suggest you to communicate the following points at the beginning of a session involving an interpreter.¹

- We are going to communicate through an interpreter.
- The interpreter will interpret everything you say into English and everything I say into ____[client’s preferred language].
- The interpreter cannot participate in the conversation. The interpreter’s only job is to interpret what each of us says.
- If you do not understand something, ask me, not the interpreter. Please talk to me, not to the interpreter.
- If you have a long question or a long answer, please pause frequently so that the interpreter can interpret everything accurately.
- Please speak loudly and pronounce your words clearly so the interpreter can hear you easily.
- It may take longer to say everything through an interpreter. Please say everything you need to say.
- If you have any difficulty hearing the interpreter or understanding me during the conversation, please tell me.
- Are you able to hear and understand the interpreter?
- The interpreter will get a break every 15 minutes or so.²
- (To the interpreter.) Are you ready to proceed? Can you hear and understand everyone adequately? Would you like pen and paper to assist you?

For more information on working with court interpreters, visit the Court Interpreter website at www.mncourts.gov/interpreters, or contact Katrin Johnson at Katrin.Johnson@courts.state.mn.us.

Resources for attorneys are listed at: http://www.mncourts.gov/?page=446

For resources for interpreters are listed at: (http://www.mncourts.gov/?page=461) including: legal glossaries in many languages; the Interpreter’s Code of Professional Responsibility; Do’s and Don’ts for Working with Interpreters.

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¹ Based on the New Jersey Courts Language Services Section (www.judiciary.state.nj.us/interpreters/telint.htm). Recommended by the Minnesota Courts Interpreter Program.

² Interpreting requires intense concentration and not giving breaks can result in mistakes.
APPENDIX U

Sample Intake and Eligibility Screening Forms
APPLICATION FOR PRO BONO PLACEMENT – NON-DOMESTIC MATTER

Please read the application requirements below and fill in the attached application and Statement of Financial Eligibility carefully and completely. **Failure to do so may delay placement of your case AND/OR prevent MVLS from obtaining a volunteer attorney to represent you.**

**Application Requirements:**

- **You must provide all the information requested on this Application Form.** If you need additional space, you may attach additional sheets to this form.

- **You must submit Proof of Income** for all current income of all members of your household with your application, including employment income, state benefits (Disability, Unemployment, Social Security, SSI, TCA, etc.), child support, pension, and any other income.

- **You must submit copies of all court or other relevant documents** (legal correspondence, leases, IRS correspondence, contracts, etc.) with your application.

- You must read the Terms and Conditions and the Client Certifications on pages 2 and 4 carefully and sign the application before you return it.

- **MVLS will not begin searching for a volunteer attorney to represent you until your file is complete and all necessary documents have been received.**

- **MVLS cannot begin to look for a volunteer attorney to represent you without a signed application and a signed Statement of Financial Eligibility on file.**

Your case will be handled by the following intake paralegal:

**Name: ___________________ Extension: ___________________

If you have any questions regarding your application or placement, please do not hesitate to contact your paralegal.

*Once you have completed this application, please return it with your proof of income and supporting documentation to:*

Maryland Volunteer Lawyer Service  
One North Charles Street  
Suite 222  
Baltimore, MD 21201-3710
**APPLICATION FOR** **PRO BONO PLACEMENT** – **NON-DOMESTIC MATTER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Client's Name:</th>
<th>Last</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Middle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address: Street:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Phone #: (  )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City:</td>
<td>County:</td>
<td>State:</td>
<td>Zip:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Work Phone No.:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B. Client Statistics**

Note: Information in Section B will be used for demographic purposes only and will in no way affect whether or not MVLS is able to provide you with an attorney.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex:</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>Date of Birth:</th>
<th>Disability:</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Highest Level of Education Completed</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race:</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| C. How many people live in your household, including yourself? Number of Children | Number of Adults: |
| Number of Children | Number of Adults: |

| D. Adverse Party (collection agency, creditor, landlord, government agency, etc.): |
| Name: | County: | State: |
| Adverse Party's Attorney: | |

| E. Objective |
| What legal action would you like an attorney’s help with? |
| What is the result you are seeking? |

<p>| F. Prior Representation | List the names of any lawyers who have represented you and explain why representation was not provided or continued: |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attorney Name</th>
<th>Dates of Representation</th>
<th>Reason Attorney Withdrew</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| G. Scheduled Hearings and Court Records | List date and type of hearing for all scheduled court appearances |
| List dates of any previous court orders related to the case. Attach copies of all court records. |

| J. Existing Agreements | Have parties signed an agreement? List dates of existing written agreements. |
| Enclose copies of any agreements and or documents (including lease or contract). |

| K. Facts of case | Briefly explain the situation, who is involved, and what has happened up to this point. |

Non-Domestic Application – Page 1
CLIENT CERTIFICATION

I certify that the information provided in this application is true and exact to the best of my knowledge.

I understand that once MVLS refers me to an attorney, the attorney may refuse to accept my case if:

- My case has no merit
- I am not prepared or able to pay the court costs or other expenses necessary for proper handling of my case
- Accepting my case would involve violation of law or Rules of Professional Responsibility.
- There is any other good reason

I understand that after my attorney accepts my case, my relationship with my attorney will be governed by the agreement between myself and my attorney.

I hereby permit and instruct any attorney, law office staff, legal or social services agency to which this matter is referred by MVLS to respond by phone or in writing to requests made by MVLS for information about the facts, progress, or outcome of my case.

I understand that MVLS does not guarantee it will find an attorney who will accept my case.

I release Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service and its officers, directors, members, and employees from any and all claims, losses, and liability arising out of any referral made by or through the Pro Bono Placement Program.

Client Signature: ____________________________  Date: ____________________________

Please do not write in the below space – MVLS use only
Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service Statement of Financial Eligibility

MVLS financial eligibility is based on Household Income and Household Size. MVLS cannot provide a free attorney to any client who exceeds the Household Income Eligibility Guideline. Please read the following guidelines to ensure you have accurately identified your Household, as failure to provide complete and accurate household information may result in denial of placement services.

1. MVLS guidelines define your “household” as all persons sharing both physical and financial living arrangements with the client.

2. If you share a residence with another person or persons who is or are solely responsible for paying all the bills associated with the household (rent and utilities), that person(s) and all their dependents must be included as part of your household, regardless of their involvement in your legal case. (In other words, if you and your family are staying with a friend or relative who is NOT charging you rent, that friend or relative AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE FRIEND OR RELATIVE’S FAMILY must be included in your household).

3. Your spouse or domestic partner must be included in your household if you share a residence, regardless of your financial arrangement.

4. If you sublet a room in a private residence and have a rental agreement, either verbal or written, your household does NOT include your landlord or other tenants of the residence with separate rental agreements.

5. If a person not living in your residence is paying your bills, you must include that person and all his/her dependents in your household, or provide evidence of the type and amount of support provided by that person.

6. Every household must provide proof of income, benefits, or means of support. A household with no employment or other cash income must still provide evidence of the household’s economic situation (Section 8 voucher, energy assistance, food stamps, evidence of savings, letter from shelter providing housing, etc.).

### Household Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Relationship to client</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME –

Please fill in the amount of each type of income for each household member. DO NOT INCLUDE BILLS OR EXPENSES IN THIS CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Member</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>SSI/AFDC/ Welfare</th>
<th>Unemployment/ Disability</th>
<th>Pension/ Retirement</th>
<th>VA Benefits</th>
<th>Child Support/ Alimony</th>
<th>Dividend/ Interest/ Rental</th>
<th>Other (Specify)</th>
<th>Total Monthly Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Client</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY STATEMENT CONTINUES ON FOLLOWING PAGE
## Assets: Joint or owned by you

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Description of additional properties</th>
<th>Total value of properties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My name, and/or the name of a member of my household, is on the deed to my home:</td>
<td>□ Yes</td>
<td>□ No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name on Deed:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I or a member of my household own additional property (land, rental property, vacation home, time share, etc.):</td>
<td>□ Yes</td>
<td>□ No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of additional properties:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a checking and/or savings account:</td>
<td>□ Yes</td>
<td>□ No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of accounts:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total amount in accounts:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have equity in stocks, bonds, certificate of deposit, money market, etc.:</td>
<td>□ Yes</td>
<td>□ No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of assets:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total value of accounts:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I own other property of value, such as a car, truck, boat, etc.</td>
<td>□ Yes</td>
<td>□ No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Specify:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total value of property:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total value of my assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Terms and Conditions

I understand that MVLS may check the accuracy of the information I have provided about my household, assets, and income. I understand that MVLS may close my case at any time upon learning that the information provided is incorrect.

I authorize my attorney to disclose to MVLS any information that my attorney learns about my financial circumstances, notwithstanding the attorney/client privilege.

I hereby permit and instruct any attorney, law office staff, legal or social services agency to whom this matter is referred by MVLS to respond by phone or in writing to requests made by MVLS for information about the facts, progress, or outcome of my case.

I understand that MVLS will seek to place my case with an attorney who will not charge me for representation, and that my attorney will seek waivers of fees and court costs for which I am eligible. **I further understand that I am responsible for the payment of any and all non-waivable court costs, advertising fees, paternity tests, or other fees that may arise in association with my case.**

I authorize MVLS to release the information provided in this application to persons checking to see that MVLS has complied with the restrictions on its funding.

I understand that **MVLS does not guarantee it will find an attorney who will accept my case.**

I release Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service and its officers, directors, members, and employees from any and all claims, losses, and liability arising out of any referral made by or through the Pro Bono Placement Program.

## Certification

I certify that the information I have provided in this application is true and exact to the best of my knowledge.
I certify that I have read and agree with the terms and conditions stated above.

Client Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________
APPLICATION FOR DOMESTIC PLACEMENT SERVICES

Please carefully read the requirements below and carefully complete the attached application. Failure to do so may delay placement of your case AND/OR prevent MVLS from obtaining a volunteer attorney to represent you.

Application Requirements:

- **Non-Refundable** payment of the $25 Application Fee must be made before your application can be processed. Please enclose a money order for $25 made payable to Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service with your application. No other form of payment will be accepted.

- You must provide all the information requested on this Application Form. If you need additional space attach additional sheets to the application.

- You must submit Proof of Income (most recent & consecutive 3 paystubs) for all current income of all members of your household with your application. Current income includes employment income, state benefits (Disability, Unemployment, Social Security, SSI, TCA, Food Stamps, etc.), child support, pension/retirement, and any other income.

- You must submit copies of all court or other relevant documents (legal correspondence, court filings, i.e., complaints, answers, motions, court orders, written agreements and/or contracts, etc.) with your application.

- You must read, sign, and date each section of the application where indicated, including the Terms and Conditions and the Client Certification.

- MVLS will not open your file or begin looking for a volunteer attorney to represent you without your completed & signed application, proof of all household income, and all necessary documents have been received.

Your application will be handled by the following intake paralegal:

Name: Tara Miles Extension: 4070

If you have any questions regarding your application or placement, please do not hesitate to contact your paralegal.

**Once you have completed this application, please return it with your $25 non-refundable application fee, proof of income, and supporting documentation to:**

Maryland Volunteer Lawyer Service
One North Charles Street
Suite 222
Baltimore, MD 21201-3710
# Application for Placement Services - Domestic Matter

## A. Client’s Name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Middle</th>
</tr>
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</table>

**Address:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Phone #: ( )</th>
<th>Cell: ( )</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**City:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>County:</th>
<th>State:</th>
<th>Zip:</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**Mailing Address, if different:**

| City: | County: | State: | Zip: |

**Employer:**

| Work Phone No.: ( ) |

## B. Household Members (including yourself)

- Number of Children: [ ]
- Number of Adults: [ ]

## C. Opposing/Other Party

(Opposing/Other party is the person arguing against you, such as your spouse, former spouse, child’s parent, person in need of guardian, etc.):

**Full Name:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Birth:</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**Address:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State:</th>
<th>Zip Code:</th>
<th>Phone No: ( )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Opposing/Other Party’s Attorney:** __________________________________________

## D. Legal Issue

- ___ divorce
- ___ custody
- ___ visitation
- ___ adoption
- ___ modification
- ___ pension
- ___ alimony
- ___ name change
- ___ child/adult guardianship
- ___ other (please explain)

## E. Marital Status

- Were the parties ever married? Y/N
- Date of marriage: ________
- Place of marriage: ________

- Are the parties separated? Y/N
- Date of separation: ________
- Last date of marital relations: ________

- Are the parties divorced? Y/N
- Date of divorce: ________
- Place of divorce: ________

## F. Custody, Support, Visitation

List all minor children by full name whether or not they are involved in this particular case. (Attach additional sheet(s) if necessary). Include relationship to client, date of birth, current residence, and custody status. If a child was born out of wedlock, indicate if paternity has been established.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Current Residence</th>
<th>Custody Status</th>
<th>Paternity (Y/N)</th>
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</table>

Placement Services Application – Domestic Matter – Page 1

~Over~
G. Prior Representation   List the names of any lawyers who have represented you. Explain why representation was not provided or continued:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attorney Name</th>
<th>Dates of Representation</th>
<th>Reason Attorney Withdrew</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

H. Agency Involvement   If Department of Social Services (DSS) or Child Protective Services (CPS) have been involved with any of your children (even children not involved in this case) regarding any investigations of child abuse/neglect, please indicate below & explain that involvement in detail.

☐ Neither DSS nor CPS has ever been involved with any of my children.

☐ DSS or CPS have been involved with my children as follows. (Attach additional sheet(s) with explanation)

I. Hearing Dates and Court Records   List all relevant scheduled court appearances and court orders, including Protective Orders or Ex Parte orders against any party involved in the case.

J. Existing Agreements   Have parties signed an agreement? List dates of existing written agreements. Enclose copies of any agreements and or documents.

*THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED*   Please provide a brief summary of your legal matter (attach additional pages if necessary):

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
MVLS financial eligibility is based on **Household Income** and **Household Size**. MVLS cannot provide a free attorney to any client who exceeds the **Household Income Eligibility Guideline**. Please read the following guidelines to ensure you have accurately identified your **Household**, as failure to provide complete and accurate household information may result in denial of placement services.

1. MVLS guidelines define your “household” as all persons sharing both physical and financial living arrangements with the client.
2. If you share a residence with another person or persons who is or are solely responsible for paying all the bills associated with the household (rent and utilities), that person(s) and all their dependents **must** be included as part of your household, regardless of their involvement in your legal case. (In other words, if you and your family are staying with a friend or relative who is NOT charging you rent, that friend or relative AND ALL MEMBERS OF THE FRIEND OR RELATIVE’S FAMILY **must** be included in your household).
3. Your spouse or domestic partner **must** be included in your household if you share a residence, regardless of your financial arrangement.
4. If you sublet a room in a private residence and have a rental agreement, either verbal or written, your household does NOT include your landlord or other tenants of the residence with separate rental agreements.
5. If a person not living in your residence is paying your bills, you **must** include that person and all his/her dependents in your household, or provide evidence of the type and amount of support provided by that person.
6. **Every household must provide proof of income, benefits, or means of support.** A household with no employment or other cash income must still provide evidence of the household’s economic situation (Section 8 voucher, energy assistance, food stamps, evidence of savings, letter from shelter providing housing, etc.).

### Household Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Relationship to client</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(SELF)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MONTHLY GROSS HOUSEHOLD INCOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Member</th>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>SSI/AFDC/Welfare</th>
<th>Unemployment/Disability</th>
<th>Pension/Retirement</th>
<th>VA Benefits</th>
<th>Child Support/Alimony</th>
<th>Dividend/Interest/Rental</th>
<th>Other (Specify)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Client</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Gross Monthly Income $
## Assets: Joint or owned by you

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My name, and/or the name of a member of my household, is on the deed to my home:</td>
<td>□Yes</td>
<td>□No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name on Deed:</td>
<td>Value of home: $</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I or a member of my household own additional property (land, rental property, vacation home, time share, etc.):</td>
<td>□Yes</td>
<td>□No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total value of properties: $</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a checking and/or savings account:</td>
<td>□Yes</td>
<td>□No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have equity in stocks, bonds, certificate of deposit, money market, etc.:</td>
<td>□Yes</td>
<td>□No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I own other property of value, such as a car, truck, boat, etc.</td>
<td>□Yes</td>
<td>□No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total value of property: $</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total value of my assets: $</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### SECTION L. TERMS AND CONDITIONS & CLIENT CERTIFICATION

I understand that MVLS may check the accuracy of the information I have provided about my household, assets, and income. I understand that MVLS may close my case at any time upon learning that the information provided is incorrect.

I understand that I must pay a **$25 application fee in the form of a money order and made payable to MVLS.** I understand that this application fee is **non-refundable.**

I understand that MVLS will seek to place my case with an attorney who will not charge me for representation, and that my attorney will seek waivers of fees and court costs for which I am eligible. **I further understand that I am responsible for the payment of any and all non-waivable court costs, advertising fees, posting fees, process service fees, paternity tests, or other fees that may arise in association with my case.**

I understand that MVLS does not guarantee it will find an attorney who will accept my case.

I understand that once MVLS refers me to an attorney, the attorney may refuse to accept my case if:

- My case has no merit
- I am not prepared or able to pay the court costs or other expenses necessary for proper handling of my case
- Accepting my case would involve violation of law or Rules of Professional Responsibility.
- There is any other good reason

I hereby permit and instruct any attorney, law office staff, legal or social services agency to whom this matter is referred by MVLS to respond by phone or in writing to requests made by MVLS for information about the facts, progress, or outcome of my case.

I understand that after my attorney accepts my case, my relationship with my attorney will be governed by the agreement between myself and my attorney.

I authorize my attorney to disclose to MVLS any information that my attorney learns about my financial circumstances, notwithstanding the attorney/client privilege. I understand that if, after reviewing my financial situation, my attorney feels I am able to pay for legal services he/she may negotiate a fee for me to pay.

I release Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service and its officers, directors, members, and employees from any and all claims, losses, and liability arising out of any referral made by or through the Placement Program.

I authorize MVLS to release the information provided in this application to persons checking to see that MVLS has complied with the restrictions on its funding.

I certify that the information I have provided in this application, including the information about my income and assets, is true and exact to the best of my knowledge. I certify that I have read and agree with the terms and conditions stated above.

Client Signature: ____________________________ Date: ________________
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Address: _________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Number of people living with me: _______ Phone: _______________________

Total (gross) income of people living in my home: $ ______________________

______ Yearly ______ Monthly ______ Weekly

Source(s) of this income _______________________________________________________________________________________

List assets you own — bank accounts, stocks, rental property, car, home:
________________________________________________________________________ Total value $ ____________

● Attach verification of income, such as last three pay stubs, if employed, unemployment check stub, or statement of benefits from Social Security or DSS.
● Attach any additional documents, including court papers and recent letters, relating to your case.

I certify that if I own property, I own only one house that I occupy.
I certify that the information given above about my income is complete and accurate. MVLS may check the accuracy of this information. I authorize my attorney to disclose to MVLS any information that my attorney learns about my financial circumstances, notwithstanding the client/attorney privilege. I understand that if the information I provide is not true, MVLS may close my case.

I also understand that if after reviewing my financial situation, my attorney feels I am able to pay for legal services, he/she may negotiate a fee for me to pay.

I authorize MVLS to release this Statement of Financial Eligibility to persons checking to see that MVLS has complied with the restrictions on its funding.

I understand that information about the facts and outcome of my legal matter will be treated as confidential information subject to the following exception: I hereby permit and instruct any attorney, law office staff, legal or social services agency to whom this matter is referred by MVLS, to respond by phone or in writing, to requests made by MVLS for information about the facts, progress or outcome of my case.

And, I understand that while MVLS will try to find an attorney for me, it cannot guarantee it will find one who will accept my case.

Client’s Signature ___________________________ Date ________________
Do not use this application if you have a short deadline. Instead, please call us at 410-547-6537 or 1-800-510-0050 Monday-Thursday, 9 am - 1 pm. It may take a month or more before we can place eligible clients with a volunteer.

By using this form, you are asking for legal help in Maryland. Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service staff will use the information you enter to see if you qualify for our program. Please note that we cannot accept every case. You do not become a client unless we give you notice in writing that we can accept your case.

Please understand that your information may not reach us. Problems such as computer malfunctions or Internet service disruptions could keep us from receiving it. Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service is not responsible for these errors.

If you enter your email address, we will send you an email to let you know we have received your application.

Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service is a nonprofit that matches low to moderate income people with volunteer lawyers to help with civil legal matters. We are not able to help with the following types of cases: DWI, class action, fee-generating (SSI, SSDI, or employment), child or spousal abuse, paternity, child support, contempt, or criminal matters (except for criminal record expungement).

I have read the information above and agree to the terms described.

-- I agree
-- I do not agree
Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service
Online Application Form

Complete the application to the best of your ability. All information you provide in this application is strictly confidential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. APPLICANT INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last Name:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Birth:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex: Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My email address is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Address (including apartment #):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zip:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mailing Address:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Phone:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cell Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The best phone number to reach me on is at my:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The best time to reach me is between the hours of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it safe to contact you using the phone number(s)/address above? Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If no, please list an alternate address/phone number:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you speak a language other than English? Yes No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, please indicate what language:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How did you hear about MVLS
2. OTHER PARTY INFORMATION

Please provide the following information about the other person, agency or business in your case. For example, if you need assistance with a divorce matter, you would list the full name of your spouse. If you are being sued, you would list the full name of the agency that is suing you.

Full name of Person, Agency or Business:
Address of Person, Agency or Business:

3. YOUR HOUSEHOLD

How many adults (age 18 and over) live in your house:
How many children (under age 18) live in your house:

4. BENEFITS AND INCOME  (*check all that apply)

☐ Food Stamps  ☐ SSI  ☐ SSDI  ☐ TCA (temp cash assistance)
☐ Alimony  ☐ Workman’s Comp  ☐ Social Security  ☐ Disability
☐ Employment  ☐ Child Support  ☐ Pension  ☐ Unemployment
☐ Veteran’s Benefit  ☐ Spousal/Family support  ☐ Emergency Family Maintenance  ☐ Savings
☐ Other:

5. ADULT HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

Please enter the name, gross monthly income before taxes, and type of income for each adult in your household (household means every person living with you).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Name of Adult</th>
<th>Amount of Monthly Income (gross amount before taxes)</th>
<th>Type of Income or Benefit Name:</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
6. CHILD HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

Please enter the name, gross monthly income before taxes, and type of income for each child in your household (household means every person living with you).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Name of Child</th>
<th>Amount of Monthly Income</th>
<th>Type of Income or Benefit Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

7. ASSETS

Do you have any assets other than your home and one vehicle (assets consist of stocks, bonds, IRAs, Pensions, CDs, additional vehicles, boat, motorcycle, time share, land and money in a checking or savings account)?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, please list:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Type of Asset</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

8. HEARINGS AND DEADLINES

MVLS may not be able to assist you if you have a hearing or deadline within the next 4 weeks. Please contact your local courthouse for procedures on how to file for a postponement.

Have you been served with court documents?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No
If yes, what date were you served with papers?

Are there any deadlines that you know of? □ Yes □ No

Is there a hearing scheduled? □ Yes □ No

If yes, what is the date and time of the hearing?

My court case number is:

My case will be heard in the following county in Maryland:

9. SPECIFIC LEGAL PROBLEM (*check only one per application)

□ Adoption

□ Bankruptcy- Chapter 7 Only

□ Criminal Record Expungement

□ Custody (unmarried biological parents)
  Is there an existing custody agreement established through a court order? □ Yes □ No

□ Denied Food Stamps or Medical Assistance
  Please note: MVLS does not handle denial of Social Security or Social Security Disability benefits. Please contact the Legal Aid Bureau, Inc. at http://www.mdlab.org/

□ Divorce
  □ Contested
  □ Uncontested

□ Employer owes back wages

□ Foreclosure

□ Guardianship
  □ Adult
  □ Child

□ License Revocation
  □ Nursing
  □ Childcare
☐ Name Change
☐ Power of Attorney
☐ School Discipline- Child suspended or expelled
☐ Small Estate Administration
☐ Tax problem with the IRS and/or State of Maryland.
☐ Tenant/Landlord Dispute
☐ Uninsured Motorist- Auto Accident
☐ Will Preparation

Please describe your legal problem and tell us what MVLS can do for you:

By using this form, you are asking for legal help in Maryland. Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service staff will use the information you enter to see if you qualify for our program.

Please note that we cannot accept every case. You do not become a client unless we give you notice in writing that we can accept your case.

Please understand that your information may not reach us. Problems such as computer malfunctions or Internet service disruptions could keep us from receiving it. Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service is not responsible for these errors.

You are about to submit this form. When you do, the information will be sent to MVLS. It may take up to 5 days to process your information and to get back to you. A copy of this application will be emailed to you if you have provided an email address.
The MVLS Community Development Project provides free legal assistance to community-based nonprofits who are working to revitalize low- to moderate-income communities in Maryland. Examples of non-profits who qualify include those that build affordable housing, revitalize depressed neighborhoods, create jobs and train people for them, offer health care, provide drug treatment to low-income individuals, shelter the homeless, and mentor youth.

Date ______________________

1. Name of Organization ________________________________
   Address ___________________________________________
   City/State/Zip _______________________________________
   County ________ Neighborhood (if applicable)____________
   Telephone _______________ Fax ________________
   Email ________________ Website ______________________

2. Name and Title of Contact Person ________________________________
   __________________________________________________

3. Additional Contact Person for information, Name and Title ________________
   __________________________________________________

4. What is the mission of your organization? ________________
   __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

**ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS WHEREVER NEEDED**
5. Describe in detail the programs, projects and services that your organization offers.

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

6. What are the neighborhoods your organization serves? If you serve an entire county or several counties, state the county/counties.

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

7. Does your organization primarily serve a low-to moderate-income community? Please specify how this is defined for your organization

________________________________________________________________________________________

8. Size of Organization
   a. Number of Paid Staff ___________ Unpaid Staff ___________
   b. If Membership Organization, number and type of members

________________________________________________________________________________________

9. Structure of Organization
   a. Date formed/established
   b. Organization incorporated? _________ If yes, when? ________________
   c. Applied for 501(c)(3) federal tax exemption? _______________________
      If yes, when did you obtain federal tax exemption? _______________________

10. What is the size of your annual operating budget? ______________
11. Please list your funding sources.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

12. Attach the following documents to your application. If a requested item is not available, indicate below.

*Included:*  *Not available:*

___   ___ Copies of articles of incorporation and by-laws

___   ___ Most recent year end financial statement and/or IRS Form 990

___   ___ Application for tax exemption and/or IRS determination letter

___   ___ List of Officers/Directors, including addresses and phone numbers

___   ___ Sample grant proposal (optional)

___   ___ Brochures, flyers, newsletters (optional)

___   ___ Other materials describing your goals and activities (optional)

13. Describe **in detail** the type of legal assistance your organization is seeking. Include specific questions/issues you would like addressed.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
14. List names and addresses of other entities involved with the matter.

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

15. Are there any attorneys providing legal assistance to your organization? If yes, please list their names, the type of legal work they have done for you, whether the relationship is ongoing and whether the services were pro bono or for a fee.

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

16. How did you hear about the Community Development Project?

________________________________________________________

17. Additional comments: ________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION AND ATTACHMENTS TO:

Richard Reitzel Chambers, Esq.
Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service
One North Charles Street, Suite 222
Baltimore, MD 21201
Attn: Community Development Project Application

Tel: 443-451-4064 • Fax: 443-451-4081
Email: richard@mvlslaw.org • Website: www.mvlslaw.org
Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Consent for Disclosure of Case Information

Your organization has requested pro bono legal services from Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service.

While Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service will make every effort to preserve the confidential nature of your organization’s legal problems, in seeking pro bono legal services we will need to disclose some of the descriptive material which you have provided us in order to match your organization with a law firm.

In addition, as we receive support from foundations and other grantors, the name of your organization and a brief description of the legal matters handled may be disclosed in fundraising materials, reports to donors and annual reports.

By signing this Consent, it is our understanding that you have granted us permission to make such disclosure, as we deem necessary.

____________________________________
Name

____________________________________
Title

____________________________________
Organization

____________________________________
Date

Return to:
Richard Reitzel Chambers, Esq.
Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service
One North Charles Street, Suite 222
Baltimore, MD 21201
Attn: Community Development Project Application

Fax: 443-451-4081
APPENDIX V

Initial Client Contact Letters / Program Agreements
JLS SERVICE AGREEMENT

Client Must Be Advised of the Following:

1. Client understands that the Jewish Legal Services ("JLS") clinic, through its volunteers, will provide only information, advice and, if necessary, referrals to other programs. This consultation is limited in scope and does not constitute representation of the client.

2. Client understands that JLS is not required to provide referrals to legal counsel. In the event an attorney agrees to handle a case matter and represent the client beyond the clinic consultation, the client understands that such legal representation is outside the auspices of JLS, and that JLS affirmatively and expressly disclaims any responsibility or liability for that matter.

3. Client understands that JLS attorneys are community volunteers who are not affiliated with JLS. JLS verifies, on an annual basis, that volunteer attorneys are licensed to practice law in the state of Maryland and are members in good standing. JLS makes no other representation regarding its volunteers.

4. Client understands that failure to provide correct financial or other information may disqualify client from JLS services. Such disqualification is in the sole discretion of JLS.

5. Client understands that JLS and its representatives will make every reasonable effort to maintain client confidentiality. In addition, JLS lawyers may disclose certain information to other JLS lawyers or staff in the course of the program's practice unless the client specifically instructs the attorney to confine particular information to specified attorneys. While conversations between the client and attorney are confidential, files may be reviewed within JLS for statistical and program assessment purposes. No information will be released to anyone outside JLS without the express prior permission of the client.

_________________________________________  ____________________________
Client Signature                                    Date

_________________________________________  ____________________________
Guardian or Translator Signature                    Date

I hereby give permission for JLS to release my records and information provided to JLS representatives to another legal services agency or attorney.

_________________________________________  ____________________________
Client Signature                                    Date

_________________________________________  ____________________________
Guardian or Translator Signature                    Date
Dear CLIENT,

As you are aware, you are eligible for assistance through the Maryland Legal Service Grant Program and have been referred to ATTORNEY, Esquire for representation. Listed below is his address and phone number.

ATTORNEY, Esq.
32 S. Washington St.
Easton, MD  21601
Cell: 202-215-5301

Please be sure to do the following:

(1) KEEP ALL APPOINTMENTS with your attorney. If you cannot keep an appointment, call the attorney right away to explain.
(2) Immediately notify your attorney and Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence if you decide not to pursue your case.
(3) Always tell your attorney about anything that happens that may affect your case.
(4) Avoid unnecessary phone calls to your attorney. Use your friends, family and Mid-Shore Council for encouragement and support.
(5) Follow all of your attorney’s instructions. If the attorney asks for information, you should get it to her promptly. If you cannot supply the information requested, inform your attorney as soon as possible.
(6) Keep the attorney and this program informed of any change in address or telephone number. You may lose your case if the attorney cannot locate you when necessary.

You do not need to pay MSCFV or your attorney for working on your case as long as you remain eligible for the free services as described in the next paragraph. It is your obligation to notify your attorney and Mid-Shore Council if your financial situation changes.
Your attorney will be paid $80/hour up to $1,600 to represent you in your divorce/custody case. If the case goes over $1,600, you will be responsible for paying the attorney directly. If the case presents extenuating circumstances, the maximum may be increased. The attorney may work with you to create a mutually acceptable reduced fee plan. You may be required to pay fees, court charges or other costs necessary to develop the case.

You should expect your attorney to handle your case the same way she would handle any other similar case. As such expect to be informed about your case and consulted about all major decisions affecting it. You should receive copies of all pertinent papers, such as correspondence, pleadings, and other court documents. Your case should not be settled without your complete knowledge and approval.

Enclosed is a Client Satisfaction Survey which MSCFV would like you to complete when your case is finished. If you have any questions, please feel free to call.

Sincerely,

C. Sheila Orwig
Legal Program Coordinator
(410) 479-1149

Copy to:
ATTORNEY, Esq.
32 S. Washington St.
Easton, MD 21601
May 3, 2010

xxx

Dear Ms. xxx:

Thank you for contacting us regarding your legal problem. We look forward to working with you. In order to assist you, we need you to send the following:

A. COPIES of your last 2 pay checks (bi-weekly pay) or 4 pay checks (weekly pay) for all household members, and/or any and all proof of family income for a month or a year that you receive (such as your taxes; AND

B. a COPY of your lease or other proof of residence in Montgomery County, Maryland; AND

C. Signed Attorney Fee & Expense and Signed Disqualification Policy Forms

D. a signed money order for $25.00 (NO PERSONAL CHECKS OR CASH), payable and written to the “Montgomery County Pro Bono Program” (this is the processing fee and you must keep a full copy for proof). Please include your case number or printed name: 09-01-0000xxx. THIS FEE IS NON-REFUNDABLE.

YOU MUST KEEP THIS OFFICE INFORMED OF ANY COURT DATES. DO NOT SEND ORIGINALS BECAUSE COPIES CANNOT BE PROVIDED.

When we receive your eligibility information, we should be able to place your case with a volunteer attorney within three weeks. (This office does not have staff attorneys.) WE CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT YOUR CASE WILL BE PLACED. In the event that we cannot place your case we will notify you. WE ALSO CANNOT PLACE YOUR CASE WITH MORE THAN ONE VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY. No exceptions!! If you need additional time or have questions, please call our office Monday-Thursday, from 9:00 am until 4:30 pm. Our fax number is (301) 424-6724. Good luck to you.

Sincerely,

The Pro Bono Program
APPENDIX W

Maryland Ethics Opinions on Conflicts of Interest and Pro Bono
You have asked about possible conflicts of interest you may have as a managing attorney of several public welfare projects providing reduced fee legal services in various Maryland counties. The services are provided in the fields of family law and domestic violence. Your role to be one of reviewing intake forms for compliance with your internal financial guidelines, avoidance of conflict of interest, and review of other statistical information.

For purposes of answering your questions, several assumptions must be made:

a. Attorneys to whom you refer cases are not employees of your organization, and you and they are not disclosing confidential information to the opposite side of a dispute.
b. Your review of the intake forms and communication with these attorneys providing services does not amount to “legal representation.”
c. The parties have actually disclosed confidential information on the basic intake sheet and you are in a position to actually communicate this information to someone representing one of the parties.

Assuming all of the above to be present, then your situation would appear to be governed by two of the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, Rules 1.6 and 1.7. Rule 1.6 prohibits a lawyer from revealing information regarding a client unless the client consents after consultation, except for disclosures that are impliedly authorized in order to carry out the representation. However, you have not indicated if you reveal any information to anyone, rather you receive information which appears to be impliedly authorized by your supervisory capacity.

Rule 1.7 prohibits representation of a client which is directly adverse to another client unless the lawyer believes the representation will not adversely affect the relationship with another client. It does not appear that you as a supervisor are actually representing a client, but rather overseeing other attorneys who engage in giving legal advice.

In conclusion, the Committee does not feel that your involvement with these projects poses a real ethical problem. However, in order to avoid a technical conflict of interest, we recommend inserting an additional sentence to the application form or intake sheet which would provide the client’s consent to administrative review of the client’s information.
Conflicts – Partner of Lawyer representing wife in a divorce is on the board of public interest law firm which represents the husband

In your letter you stated that Attorney A is providing pro bono legal services for your organization by representing a Wife in a divorce matter. You note that Attorney A originally began representing the Wife while working for one law firm, and continued this representation after moving to another, smaller firm. At this new firm, Attorney A has a law partner, Attorney B, who sits on the Board of an agency which is providing a staff attorney to represent Husband in Attorney A’s case.

You ask if this situation poses a conflict of interest. You further ask if such a conflict might be alleviated if the agency provided the Husband with a pro bono attorney, rather than with one of its own staff attorneys.

Under Rule 1.10 (a) of the Maryland Rules of Professional Conduct, “While lawyers are associated in a firm, none of them shall knowingly represent a client when any one of them practicing alone would be prohibiting from doing so by Rules 1.7, 1.8 (c), 1.9 or 2.2.” For purposes of your inquiry, 1.8 (c), 1.9 and 2.2 are not applicable.

Rule 1.7 (b), however, provides

A lawyer shall not represent a client if the representation of that client may be materially limited by the lawyer’s responsibilities to another client or to a third person, or by the lawyer’s own interests, unless:

(1) the lawyer reasonably believes the representation will not be adversely affected; and

(2) the client consents after consultation.

Rule 1.10 (a) imputes any conflict that Attorney B would have to her law partner, Attorney A. If Attorney B could not represent Wife, then that disqualification would be imputed to law partners of Attorney B, including Attorney A.

Nevertheless, the Committee notes that Rule 6.3 provides:

A lawyer may serve as a director, officer, or member of a legal services organization, apart from the law firm in which the lawyer practices, notwithstanding that the
organization serves persons having interests adverse to a client of the lawyer. The lawyer shall not knowingly participate in a decision or action of the organization.

(a) if participating in the decision would be incompatible with the lawyer’s obligations to a client under Rule 1.7; or

(b) where the decision could have a material adverse effect on the representation of a client of the organization whose interests are adverse to a client of the lawyers.

The Comments to Rule 6.3 note that Attorney B does not by virtue of her position on the Board of an agency, have an attorney-client relationship with the clients served by the organization. The Comments further state that there a potential conflict between the interests of such persons—i.e. Attorney B, Board member—and the interests of the lawyer’s clients—i.e., law partner Attorney A’s client. Attorney B’s own interests by virtue of her board membership and her duties and obligations to the organization in some circumstances could be in conflict with the interest of the client represented by her partner, Attorney A. If existing, this conflict would be imputed to Attorney “A” under Rules 1.10 (a) and 1.7 (b) as stated above.

The Committee believes that the possibility of conflict must be dealt with on a case by case basis. Attorney A could ethically continue her representation of the Wife, provided that Attorney B obeys the prohibitions of 6.3 regarding ‘knowing participation’ in the agency’s representation of the Husband. (For example, the approval or denial of funds necessary for Husband’s litigation in a situation where the Board must approve the funds)

The Committee would note that under Rule 1.7, Attorney A should also reasonably believe that her representation of Wife is not adversely affected and her client should be consulted and consent to continued representation.

The Committee’s opinion would not change if the agency provided a pro bono attorney.
APPENDIX X

Sample Attorney Conflict of Interest Policy
ATTORNEY CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY (ADOPTED JANUARY 2009) *

I. Conflict checking system - VLN shall create and maintain a conflicts log that shall include at least the following information:

a. The names and addresses of persons to whom staff attorneys have provided legal services

b. The dates of services provided

c. A brief description of the nature of the services provided

d. A listing of the parties to the litigation if the services were provided in connection with a litigation matter

e. The name and addresses of the persons adverse to the client represented, if known

II. Conflicts checks – Prior to a VLN staff attorney undertaking the representation of a client in a matter that involves advice, counsel, or representation other than short term limited legal services (See paragraph IV, below), the attorney shall first consult the conflicts log to determine whether the contemplated representation will constitute a conflict of interest. If the representation will involve a conflict of interest, the attorney must first obtain appropriate consents, confirmed in writing, or decline the representation.

III. Staff placement of cases to outside attorneys – When the actual representation of the referred client will be conducted exclusively by the volunteer attorney, VLN need not conduct a conflicts check. VLN should not, however, release intake information regarding a client to anyone other than the client or the client’s attorney. VLN may release information necessary to place a case to prospective volunteers and/or pro bono coordinators. In addition, one case placement coordinator may not panel opposing sides of the same case.

IV. Entries into the Conflicts Log:

a. Full representation/more than short term representations – Staff attorneys who undertake the representation of a client involving something more that short term

* Excerpt from Volunteer Lawyers Network Strategic Plan: July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2014
Obtained from the October 29, 2009, National Association of Pro Bono Professionals (NAPBPro) Webinar
limited legal representation should note the representation in the VLN conflict log. Such representations would be subject to Rules 1.7 and 1.9, MRPC, and those conflicts, if any, will be imputed to other VLN staff attorneys pursuant to Rule 1.10, MRPC.

b. **Staff providing short term limited legal services** – This category of work includes phone advice, advice only clinics, assisted pro se workshops (e.g., form completion), and advice only with brief follow-up services. In light of the provisions of Rule 6.5, Minnesota Rules of Professional Conduct (MRPC), staff attorneys providing such services need not conduct a conflicts check prior to providing the services. However, if the staff attorney providing the services knows that they are or have previously provided services to a person such that a conflict of interest would exist under Rules 1.7 or 1.9(a), (MRPC), they must decline to provide the short term legal services and refer the matter to a volunteer. Staff should keep track of the identities of the clients to whom they have provided short term limited legal services and note it on the VLN conflicts log as a Rule 6.5 representation. This will/should, absent appropriate consents, preclude the staff attorney who provided the short term limited legal services from providing services to a person adverse to the prior client that would constitute a Rule 1.9 or 1.7 conflict, but would not prevent another staff attorney from providing such services.

c. **Case screening by staff attorneys**– In matters where a staff attorney has screened a case to determine whether to refer it to a volunteer or for purposes of staff attorney representation, the provisions of Rule 1.18, MRPC, regarding duties to a prospective client will apply. Pursuant to that rule, if the staff attorney has received information from the prospective client that could be significantly harmful to the person if that information were in the possession of someone representing the adverse party, the client’s name should be entered into the VLN conflicts log to ensure that no staff attorney undertakes the representation of a party adverse to the prospective client in the same or a substantially related matter absent appropriate consents or screening in accord with rule 1.18(d), MRPC. This would not, however, preclude the referral of the adverse party to a volunteer lawyer.

d. **Staff support of volunteers** – In those instances where staff attorneys provide support to volunteers in specific cases and the staff attorney is made privy to client confidential information that does not fall within the exception of Rule 1.6(b)(2), MRPC, the staff attorney should be considered to have undertaken the representation of the client involved and that representation should be noted in the VLN conflicts log. Such a representation would, absent appropriate consents, preclude the staff attorney and other staff attorneys from undertaking a representation prohibited by Rules 1.7 and 1.9 and would be imputed to other staff attorneys by virtue of Rule 1.10.
Confidentiality Policy for Pro Bono Attorneys
2.1 CLIENT CONFIDENTIALITY CONCERNS *

Client Confidentiality Agreements

During the client intake process, each new client is required to sign the client representation agreement that outlines the Clinic’s responsibility with regard to client confidentiality.

In addition, upon commencing work for the Clinic, Clinic personnel including volunteers, full and part time Clinic staff, and pro bono attorneys and CPAs must sign a confidentiality agreement. All original, signed agreements will be kept on file at the Center for Economic Progress.

The Center for Economic Progress is required by the Code and by several funding agencies, including the IRS, to keep client documents confidential. Moreover, many client communications are entitled to attorney-client protections. Clients are informed that upon agreeing to representation by Clinic staff and volunteers, they are afforded certain protections; including the right, in most instances, to request that all IRS communications be handled by their authorized tax representative.

It is the policy of the Center for Economic Progress that all client information, including client names, files, and records, remain confidential and not be disclosed outside of the necessary disclosures in the course of client representation and tax compliance assistance. All client files are kept in closed, locked file cabinets. It is the responsibility of every staff person, volunteer, and pro bono professional to protect client confidentiality. (see Example 6)
Exceptions to Client Confidentiality Policy

Careful exceptions to confidentiality include:

1. Media Releases are used when a client authorizes in writing that their name, image, or personal story may be disclosed as part of a media event, individual media contact, or in connection with the Center’s promotional materials. However, even and especially in these cases, Center staff must make certain that the proposed disclosure of information is not confidential and does not expose a taxpayer to civil or criminal liability. Whenever possible, the Center should approve the final release of information to media. In addition, Center staff (preferably staff or pro bono counsel) must educate each client participating in a media event as to the information that may safely be disclosed to a member of the media.

2. Exception is also taken if Center personnel are conducting a review for the purposes of program oversight or if IRS officials are conducting an LITC Review to determine a Center’s program eligibility or compliance. In each of these instances, the individuals involved have the right to full access to files.

3. If a court order is issue, Center staff counsel will be immediately notified and necessary information will be released or disclosed by the Center, pending legal review. If information is requested akin to a legal proceeding, the Center must still take the necessary precautions, including a legal review, to protect privileged information.

IRS Policy Regarding Practitioner Email Contact

In order not to compromise the taxpayers’ privacy and confidentiality rights, the IRS discourages practitioners from using e-mail to communicate on specific taxpayer matters with assigned IRS employees. The IRS categorizes tax return and return information as sensitive but unclassified (SBU) information. IRS security and Internet e-mail policies restrict employees from sending SBU information in external e-mail communications. If a practitioner sends an IRS employee an e-mail that contains tax information concerning a specific taxpayer, the IRS employee is not permitted to reply via e-mail but will reply by telephone, mail or fax in certain situations.

The IRS offers tax professionals enrolled in the e-services suite of electronic products the ability to conduct certain preapproved transactions over the Internet. Those transactions are specifically identified and all necessary safeguards are in place to ensure that taxpayer privacy and confidentiality are not compromised. (see Example 7)²
EXAMPLE 6:

ADVANCE EITC

Lynn filled out a W-5 form when starting her new job as a day laborer. This resulted in Lynn’s receiving an Advanced EITC during the year in each paycheck. Upon filing her recent tax return she found out that she does not qualify for EITC, therefore, she must pay back what she erroneously received in advance during the year. How do you proceed?

Answer:

Educate the client on the EITC, the Advance payment option, and the qualifications to receive this credit. Fill out Form W-5, Earned Income Credit Advance Payment Certificate, by answering “NO” to the first question on the document. Have the client sign and date in the required areas and advise her to present it to her employer as soon as possible.

EXAMPLE 7:

INNOCENT SPOUSE RELIEF

Henry is a continual gambler who was audited by the IRS last year. The audit resulted in having to pay $3,000 back in taxes on unreported gambling winnings.

Henry had two separate bank accounts. One was a joint account shared with his former wife used to pay monthly home expenses. The other account was used for his business, a restaurant, and was only under his name. The statements of the business account were received at the restaurants’ location. This was the same account that Henry used to deposit his gambling winnings. The gambling winnings were used to purchase appliances for his restaurant.

Henry’s former spouse, Joanna, had always been a stay at home wife. She married right out of high school and had dedicated herself to their three children. She paid the monthly bills with her joint bank account and had never seen the business account statements.

Joanna and Henry are now going through divorce procedures and have been living separately for seven months. Joanna wants to file an innocent spouse claim. She did not know about Henry’s gambling winnings. The winnings were not used to benefit her directly, but rather her husband’s business. What do you do?

Answer:

File Form 2824 Power of Attorney. Publication 971, Innocent Spouse Relief, indicates the three determining factors: understatement of tax, actual knowledge or reason to know, and indications of unfairness for innocent spouse relief. You should talk to your client about her situation and determine if she meets the qualifications. You should also complete Worksheet A: Allocating the Understatement of Tax to determine the break down of the spouse’s portion of tax, interest,
and penalties. A request for the relief should be filed within two years after the date the IRS initiates collection activities.

Fill out Form 8857, Request for Innocent Spouse Relief. The form should include an attachment indicating why the request is being filed and an explanation of the client’s innocence pertaining to the three determining factors. Mail the completed form to the IRS agent that originally handled the case, the agent’s name will be on the 30 day letter. The Practitioner’s hotline could also provide information on the correct mailing address.

The IRS may ask for additional information on IRS Form 12510, Questionnaire for Requesting Spouse. The questionnaire will ask for details of the marital status, the Innocent Spouse’s involvement with the preparation of the joint return, and the spouses’ finances and employment.

You may petition the Tax Court for review if the IRS has made a final decision of relief or if they have not made a decision within six months of filing Form 8857. The petition should be filed within six months after the request was filed, or within 90 days after the date the IRS has mailed notice of a final determination of relief.
APPENDIX Z

Pro Bono Attorney Volunteer Registration Forms
Please complete and return this form to us. Thank you!

Name: ____________________________  Today’s Date: ____________________________
Year Admitted to MD Bar: ____________________________
Address: ___________________________________________________________________
City/State/Zip: ___________________________________________________________________
County: ___________________________________________________________________
Firm/Org.: ___________________________________________________________________
Home Phone: ____________________________  Work Phone: ____________________________  Fax: ____________________________
E-mail: ____________________________

How did you learn about us?  ( ) website  ( ) flyer  ( ) listserv  ( ) training  ( ) conference
( ) newspaper  ( ) colleague  ( ) other ____________________________

I am currently capable of providing pro bono legal services in the following areas:

( ) bankruptcy  ( ) divorce  ( ) public benefits
( ) child custody  ( ) elder law  ( ) real estate
( ) civil rights  ( ) estate planning  ( ) special education
( ) consumer  ( ) guardianship  ( ) tax
( ) disability  ( ) immigration  ( ) other (please specify)
( ) discrimination  ( ) landlord-tenant ____________________________

The following is a partial list of referral programs. We attempt to refer volunteers to programs based on their experience and location. However, if there is a particular agency to which you prefer to be referred, please let us know.

( ) Catholic Charities Immigration Services  ( ) Mid-Shore Pro Bono Project
( ) Community Legal Services of Prince George’s  ( ) Montgomery Co. Bar Pro Bono Project
( ) Community Law Center  ( ) St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center
( ) Homeless Persons Rep Project  ( ) Women’s Law Center
( ) House of Ruth Legal Clinic  ( ) _____________ County Pro Bono Program
( ) Legal Services to the Elderly  ( ) other (please specify)
( ) Maryland Disability Law Center ____________________________
( ) Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service ____________________________

The following training areas are ones in which I would like to receive training to provide pro bono services:

( ) bankruptcy  ( ) divorce  ( ) public benefits
( ) child custody  ( ) elder law  ( ) real estate
( ) civil rights  ( ) estate planning  ( ) special education
( ) consumer  ( ) guardianship  ( ) tax
( ) disability  ( ) immigration  ( ) other (please specify)
( ) discrimination  ( ) landlord-tenant ____________________________

I prefer to provide pro bono service in the following area(s):

( ) direct representation  ( ) teach classes to other pro bono attorneys
( ) give brief advice / counsel individuals in shelters  ( ) conduct public education seminars
( ) be a mentor to pro bono attorneys  ( ) other (please specify):
( ) assist pro se clients in a pro bono clinic setting ____________________________

If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Larrabee, Esq. at 800-396-1274 or 410-837-9379 or jlarrabee@probonomd.org.
VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM
Homeless Persons Representation Project, Inc.
1800 N. Charles Street, Suite 206, Baltimore, MD 21201 410-685-6589 x14
Fax: 410-625-0361 E-mail: hprpprobono@hrplaw.org

Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Mailing Address: ___________________________

City: ______________ State: __________ Zip Code: __________ Fax: __________

Telephone: ___________ (home) ___________ (work) E-mail: ___________

Name of firm, school or place of employment: ___________________________

Your occupation: ___________________________ Name of Pro Bono Coordinator: ___________________________

Jurisdiction(s) of Bar Membership: ___________________________ Year Admitted to Bar: ___________________________

Counties (including Baltimore) that you are interested in serving: ___________________________

Language(s) Spoken (please circle): Spanish, French, German, Russian, Chinese, Korean, other__

I currently practice law in the following areas (check all that apply)

Bankruptcy  Business contracts, etc.  Civil Liberties  Consumer Law  Credit  Discrimination Cases  Domestic Relations  Law for Senior Citizens

Employment Dispute  Expungement of Criminal Records  Federal Workers' Comp.  Guardianship  Immigration  Juvenile  Landlord/Tenant  Mental Health Law

Public/Subsidized Housing  Real Estate  Social Security Disability  Other Public Benefits  Unemployment Compensation  Veteran Administration  Zoning  Probate

Please check the type of volunteer activity you are interested in below:

___ I would like to do intake at a shelter or soup kitchen on a monthly basis and to do follow up advocacy and representation of homeless individuals for Expungement.

___ I would like to handle cases on referral, in the area of Veterans Benefits.

___ I would like to serve as a consultant to other volunteer attorneys in the areas of law checked below.

Bankruptcy  Business contracts, etc.  Civil Liberties  Consumer Law  Credit  Discrimination Cases  Domestic Relations  Law for Senior Citizens

Employment Dispute  Expungement of Criminal Records  Federal Workers' Comp.  Guardianship  Immigration  Juvenile  Landlord/Tenant  Mental Health Law

Probate  Real Estate  Social Security Disability  Other Public Benefits  Unemployment Compensation  Veteran Administration  Zoning  Subsidized Housing

FOR ATTORNEY VOLUNTEERS ONLY
I hereby certify that I am in active legal practice and not currently subject to any disciplinary proceedings under Subtitle BV of the Maryland Rule of Procedure.

I hereby certify that I am duly admitted to practice before the Court of Appeals of Maryland and am presently a member in good standing, and I will immediately notify the Homeless Persons Representation Project if I am suspended or disbarred from the practice of law in Maryland.

Date: ___________________________ Signature of Attorney: ___________________________
PARALEGAL/STUDENT VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM
Homeless Persons Representation Project, Inc.
1800 N. Charles Street, Suite 206 + Baltimore, MD 21201 + 410-685-6589 x14
Fax: 410-625-0361 + E-mail: hprpprobono@hrplaw.org

Name: _______________________________ Date: __________________

Mailing Address: __________________________

City: __________________ State: _______ Zip Code: __________ Fax: __________________

Telephone: ___________ (home) ___________ (work) E-mail: __________________

Name of school __________________ Program: __________________

Advisor: __________________ Telephone: __________________

Employer: __________________

Counties (including Baltimore) that you are interested in serving: __________________

Special Talents: __________________

Other prior volunteer work: __________________

Language(s) Spoken (please circle) Spanish, French, German, Russian, Chinese, Korean, other: __________________

I have experience in the following areas of law (check all that apply): 

- Bankruptcy
- Business contracts, etc.
- Civil Liberties
- Consumer Law
- Credit
- Discrimination Cases
- Domestic Relations
- Law for Senior Citizens
- Employment
- Federal Workers' Comp.
- Guardianship
- Immigration
- Juvenile
- Landlord/Tenant
- Mental Health Law
- Prisoner Assistance (Civil)
- Probate
- Public/Subsidized Housing
- Real Estate
- Social Security Disability
- Unemployment Compensation
- Veterans Administration
- Zoning

Please check the type of volunteer activity you are interested in below:

- I would like to do intake at a shelter or soup kitchen on a monthly basis and to do follow up advocacy and representation of homeless individuals.
- I would like to conduct legal research and other related duties.

I am most interested in the following areas of law:

- Bankruptcy
- Business contracts, etc.
- Civil Liberties
- Consumer Law
- Credit
- Discrimination Cases
- Domestic Relations
- Law for Senior Citizens
- Employment Dispute
- Federal Workers' Comp.
- Guardianship
- Immigration
- Juvenile
- Landlord/Tenant
- Mental Health Law
- Prisoner Assistance (Civil)
- Probate
- Public/Subsidized Housing
- Real Estate
- Social Security Disability
- Unemployment Compensation
- Veterans Administration
- Zoning

Thanks for applying with us! For any questions, please contact Amelia Lazarus at hprpprobono@hrplaw.org
VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mr.</th>
<th>Mrs.</th>
<th>Miss</th>
<th>Ms.</th>
<th>Last name:</th>
<th>First name:</th>
<th>Middle:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Address:                                                                                               City:                   State/Zip:  
Home Phone:                                                                                             Alternate Phone:          Email:       
Employer and Address:                                                                                   DOB (MM/DD/YY):          
Employer Phone:                                                                                         Occupation:               Length of Service:  
What volunteer opportunities interest you? (All of the below opportunities require a minimum six month commitment.)*

- Ruth’s Closet
- Shelter/Operations Assistant
- Gateway Project
- Office Assistant
- Child Care Assistant
- Legal Clinic
- Speaker’s Bureau
- B-More Bags
- Other ___________________

*All positions require a background check obtained at volunteer’s own expense.

Are you over 16 years of age?      _____Yes      _____No

When are you available to volunteer? Please list hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

How many times per month? __________________

What attracted you to the House Of Ruth Maryland? ____________________________________________

How did you hear about House Of Ruth Maryland? _______________________________________________

Please list two emergency contacts should a situation arise when you are volunteering.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Relationship:</th>
<th>Phone:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Relationship:</td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please list three personal or professional references. Please exclude relatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Relationship:</th>
<th>Phone:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Relationship:</td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Relationship:</td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE:
(Please list any volunteer experience you feel is applicable.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State/Zip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start date</th>
<th>End date</th>
<th>Duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you have previous domestic violence experience?  □ Yes  □ No  If yes, please describe

*All answers will be kept confidential.

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

What skills, training or knowledge do you want to utilize at the House Of Ruth? _______________________
_____________________________________________________
___________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Give an example of a time you have worked with people from different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds? How did you feel?  ___________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Have you ever been convicted of a crime other than a minor traffic violation?  □ Yes  □ No  If yes, please explain and give dates
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Do you agree to disclose any future convictions or violations?  □ Yes  □ No

I hereby certify that this application is true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I authorize investigation of all statements contained in this application for volunteer employment. I agree to abide by all House of Ruth Maryland rules and policies.

Signature: _____________________________  Date: ____________________________

Please return to: Volunteer Manager via fax: 410-889-9347, email: knewton@hruthmd.org or mail:
2201 Argonne Drive  Baltimore, MD 21218

OFFICE USE ONLY:  ACCEPTED ___________________________  DECLINED ___________________________

Attended General Orientation  Yes _____  Date _______________________

Attended Program Training (name) ___________________________  Date _______________________

COMMENTS:_____________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
Please complete this form, listing all of the legal areas in which you are willing to accept an occasional pro bono and/or reduced fee case. Mail or fax this form to Community Legal Services, P.O. Box 329, Hyattsville, Md. 20781. Fax: 301-864-8352

Name: ____________________________
Business Address:___________________

Phone: ___________________________ Fax: ___________________________
Email: ____________________________
EIN or SSN ____________________________
State(s) where licensed, in good standing to practice law: ____________________________

I am willing to accept pro bono cases □  CLS provides liability insurance in pro bono cases.  
I will also accept reduced fee cases with the understanding that for each reduced fee case I must also accept a pro bono case □ The name of my malpractice insurance carrier and the amount of insurance is: ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAMILY LAW</th>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>HOSPICE/AIDS</th>
<th>HOMELESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>Assist with applying for and appealing</td>
<td>Provide legal services to terminally ill clients on site</td>
<td>Visit shelters and provide legal service to shelter residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custody</td>
<td>Special Education Benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>Suspensions/Expulsions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESTATE LAW</th>
<th>ELDER LAW</th>
<th>RELATED LAW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will, Power of Attorney, etal.</td>
<td>Guardianship</td>
<td>Public Benefits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LANDLORD TENANT LAW</th>
<th>RELATED LAW</th>
<th>RELATED LAW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defend suit for back rent/Security Deposit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPLOYMENT</th>
<th>RELATED LAW</th>
<th>RELATED LAW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Worker’s Rights Compensation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSUMER LAW</th>
<th>RELATED LAW</th>
<th>RELATED LAW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Credit/Debt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NON-PROFIT</th>
<th>RELATED LAW</th>
<th>RELATED LAW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zoning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL SECURITY</th>
<th>RELATED LAW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appeal denial of reconsideration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OTHER
(please specify)

OTHER LANGUAGES SPOKEN:
______________________________
Volunteer Attorney Registration Form

Thank you for your interest in joining Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service's panel of volunteer attorneys. So that we can find the right volunteer opportunity for you, please complete the following information.

I affirm that I am admitted to practice before the Court of Appeals of MD and am presently a member of the bar in good standing. I have not been disciplined by the Attorney Grievance Commission, nor am I currently the subject of a grievance proceeding. ○ YES ○ NO

I promise to notify MVLS immediately if I am suspended or disbarred from the practice of law in Maryland or any other jurisdiction. ○ YES ○ NO

Salutation:       First Name:  
Middle Name:       Last Name:  
Sex: ○ Female ○ Male  Firm:  
Business Address:  
Business City/State/Zip:  
Work Phone:       Cell Phone:  
Fax Number:       Email:  

Optional
Home Address:  
Home City/State/Zip:  
Home Phone:  
Personal Email:  

Date of Admission to Maryland Bar:  (mm/dd/yyyy)  
Please list any languages you speak in addition to English:  
I prefer to accept cases in the following counties:  
I am ready to accept a case now. ○ YES ○ NO  
I need a mentor in the following area(s):  

I am willing to mentor attorneys in the following area(s):  


I am willing to lead a training session for attorneys in the following area(s):

I am willing to lead a pro se training for low income clients in the following area(s):

I can provide representation in the following area(s) (check all that apply):

- ☐ Administrative Hearings
- ☐ Adult Guardianship
- ☐ Best Interest/Guardian ad litem
- ☐ Chapter 13 Bankruptcy
- ☐ Consumer Rights
- ☐ Custody
- ☐ Deed Change
- ☐ Employment
- ☐ Landlord/Tenant
- ☐ Mortgage Foreclosure
- ☐ Name change
- ☐ Public Benefits
- ☐ Tax Disputes
- ☐ Unemployment Benefit Denial
- ☐ Wills and Estates
- ☐ Adoption
- ☐ Back Tax Preparation
- ☐ Chapter 7 Bankruptcy
- ☐ Child Guardianship
- ☐ Criminal Record Expungement
- ☐ Debt Collection Defense
- ☐ Divorce
- ☐ Identity Theft
- ☐ License (denial or revocation of daycare, nursing or other professional license)
- ☐ Mortgage Foreclosure Mediation
- ☐ Power of Attorney/Advance Directives
- ☐ School Suspension
- ☐ Torts Defense
- ☐ Veterans Benefit Denial
- ☐ Real Estate

I am willing to accept a contested family law case for a reduced-fee. I have at least three years of family law experience and I am willing to accept one pro bono case for every paid case that I accept. ○ YES ○ NO

I can provide representation for Nonprofits in the following area(s) (check all that apply):

- ☐ Corporate
- ☐ Labor & Employment
- ☐ Tax
- ☐ Other:

- ☐ Intellectual Property
- ☐ Real Estate
- ☐ Zoning

Would you like to be included on the MVLS listserv? ○ YES ○ NO
APPENDIX AA

Transfer Letters to Pro Bono Attorneys and Referral Sheet
DATE

ATTORNEY, Esq.
32 S. Washington St.
Easton, MD 21601

Dear ATTORNEY,

Thank you for representing CLIENT in her divorce/custody case through the Maryland Legal Service Grant Program. The current contact information for your client is:

CLIENT
ADDRESS
Easton, MD 21601
H:
Cell:

Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence (MSCFV) agrees to pay your firm $80 an hour for 20 hours of service on this case. Ms. CLIENT understands that she is responsible for fees incurred after the initial $1,600 is expended. She has signed a contract with MSCFV and a copy of this contract is enclosed.

Enclosed is a Retainer Agreement which Ms. CLIENT has signed. Please sign the agreement and forward it to our office. I have also enclosed a copy of the letter that she received.

We appreciate your participation in the Maryland Legal Service Grant Program and your continued support of MSCFV’s clients. It is a pleasure to work with you and your office staff. Thank you again for all your help.

Sincerely,

C. Sheila Orwig
Legal Program Coordinator
(410) 479-1149

Enclosures
MID-SHORE COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE
Referral Sheet

To: __________________________________________

Type of Referral:  FPO Hearing ______________  Modification Hearing ______________
Divorce ______________  Custody ______________  Other ______________

Date of Immediate Needs: __________________________________________

Name: __________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________

Telephone Number:  (H) ________________________  (W) ______________
History: __________________________________________

Staff Signature __________________________________________  Date

Notes: __________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
July 15, 2009

Attorney name
Address
Address

RE:

Dear ________:

Thank you for agreeing to accept a pro bono case. Pro bono referrals are made because MDLC does not have the resources to handle the large volume of cases in which students with disabilities need representation. A specific referral is made when MDLC is unable to handle a case and the family meets the income guidelines of the Maryland Legal Services Corporation. Enclosed please find referral information for CLIENT, a Baltimore County student who is in need of an attorney. CLIENT's GUARDIAN, CLIENT'S NAME & RELATIONSHIP, has been advised that a pro bono referral has been made to you. I would be most appreciative if you would contact the family as soon as possible and arrange to represent CLIENT. CLIENT'S GUARDIAN can be reached at PHONE NUMBER.

Maryland Lawyers' Rule of Professional Conduct 1.5(b) requires that attorneys advise clients, preferably in writing, of their fees for services before or within a reasonable time after commencing representation. Thus, we urge you to enter into a retainer agreement with this client stating the pro bono nature and scope of representation, as well as the handling of any additional costs. You should also be aware that, if you do not have malpractice insurance coverage, MDLC's professional liability insurance will extend to professional services you render in connection with the special education matter referred.

Please be advised that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) authorizes the award of attorneys fees when the child or youth is the prevailing party. Should you decide to pursue a fee award, we would be happy to provide you with technical assistance including the necessary forms. If you are successful, we encourage you to consider making a contribution to a fund we are establishing to help defray the costs and expenses incurred by pro bono attorneys in the course of representing MDLC referrals.
Now that a referral has been made, MDLC will not have any ongoing attorney-client relationship with CLIENT. Should you have any questions in the course of your representation of CLIENT, please feel free to call me and I will be happy to provide assistance.

Again, thank you for your generosity and commitment to our pro bono project.

Sincerely,

Lauren B. Kallins, Esq.
Pro Bono Coordinator

Enc: Referral Form
APPENDIX AB

Sample Retainer Agreements and Engagement Letters
Re: [Student/Client Name]

Dear [Parent]:

This letter confirms our discussion of earlier today. At that time, we discussed your need for legal representation concerning the special education needs of your son [student/client], I understand that you have the authority to make all decisions about the educational needs for [student/client]. Unless specifically agreed in a separate letter similar to this one, I will not provide legal advice on issues other than [student/client]’s special education needs.

My firm is prepared to render professional services on your behalf concerning this matter. This letter is to inform you in writing of the terms and conditions of your engagement of my firm. Because your case was referred to me by the Maryland Disability Law Center and/or the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, I am not charging you for any legal fees for my professional services. I do not intend to charge you for ordinary disbursements which include photocopying, fax charges, parking, travel expenses, postage, long distance telephone charges, and similar out-of-pocket expenses. However, in the event extra-ordinary expenses are incurred my firm will require you to reimburse those disbursements incurred in connection with the performance of legal services on your behalf. Extraordinary expenses include by are not limited to, filing fees, witness fees, expert fees, medical examination charges and the like. Any extra-ordinary expenses shall not be incurred on your behalf without first obtaining your consent. You agree to pay for all such costs related to your case to the extent that such costs are not waived by the appropriate agency or court. If I advance any costs or expenses, you agree to reimburse me. Further, you agree that neither I, nor the Maryland Disability Law Center are responsible for paying any of the above costs.

Upon request and within a reasonable time, you agree to pay any expenses advanced by me in this matter. I reserve the right to request that you pay some expenses in advance or that you pay directly to the party charging you.

In addition, you agree to the following terms:

(1) You agree to notify me about any change in address and telephone number.
(2) You understand that I may need to discuss the case with other attorneys and professionals whenever I determine it to be necessary to obtain information to help handle the case. Such conversations with other professionals about the case will be in an anonymous manner whenever possible.

(3) You agree that nothing in this agreement or in my statements to you will be taken as a promise or guarantee about the outcome of this case. Any comments I make are only opinions and are not promises or guarantees.

(4) You may terminate this agreement with me at any time by writing to me. If you terminate this agreement, you are responsible for payment of the costs discussed previously in this letter. I may terminate this agreement with you, also in writing, either with your consent or for cause. Cause includes your failure to comply with this agreement, your refusal to cooperate with me or your refusal to follow my advice on a material matter, or any other fact or circumstance that would result in my representation being unlawful, unethical, or impractical. I will exercise my sole discretion in deciding if cause exists and, by signing below, you agree to accept that determination. In the event I terminate this agreement I will provide you written notice mailed to the last address you provided and will comply with any other requirements which may be imposed on termination of an attorney/client relationship which may be imposed by rules or law.

If you agree to these terms, please sign below and return the enclosed copy of this letter. Please note that I can take no action until you return one copy of this letter. I have enclosed an envelope and authorization form for you to sign and return to me.

Putting aside all formality, I look forward to working with you. I do sincerely hope to be of service to [student/client] and you.

Very truly yours,

Attorney

enclosure (1)

SIGNED AND AGREED TO THIS ___________ DAY OF ______________, 2002.

[Parent] individually and on behalf of [student/client]
I, ____________________________________________, do hereby retain and authorize the Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence (MSCFV) Legal Program and its attorneys to represent, investigate and advise me concerning the following action(s):

I understand that the scope of my representation by MSCFV is limited to the above actions. I hereby agree to the following representation by MSCFV:

1. **FEES.** I understand that I will not be charged for my attorney’s services because I meet the Maryland Legal Services Corporation Income guidelines for representation. I hereby affirm that the information I have provided MSCFV regarding my income and expenses is true and accurate. If my income increases substantially during the course of my representation, I agree to notify my attorney immediately. I understand that the attorney has agreed to a fee of **$80.00** an hour for this case, with MSCFV paying up to **$1,600.00**. Any amount above this will be paid by me, the client. I understand that some fees and costs may be assessed to me. I agree to pay these fees and court costs. In some instances, the costs may be waived or assessed against my spouse.

I also understand and agree that the firm/attorney representing me reserves the right to collect any cash property settlements awarded to me as a result of the case.
2. **FULL DISCLOSURE.** I agree to full and accurate disclosure of all relevant facts pertaining to my case. I understand that withholding some information from my attorney may result in MSCFV’s withdrawal from my case.

3. **CONTACT WITH MY ATTORNEY.** I agree to keep my attorney informed of all changes in my address, my phone number, my employment status and my income. I will call my attorney immediately if I receive any letters or documents relative to my case. I agree to be on time for all appointments unless an emergency prohibits me, in which case I will call my attorney as soon as I am able. I understand that repeated failures on my part to meet with my attorney or keep him/her informed about my case may result in MSCFV’s or the attorney’s withdrawal from my case.

4. **CONTACT WITH OPPOSING COUNSEL OR PARTY.** My attorney has discussed with me the problems which might arise if I contact my partner or his attorney regarding my case without my attorney’s knowledge. I understand that this contact may result in MSCFV’s or the attorney’s withdrawal from my case.

5. **CONSENT TO DISCUSS CASE.** I hereby consent to allow my attorney to discuss my case and information I give to my attorney with members of MSCFV’s staff.

6. **OTHER PROVISIONS.**

   ——— ——— ——— ——— ——— ———

   CLIN ENCA DATE

I have reviewed the terms of this retainer agreement with the client and am satisfied that the client understands its provisions.

   ——— ——— ——— ——— ——— ———

   ATTORNEY DATE
AFFIDAVIT OF INCOME

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Number of persons living in your household: ____________________________

Income before taxes and other deductions:

________________________ (annual) or

________________________ (monthly) or

________________________ (weekly).

Other income received by you or persons in your household:

Child Support: _____________________________________________________

Social Security or other government benefits): _________________________

Other: __________________________________________________________________

Assets to which you have access: (e.g., savings accounts, automobiles, etc.):

____________________________________________________________________

I solemnly affirm under the penalties of perjury that the contents of the foregoing
document are true to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

________________________ ______________________
Date Signature
Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service

Representation Agreement

This Agreement for legal services is between ____________________________, a volunteer attorney with the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, Inc., hereinafter referred to as the Attorney, and ____________________________, hereinafter referred to as the Client.

I, ____________________________, the Client, hereby authorize the Attorney to represent me as my lawyer in the following matter: ____________________________ and to obtain any information or documents necessary for such representation.

I understand that this agreement does not require the Attorney to represent me in an appeal from the decision of the trial court or administrative hearing or in any other matter not specified in this Agreement.

Client's Rights

I have the right to be kept informed about any important developments in my case and to be consulted before the Attorney makes any important decision on my behalf. I also have the right to receive enough information to make an informed decision; to be consulted; and to agree to any settlement before my Attorney settles the case.

Client's Responsibilities

I will inform the Attorney and Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service about any change in my address, my telephone number or my financial status.

I will cooperate with the Attorney in the preparation and presentation of the case by always telling the truth and taking into consideration my Attorney's reasonable advice in making decisions about the case. I will keep all appointments with the Attorney in a timely fashion or notify the Attorney in advance if I am unable to keep an appointment. I will appear at my hearings and court appearances.

I will avoid communication with opposing parties or opposing counsel unless my Attorney tells me that I can communicate with them.
Attorney Obligations

The Attorney will keep me informed of the progress of my case and will consult with me before making any significant decision on my behalf.

The Attorney will keep all the information regarding my case confidential, except the Attorney may discuss the case with other attorneys and professionals whenever the Attorney determines it is necessary to obtain information to help handle the case. My Attorney will keep in strict confidence anything I tell my Attorney and any discussion my Attorney may have with other attorneys or professionals about the case.

To the extent, if at all, that the attorney-client privilege would prohibit my Attorney from talking to the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service about my case, I specifically waive the privilege to that extent and hereby authorize my Attorney to discuss my case with Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service.

Attorney Fees

The Attorney will represent me in the above matter without charging attorney's fees so long as I remain eligible to receive free legal services under the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service's eligibility guidelines.

If my financial eligibility changes so that I no longer qualify to receive free legal services under Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service's guidelines, the Attorney may enter into a new fee arrangement with me for the remainder of the representation, but not for the services rendered before the change in my eligibility.

If attorney's fees are awarded in any action brought by the Attorney on my behalf, the Attorney will have the exclusive right to any such fees, and I will have no claim on any such fees except for such amounts that exceed the Attorney's reasonable and customary fees. Should these fees come into my possession for any reason, I will promptly remit them in full to the Attorney.

Case Costs and Other Expenses

The Attorney is not responsible for paying any court costs, bonds, filing fees, fines, judgments, assessments, or any other costs or expenses imposed on or incurred by me in connection with this case.

Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service may reimburse my Attorney for covered costs and expenses that total over $10.00 incurred in connection with the matters referred to Attorney by Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service or another pro bono program, to the extent that these costs are not waived by the appropriate agency or court. I understand that Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service will not reimburse costs of appeal, matters not specifically referred to the Attorney on pro bono basis, and filing fees in bankruptcy cases. I understand that I will be responsible for payment of costs and expenses not waived by a court or not reimbursed by Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service.
Termination of Representation

I have the absolute right to terminate this agreement for any reason at any time by writing to the Attorney. I understand that if I do so, only in extraordinary circumstances will Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service find me another attorney.

The Attorney may also terminate this agreement (in writing) either with my consent or for good cause. Good cause includes my failure to comply with this Agreement, my refusal to cooperate with the Attorney or to follow the Attorney's advice on a material matter, my failure to truthfully disclose the amount of my income, or any other fact or circumstance that would result in Attorney's representation being unlawful, unethical, or impractical. The Attorney may also terminate this Agreement if further representation would be useless or unreasonable or if the nature of my case has changed significantly from the facts that I initially presented.

This agreement is the entire agreement between Client and Attorney, and can be changed only with both Attorney and Client agreeing in writing.

________________________________________________________
Signature of Client                                Date

________________________________________________________
Signature of Attorney                             Date
APPENDIX AC

Volunteer Attorney Report Form for Case Tracking
Attorney Volunteer Report Form

Since its formation in 1986, the Community Law Center has enabled volunteer attorney representation for community and nonprofit organizations in the Baltimore area. We receive inquiries from organizations needing legal help and are able to place our current roster of attorneys and our access to hundreds of attorneys through the Center's listserv.

To continue our program, it is very important to us that we be able to report your volunteer work to our funders. You can provide this information to us at any time. We must provide updated information to our funders each January and July. Accordingly, please complete the survey below describing each case you have from the Community Law Center. Please reflect upon your experience with the Community Law Center. We value your feedback and encourage you to provide any assistance possible to assist you.

Thank you for volunteering your time and talent through the Pro Bono Project. We are grateful for working with you on current and future matters.

Volunteer Attorney Hours Report Form

Year:
Choose One:  

Please enter reporting period:
☐ January - June
☐ July - December
☐ Other:

1. Total number of volunteer hours during this reporting period
2. Please complete the chart below for each case:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client 1</th>
<th>Approximate date case was opened:</th>
<th>Approximate date case was closed:</th>
<th>Total number of hours expended during reporting period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Status - please check all that apply.
- [ ] a. Case is ongoing.
- [ ] b. Case is closed
- [ ] c. Client unresponsive.
- [ ] d. Case is on appeal.
- [ ] e. I would like CLC to assign a new attorney.

Any milestones reached? (please describe)

3. Please provide your hourly billing rate. We must assign a dollar value to the number of hours we report as having been volunteered. Neither your name nor your firm will be disclosed.

4. Have you received adequate assistance from Community Law Center staff throughout your case? (Please select one and comment in the box below.)
   - [ ] Yes...
   - [ ] I would like assistance with...
   - [ ] No, please explain...
   - [ ] In the future, I would like assistance with...

5. Please check the counties in which you are willing to volunteer.
6. Please list any languages you speak in addition to English.

7. I am interested in working with legal issues in the following categories:
- [ ] Corporate
- [ ] Environmental
- [ ] Intellectual Property
- [ ] Labor and Employment
- [ ] Liquor Board hearings
- [ ] Nuisance
- [ ] Real Estate
- [ ] Tax
- [ ] Zoning
- [ ] Other:

8. Do you have any suggestions for how the Community Law Center staff could have done a better job in assisting you or your client in handling Pro Bono Project cases in general?

9. The Community Law Center always needs new volunteers! Please provide the name and contact information of any attorneys you think may be interested in working with the Pro Bono Project.

Contact Information
* First Name: 

* Last Name: 

Firm: 

* Mailing Address: 

* City: 

* State: 
  Choose One: 

* Zip: 

* Phone: 
  Choose One: 

* Email: 

☐ I hereby certify that I am not currently subject to disciplinary proceedings under the Maryland Rules of Procedure and that I am admitted to practice before the Maryland Court of Appeals. I will notify the Bar Association of Baltimore City and The Community Law Center, Inc. if I am suspended or disbarred from the practice of law in Maryland.

submit
APPENDIX AD

Volunteer Attorney Case Closing Forms for Case Tracking
December 31, 2010 [Date]

Mr. John Doe [Volunteer Attorney: Salutation, first name, last name]
Address
Address
Address

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. [Volunteer Attorney]:

This letter is a follow up to your gracious acceptance on [date] of a referral to assist [client name: Salutation, first name, last name].

We would very much appreciate you completing this summary and mailing or faxing it to our office at your earliest convenience. We will use this information for our required reports to our funding sources and to assist you with any reports to the Maryland State Bar Association.

Have you completed your assistance to this client?  Y_____ N _____

Legal matter addressed — (e.g., divorce, bankruptcy) ___________________________

Highest level of service provided: _____ Brief Advice _____ Judicial Litigation
      _____ Counseling _____ Negotiations
      _____ Administrative Hearing _____ Other appropriate remedies, Specify: _________

Please summarize what was achieved for client — (e.g., modified custody, etc.)
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Number of pro bono hours you contributed __________________

Financial benefit to client other than your fees
__________________________________________________________________________

Thank you,

Neal T. Conway
Executive Director
301-864-4907
Case Update Form

MVLS is required to report to its grantors and the Court of Appeals information about pro bono cases referred to attorneys in private practice. Your completion of this form, including the approximate number of hours spent and the result achieved, will help us comply with grant requirements and will ensure that you receive recognition for the services you performed.

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Attorney __________________________ Date ________________

Client __________________________ MVLS Client Number__________________

1. Reason case closed: (circle one)
   A. Advice and brief service (under 30 minutes)
   B. Counseling
   C. Referral to other agency
   D. Insufficient merit to proceed
   E. Client withdrew, did not return
   F. Negotiated settlement (without litigation)
   G. Negotiated settlement (with litigation)
   H. Administrative agency decision
   Ia. Uncontested court decision
   Ib. Contested court decision
   Ic. Appeals
   J. Change of eligibility status
   K. Other: ____________
   Extensive services (over 20 hours) please explain in comments section

2. Brief summary of the legal issues and the results achieved:

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

3. Attorney hours at closure ____________  4. Total dollar value ____________

5. Additional comments about your case, your client, or your experience with this pro bono matter:

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________
6. We are always looking for compelling stories to feature in the MVLS annual report or newsletter. Do you think this case would be an interesting one to highlight?  ___ yes    ___ no
**SAMPLE JUDICARE CASE CLOSURE FORM**

**MID-SHORE COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE**

**CASE CLOSED**

Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence is required to furnish to its grantors information about closed reduced-fee cases referred to attorneys in private practice. Your completion of this form will help us comply with grant requirements. Thank you for your cooperation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attorney</th>
<th>Date Closed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Client</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Reason case closed and/or Highest level of Assistance given (circle one):
   - A. Advice and brief service
   - B. Counseling
   - C. Referral to other agency
   - D. Insufficient merit to proceed
   - E. Client withdrew — or did not appear
   - F. Negotiated settlement without litigation
   - G. Negotiated settlement with litigation
   - H. Administrative hearing
   - I. Court decision
   - J. Change of eligibility
   - K. Other: Specify

2. Brief summary of the legal issues and the results achieved:

3. Attorney hours at closure

4. Comments

MID-SHORE COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE, INC.  ♦  P.O. Box 5, Denton, MD  21629
Telephone: 410-479-1149 ♦ Hotline: 1-800-927-HOPE
### SAMPLE CASE UP-DATE FORM

**GRANT CASE UP-DATE**  
Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence

Date sent ________________________

Client __________________________
Attorney __________________________
Grant ____________________________
Type of Case __________________________

**IS CASE ACTIVE?**  
YES ________ NO ________

**EXPECTED DATE OF COMPLETION:** __________________________

**IF CASE CLOSED PLEASE COMPLETE**

**DATE CLOSED:** __________________________

1. **Reason case closed and/or Highest level of Assistance given (circle one):**
   - A. Advice and brief service
   - B. Counseling
   - C. Referral to other agency
   - D. Insufficient merit to proceed
   - E. Client withdrew — or did not appear
   - F. Negotiated settlement without litigation
   - G. Negotiated settlement with litigation
   - H. Administrative hearing
   - I. Court decision
   - J. Change of eligibility
   - K. Other: Specify

2. **Brief summary of the legal issues and the results achieved:**

   ______________________________________

3. **Attorney hours at closure** __________________________

4. **Comments**

   ______________________________________

Please mail to: Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence, Attn: Sheila Orwig, P.O. Box 5, Denton, MD 21629; or Fax to: Sheila @ 410-479-2064
Closed Case Summary

DATE: ___________

Attorney: ________________________________

RE Case Of: __________________________________ DATE of Closure: _________

Thank you very much for handling this matter. Your pro bono work represents a significant contribution to our program and our community. We would appreciate your completing this summary and returning it to Mid-Shore Pro Bono at your earliest convenience. We want to make sure we recognize your contributions to our program.

Is this case closed? ☐ Yes ☐ No, case is still going on

1. Legal Matter addressed: (divorce, custody) ________________________________

2. Highest level of service provided – CHECK ONE:

☐ Brief Advice, Information, Referral ☐ Administrative remedies
☐ Counseling ☐ Judicial litigation
☐ Negotiation ☐ Other appropriate remedies (please explain)

County: ______________________________

3. Major Benefit produced for client. Please summarize, in a sentence or two, what was achieved – for example “client obtained a divorce” or “prevented eviction of client from home.”

Benefit: __________________________________________________________________________

4. Number of people affected (typically # in household): _____________

5. Number of Pro Bono hours you contributed to this case: ___________

THANK YOU!!

Please return to Mid-Shore Pro Bono by fax, email or mail:
216 E. Dover Street, Bldg 300
Easton, MD 21601
FAX: 443-385-0210 Email: sabrown@midshoreprobono.org
Attorney: __________________________________________

RE Case Of: __________________________________________ DATE of Closure: __________

Thank you very much for handling this matter. We would appreciate your completing this summary and returning it to Mid-Shore Pro Bono at your earliest convenience. We want to make sure we recognize your contributions to our program.

Is this case closed? □ Yes

1. Highest level of service provided – CHECK ONE:
   - □ Brief Advice, Information, Referral
   - □ Administrative remedies
   - □ Counseling
   - □ Judicial litigation
   - □ Negotiation
   - □ Other appropriate remedies (please explain)
     __________________________________________

2. Benefits from Direct Legal Representation of Individuals - Family Law Matters
   Please check the appropriate boxes to Track Client Outcomes (check all that apply):

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Obtained or maintained custody</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Obtained or preserved right to visitation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Obtained a divorce or annulment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Obtained assistance in negotiating separation agreement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Obtained guardianship or adoption for dependent child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Avoided protective order/removal of children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Avoided termination parental rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Avoided or reversed administrative finding of child abuse/neglect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Established paternity for child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Obtained protection from domestic violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. Obtained, preserved or increased child support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l. Obtained downward modification of child support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m. Obtained, preserved or increased spousal support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. Obtained downward modification of spousal support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Improved terms of foster care plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. Obtained brief advice, information and referral on a Family matter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q. Obtained counseling services on a Family matter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Major Benefit produced for client. Please summarize, in a sentence or two, what was achieved – for example “client obtained a divorce” or “prevented eviction of client from home.”

   Benefit: ________________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________________

4. Number of people affected (typically # in household): ________________

5. Number of hours you contributed to this case: __________

6. Number of Pro Bono hours contributed (above the 20 hours): ______________

THANK YOU!!
Please return to Mid-Shore Pro Bono by fax, email or mail:
216 E. Dover Street, Suite 301
Easton, MD 21601
FAX: 443.385.0210  Email: sabrown@midshoreprobono.org
APPENDIX AE

Volunteer Attorney Feedback Survey
SAMPLE VOLUNTEER SURVEY *

VOLUNTEER SURVEY—PLEASE GIVE US YOUR COMMENTS & THANK YOU!  
Community Legal Services and Volunteer Lawyers Program of Arizona

For each question, please circle your rating using this scale and add comments:

1 — Very poor  2 — Poor  3 — Fair  4 — Good  5 — Excellent

1. How would you rate overall your volunteer experience with CLS/VLP?
   1  2  3  4  5

2. What did/do you value most about your volunteering with CLS/VLP?

   __________________________

3. How effective was your volunteering in helping you develop useful job skills?
   1  2  3  4  5

4. How helpful was your volunteering in increasing your understanding of poverty?
   1  2  3  4  5

5. How useful was your volunteering for networking and meeting other?
   1  2  3  4  5

6. How helpful was the orientation you received?
   1  2  3  4  5

7. How effective was the training you received in preparing you for volunteering?
   1  2  3  4  5

8. How effective was the amount and type of supervision you received?
   1  2  3  4  5

* Obtained from the October 29, 2009, National Association of Pro Bono Professionals (NAPBPro) Webinar
9. How effective were the facilities, supplies, technology and supports?
   1  2  3  4  5

10. How likely would you be to recommend someone volunteer with CLS/VLP?
   
   

11. Is there someone you recommend CLS/VLP contact about volunteering?
   Name ________________________________  Contact info ____________________

12. What suggestions do you have for CLS/VLP to improve volunteering? Please add your comments:
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

| Information obtained by ___________________ | Dates of volunteer service ____________ |
| Date ___________________________ | Name (optional) ____________________ | Contact Info (optional) ____________ |

THANK YOU! If you prefer, you may fax your comments to (xxx) xxx-xxxx.
APPENDIX AF

Client Satisfaction Surveys
CLIENT SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Please help us improve our program by answering some questions about the services you have received. We are interested in your honest opinion, whether they are positive or negative. Please answer all of the questions. We also welcome your comments and suggestions on the bottom of this form. Thank you very much. We really appreciate your feedback.

Program: **Immigration Legal Services**  Date: __________ Age: ______ Male: ______ Female: ______

**Ethnicity:**
Please put a check on the line after the group that best describes your ethnicity.

- [ ] Asian/Pacific Islander  - [ ] Biracial/Mixed  - [ ] Black/African American  - [ ] Hispanic/Latino
- [ ] Native American  - [ ] White/Caucasian  - [ ] Other ______

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not Sure Or Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>The quality of the service I received was excellent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I got the kind of service I wanted.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The program met my needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>If a friend were in need of similar help, I would recommend this program to him or her.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I was satisfied with the amount of help I received</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>The services helped me to deal more effectively with my problems.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>In an overall sense, I was satisfied with the services I received.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>If I was to seek help again, I will come back to this program.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments:**

Please mail survey to Jeanne M. Atkinson, 924 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001
QUESTIONARIO DE SATISFACCIÓN AL CLIENTE

Por favor ayude a mejorar nuestro programa contestando estas preguntas sobre los servicios que ha recibido.

Nosotros estamos interesados en su opinión honesta, sea positiva o negativa. Por favor conteste todas las preguntas. Nosotros aceptamos sus comentarios y sus sugerencias en el fondo de esta forma. Muchas gracias. Nosotros apreciamos gratamente su respuesta.


Etnecidad:

Por favor marque en la línea después del grupo que mejor describa su etnicidad:

Asiático/Isla del Pacifico_____ Mezclado_____ Negro/Afro-Americano_____ Hispano/Latino_____
Americano Nativo_____ Blanco_____ Otro_____

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Esta de acuerdo</th>
<th>Esta de acuerdo</th>
<th>No esta seguro o neutral</th>
<th>Esta en Desacuerdo</th>
<th>Esta en Desacuerdo firmemente</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. La cualidad del el servicio que yo recibí fue excelente.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Recibi el tipo de servicio que yo quería.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. El programa acordó con mis necesidades.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Si un amigo está en una necesidad similar, yo recomendaría este programa a él o ella.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Estaba satisfecho con la cantidad de servicios que yo recibí.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Los servicios me ayudaron a dirigir mis problemas más efectivamente.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. En el sentido general, yo estuve satisfecho con los servicios que recibí.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Si yo buscaré ayuda de nuevo, yo regresaré a este programa.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Favor de enviar a Jeanne Atkinson, 924 G Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20001

Attachment Q (a) ILS Client Satisfaction Questionnaire (Survey) - February 2008
MID-SHORE COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE
Client Satisfaction Survey
Divorce and Custody/Contested Custody Cases

We are continually looking for ways to improve our services. We would appreciate your giving us feedback on your experiences with Mid-Shore and how we may improve our services in the future.

1. What types of services did you receive from Mid-Shore? (Please check all that apply)

   - Legal advice, re: divorce and/or custody
   - Legal representation, re: divorce/custody
   - 24-hour hotline
   - Attorney
   - Children’s group/advocate
   - Donations
   - Immigration information
   - Individual Counseling
   - Legal advocacy/accompaniment
   - Medical accompaniment
   - Shelter
   - Shelter pet
   - Translation
   - Transportation
   - Cell phone
   - Food basket
   - Information and referral
   - Safenet
   - Support group
   - Support group
   - Other

2. Considering your entire experience with Mid-Shore, how helpful were the services we provided in meeting your needs?

   - Not at all helpful
   - Neither helpful nor unhelpful
   - Somewhat helpful
   - Very helpful

3. How effective were Mid-Shore services in helping you understand your situation and options?

   - Very ineffective
   - Somewhat ineffective
   - Somewhat ineffective
   - Very ineffective
   - Did not use

4. Considering your entire experience with Mid-Shore, how supported did you feel by Mid-Shore staff?

   - Very unsupported
   - Somewhat unsupported
   - Somewhat supported
   - Very supported
5. How effective were the legal services provided by our attorney in meeting your needs?

| Very ineffective | Somewhat ineffective | Somewhat ineffective | Very ineffective | Did not use |

6. How satisfied are you with the legal representation you received from your MSCFV attorney?

| Very dissatisfied | Somewhat dissatisfied | Somewhat satisfied | Very satisfied |

7. Do you feel that your MSCFV attorney took all the actions appropriate in your case (e.g., filing motions, requesting evaluations, etc.)?

- _____ No, much more should have been done.
- _____ Some things were missing, but overall it was ok.
- _____ Yes, they did everything I thought they should.

8. Do you feel that your MSCFV attorney listened to your side of the case and your concerns?

| Did not listen at all | Listened somewhat | Listened completely |

9. How satisfied are you with how your case was dealt with by the legal system?

| Very dissatisfied | Somewhat dissatisfied | Somewhat satisfied | Very satisfied |

10. How satisfied are you with the final outcome of your divorce?

| Very dissatisfied | Somewhat dissatisfied | Somewhat satisfied | Very satisfied |

11. How satisfied are you with the final outcome of your custody case?

| Very dissatisfied | Somewhat dissatisfied | Somewhat satisfied | Very satisfied |

12. Which of the services Mid-Shore provided was most helpful in meeting your needs?

Why was this most helpful? ___________________________________________________________

13. Which of the services Mid-Shore provided was least helpful in meeting your needs?

Why was this least helpful? __________________________________________________________
14. Do you have any other comments about Mid-Shore services?

Name (optional): ________________________________  Date: _______________
Pro Bono Project Client Survey

To: Current and Recent Clients of the Pro Bono Project

From: Kelly Pfeifer, Supervising Attorney and Alyson Harkins, Outreach Coordinator

Please take a few moments to let us know how you feel about your experiences with the Pro Bono Project. Your response will help the Community Law Center and the Pro Bono Project improve practices and assist many more community and nonprofit organizations in the future. If you need help with this form, please contact Alyson Harkins at 410.366.0922 x15 or alysonh@communitylaw.org.

NOTE: If you wish to remain anonymous, do not fill in this section with identifying information.

Date:

Name of Organization:

Mailing Address (Include City, County, State and Zip Code):

Contact Person and Title:

Phone:

Email:

Pro Bono Attorney:

1. How did you find out about our Project?

- Another Client
- Another organization:
- Government Official/Agency
- Website
- Other Attorney
- Other: ____________________________

2. When you first contacted us for help, how did you reach us?

- Telephone
- Email
- Came into office

3. When you first contacted the Pro Bono Project, with whom did you speak?

- Kelly Pfeifer
- Danielle Deckard
- Alyson Harkins
- Other Staff
4. Overall, how satisfied were you with the following services of the Pro Bono Project? (Please check one box for each question.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat Satisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Not Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The way in which you applied for our services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of time it took from when you first contacted the Project until your case was assigned to an attorney</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promptness of communications from your attorney</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of time your attorney spent with you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way your attorney explained your case and the legal options available to you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparedness and thoroughness of your attorney</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of respect and concern your attorney showed for you</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of time it took to finish your case</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome or result of your case</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. If you need help again, would you return to the Pro Bono Project?  
   ☐ Yes    ☐ Probably    ☐ Not sure    ☐ Probably not    ☐ No

6. Do you have anything else you would like to tell us? ________________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

Please send this form back to us:

Alyson Harkins  
Community Law Center, Inc.  
3355 Keswick Rd.  
Baltimore, MD 21211  
410.366.7763 (fax), alysonh@communitylaw.org

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your response will help us improve our services.
Appendix AG

Client Grievance Policy
CLIENT GRIEVANCE POLICY (ADOPTED OCTOBER 2008) *

A. PURPOSE. This client grievance procedure is established to assure that clients and potential clients have full access to the services of the organization. It provides an opportunity for review by senior staff members and, when appropriate, by a member of the Board of Directors of complaints by clients dissatisfied with the legal services provided them by the volunteers of VLN, treatment by staff and of complaints by persons rejected for placement with a VLN volunteer.

B. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1. Posting and Distribution of Policy
   a. A copy of this policy will be given to any person who requests it.
   b. Staff members shall have the responsibility to inform clients and potential clients of the grievance procedures when asked or when those persons’ statements indicate the desire to pursue some type of grievance procedure.
   c. A copy of this policy will be posted on the VLN web-site client page.

2. Complaint Process
   a. Any person with complaints regarding denial of services, legal assistance provided or with concerns about the VLN program or staff shall be provided an opportunity to meet with the appropriate supervising attorney or Program Director as soon as possible. If such a meeting cannot be held at that time, staff members shall provide that person assistance to submit a written statement to the appropriate supervising attorney or Program Director setting forth the basis for the complaint.
   b. In the event the complaint is not resolved by the appropriate supervising attorney or Program Director, the complaining party shall be provided with the name of the Operations Director or Executive Director, and shall, if at all possible, be provided an informal conference with the Operations Director or Executive Director within five working days.
   c. In the event that the complaint is still not resolved after meeting with the Operations Director or Executive Director, said Director shall, if requested to do so by the complaining party, arrange an opportunity for the complaining party to submit a
complaint to the Chair of the Board of Directors. The complaint to the Chair must be in writing and must be received by the office within fifteen days of the final discussion seeking an informal resolution of the issue.

d. Any person requesting a hearing before the Board must execute a form authorizing disclosure to the Board of information from his/her file and, if necessary, waiving the attorney-client privilege for purposes of the grievance proceeding. Client confidentiality will be protected during the grievance proceeding.

e. A grievance shall be heard by a Board Member designated by the Chair within fifteen days after the receipt of the written complaint.

f. Straight forward matters such as the proper application of established eligibility guidelines may be excluded from this level of the grievance procedure. In those cases, if the complaining party so desires, he or she may submit a written objection to said guideline, and this objection will be forwarded to the Quality Control Committee for review and consideration.

3. Application

a. Any grievance filed regarding actions by VLN staff, including, for example, the rejection of a matter for placement or perceived rude conduct exhibited towards a client or applicant, are issues that may be addressed through the grievance procedure. Some grievances filed regarding the manner or quality of service rendered by a volunteer may also be resolved through the grievance procedure. For example, if the client's complaint involves the failure of the volunteer to return phone calls or the failure to keep the client informed about the status of the matter, a simple phone call from the Program Director to the volunteer may suffice to resolve the problem.

b. If the grievance involves more serious questions of quality of work or potential or actual malpractice, ethical considerations require that the volunteer exercise independent professional judgment and therefore, the Program Director cannot order the volunteer to take or refrain from taking any action on a matter. Given this limitation, the Program Director should discuss the complaint with the volunteer to determine if it can be resolved or if the matter should be re-assigned, unless the client's interests would be impaired by doing so. If it appears reasonably likely, however, that the grievance involves irremediable malpractice, the client should be referred to outside assistance, and VLN should make reasonable efforts to aid the client in obtaining such assistance.

c. If a grievance concerns the conduct of a volunteer lawyer and reaches the level of review by the Board of Directors, the board cannot interfere with the independent judgment of the volunteer. In addition, the board is prohibited from access to confidential client information which it would likely need to effectively review the grievance, unless the complaining party consents to the disclosure of that information for the limited purpose of investigating the grievance, whether or not VLN stands in an attorney-client relationship with the complaining party. Grievances regarding quality of work should not go before the board if, as a result of board review, the client's legal rights would be compromised.
d. If through the grievance procedure VLN learns of conduct by a volunteer that raises questions regarding the volunteer's competency or the volunteer's ability to work with clients, steps should be taken by the Program Director to either provide the volunteer with training prior to the assignment of another matter, or to refrain completely from referring other matters to that volunteer.

4. Records of Complaints
   a. In each instance in which a complaint is considered pursuant to this policy, copies of all written documents relating to the complaint and copies of conversations or meetings shall be maintained on file at the office involved.
   b. Once per year the Board or Quality Control Committee will receive a report summarizing grievances received and their resolution.
APPENDIX AH

Short-term Pro Bono
Client Intake Forms
Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project  
Foreclosure Solutions Workshop

Confidential Intake Summary

**All information on this form is confidential and will not be released or discussed with anyone without your written authorization. This information will be used only to follow up with you or provide a referral to you.**

Please complete this form and return it to the attorney assisting you today.  
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Volunteer Attorney Name</strong> (to be filled in by the volunteer attorney at the start of the consultation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Name</th>
<th>Today’s date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If you are not a borrower on the loan, what is your relationship to the borrower?  

**Daytime phone numbers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property Address (include city and zip code)</th>
<th>County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

List all names on title of the property  
List all names on Note

Age of borrower  
Age of Co-borrower

Check ALL that apply:

- The above address is my primary residence.
- I still live in the primary residence.
- I do not own another property or time share.
- I am not currently represented by an attorney in a matter regarding the property (such as bankruptcy, divorce, or estate matter).
- I received an Order to Docket in July 2010 or later.

Are you working with a housing counselor?  

- Yes, currently  
- Previously  
- No

Name of counselor and agency __________________________ Date of last contact __________________________  
What was the result?

Are you working with anyone else regarding your mortgage?  

- Yes, currently  
- Previously  
- No

Name of individual and/or company __________________________ Date __________________________  
What was the result?

Paid up-front fees?  

- Yes  
- No  
If yes, amount $__________________________

What was the result?

Is the property vacant?  

- Yes  
- No

If you are no longer living in the property, please explain why you moved. __________________________
Have you filed Bankruptcy?  □Ch. 13 □Ch. 7  Date Filed ________________________  □No
If yes, is the house included in the Bankruptcy?  □Yes  □No
Status of Bankruptcy □Active □Discharged □Voluntarily Dismissed □Involuntarily Dismissed
Discharge or Dismissal Date____________________
If you are currently represented by an attorney, please provide name and phone number of the attorney ________________________
Type of current representation □Bankruptcy □Mortgage Default □Divorce □Estate matter involving the property □Other (explain) ________________________

Check ALL that you have received and provide dates:
 □Letter or notice from lender or lender’s attorney about foreclosure dated____________
 □Notice of Intent to Foreclose dated __________
 □Order to Docket with documents filed in Circuit Court. I received these documents on ________
      □ Check here if Order to Docket included a Preliminary Loss Mitigation Affidavit.
      □ Check here if Order to Docket included a Final Loss Mitigation Affidavit.
 □Received Request for Mediation form on ______________________
 □Completed Request for Mediation form on ______________________
 □Letter that my home will be sold at auction on __________
 □My home was sold at auction on __________ It was purchased by ______________________
 □Report of Sale dated ______________________
 □Motion for Judgment Awarding Possession Prior to Ratification ______________________
 □Motion for Judgment Awarding Possession ______________________
 □Letter or Notice stating that you must move? If yes, from whom? ______________________
      Move out date ______________________
 □Notice of Eviction from the Sheriff  Eviction date____________________

Check ALL types of liens that apply:
 □ First Mortgage  □ Lien for unpaid condo or homeowners association fees amount$___________
 □ Second Mortgage  □ Tax liens   Federal $___________ State $___________
 □ Home Equity Line of Credit  □ Local government $___________
      Amount $___________ (explain)________________________________________
Plaintiff or defendant in any court action, excluding foreclosure and traffic issues?  □Yes □No
Describe _________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
Year I bought my home __________
Number of Household Residents _____ Number of Adults _______ Age(s) of Children___________

Check all that apply:
I want to:
 □ Keep my home.
 □ Sell my home.

I need help to:
 □ Negotiate a loan modification for my □ first mortgage □ second mortgage.
 □ Negotiate time to sell my home.
 □ Negotiate a short sale of my home. Home will only sell for less than amount owed on mortgages.
 □ Obtain more time before I have to move out of my home.
 □ Other (be specific) ___________________________________________________________
Complete the information requested on the following pages for each mortgage or line of credit that you have against the property, even if you are current on your payments.

**Homeowner’s Name:**

**The following information refers to my:** (CHECK ONLY ONE)
- [ ] First Mortgage
- [ ] Second Mortgage
- [ ] Home Equity Line of Credit

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I send my mortgage payments to</th>
<th>Current interest rate</th>
<th>Current monthly payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan date</th>
<th>Term:</th>
<th>Amount borrowed (amount on Note): $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan was</th>
<th>Purchase</th>
<th>Refinance</th>
<th>Approximate current loan balance: $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If a refinance, reason</th>
<th>Lower monthly payment</th>
<th>Consolidate bills</th>
<th>Refinanced to avoid foreclosure</th>
<th>Other (explain)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current payment arrangements</th>
<th>Payments as per Note</th>
<th>Written forbearance agreement</th>
<th>Loan modification</th>
<th>Verbal repayment plan</th>
<th>Mortgage company won’t accept payments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment includes</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Interest</th>
<th>Taxes</th>
<th>Homeowners Insurance</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Lender Placed Insurance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Payment Status</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>30-60 days late</th>
<th>61-90 days late</th>
<th>91-120 days late</th>
<th>121 days late or greater</th>
<th>In foreclosure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| ***Amount saved towards arrears | $ | |

Most recent mortgage payment was made on ____________(date) Amount paid $__________

**Check ALL that apply:**
- [ ] Condo or home owner’s association (HOA) dues? [ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] Current [ ] In arrears $__________

**Reason for default/ anticipated default**
- [ ] Reduction in income
- [ ] Loss of income (unemployment)
- [ ] Interest rate increase
- [ ] Unaffordable from the beginning
- [ ] Medical expenses
- [ ] Divorce expenses
- [ ] Paying other debt instead of mortgage (car loans, credit cards, etc.)
- [ ] Other (explain) ________________________________

**Loan Features (Check all that apply)**
- [ ] Adjustable Rate Mortgage (ARM)
- [ ] 2/28
- [ ] 3/27
- [ ] Interest only for ____ (number of years)
- [ ] Fixed rate
- [ ] Payment option ARM/Pick a Payment
- [ ] Balloon
- [ ] Prepayment penalty
- [ ] Not sure
- [ ] Conventional
- [ ] FHA
- [ ] VA

Have you contacted your mortgage company? [ ] Yes [ ] No

What was their response? ____________________________________________________________

Is the house currently on the market? [ ] No [ ] Yes Date placed on the market ________

Asking Price $________________________ Is this a short sale? [ ] Yes [ ] No Any offers? [ ] Yes [ ] No

If home is not on the market, approx. current market value of home $________________________

Based on [ ] Recent sale of similar property in my neighborhood [ ] Real estate agent
- [ ] Appraisal within the last 3 months [ ] Other ________________________________
**Homeowner’s Name:** _______________________

**The following information refers to my:**  (CHECK ONLY ONE)
☐ Second Mortgage  ☐ Home Equity Line of Credit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I send my mortgage payments to</th>
<th>Current interest rate</th>
<th>Current monthly payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Loan date | Term: ☐ 30 years ☐ 20 years ☐ 15 years ☐ Other | Amount borrowed (amount on Note) $_______________ |

| Loan was ☐ Purchase ☐ Refinance | Approximate current loan balance: $_______________ |

**If a refinance, reason** ☐ Lower monthly payment ☐ Consolidate bills ☐ Refinanced to avoid foreclosure ☐ Other (explain) __________________________________________________

**Current payment arrangements** ☐ Payments as per Note ☐ Written forbearance agreement ☐ Loan modification ☐ Verbal repayment plan ☐ Mortgage company won’t accept payments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment includes</th>
<th>☐ Principal ☐ Interest ☐ Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Payment Status</th>
<th>☐ Current ☐ 30-60 days late ☐ 61-90 days late ☐ 91-120 days late ☐ 121 days late or greater ☐ In foreclosure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Most recent mortgage payment was made on ___________________________ (date) Amount paid $______________ |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Features (Check all that apply)</th>
<th>☐ Adjustable Rate Mortgage (ARM) ☐ 2/28 ☐ 3/27 ☐ Interest only for ____ (number of years) ☐ Fixed rate ☐ Payment option ARM/Pick a Payment ☐ Balloon ☐ Prepayment penalty ☐ Not sure ☐ Conventional ☐ FHA ☐ VA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Have you contacted your mortgage company?</th>
<th>☐ Yes ☐ No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What was their response? __________________________________________________________

Please PRINT any additional information you feel an attorney may need regarding your mortgage issue.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Borrower(s) Name(s)</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Borrower’s Occupation</th>
<th>Borrower’s Monthly Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>_________________</td>
<td>___________</td>
<td>______________________</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### A. Fixed MONTHLY Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Mortgage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Taxes (if not included in 1st mortgage payment)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeowners Insurance (if not included in 1st mortgage payment)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Mortgage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condo/Homeowner Association Fees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas &amp; Electric</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heating Oil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water &amp; Sewer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Payment 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Payment 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Insurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Insurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Insurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alimony / Child Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alarm System</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other/Minimum Credit Card Payment from Section C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Total FIXED Expenses:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B. Other MONTHLY Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Groceries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating Out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus/Taxi/Parking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Repairs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Toiletries/Hair Care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical/Prescriptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day Care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable TV/Internet</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clothing/Laundry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lottery</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Church/Charity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cell Phone</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Total OTHER expenses:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### C. Credit Cards and Other Debt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creditor Name</th>
<th>Payment</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### D. Monthly Surplus/Deficit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total NET Monthly Household Income</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subtract Total Monthly Expenses (A+B+C)</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Surplus or Deficit</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Volunteer Attorney Notes:

Additional recommendations / Comments Regarding Mortgage:
### Community Legal Services
#### Family Law Project in Langley Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Opposing Party Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client Name</th>
<th>Opposing Party Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th>Hearing Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Hearing</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Primary Language**  English / Spanish / Other

**Sex**  f  m  **Age**  
**Marital Status**  Married / Single / Separated / Divorced / Widow(er)
**Educational Level**  Elementary / HS / GED / Trade School / Some College / College degree / Grad Degree
**Ethnic group**  African-American / African / Asian / White / Latino / Native American / Pacific Islander / Multi Race / Other

**Work Status**  Full / Part / Unemployed / Disabled & unemployed / Retired

**Number of adults residing in your household INCLUDING YOURSELF**  
**Number of children residing in your household**  
Client  $_________ gross per month.  Other adult household members:  $_________ gross per month

**Are you here for help with child support?**  Yes  No

**Have you filed your case with the Office of Child Support Enforcement?**  Yes  No

**Please circle your legal problems**
- Divorce
- Custody
- Visitation
- Paternity
- Child Support
- Guardianship
- Name Change
- Landlord/Tenant
- Debtor/Creditor
- Other (explain)  
- Don’t Know

**Attorney notes:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who referred you to us?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CASA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Case type**  
**Referred to:**
- Volunteer Lawyer  
- Pro Bono Program  
- PGCBA  
- OCSE  
- House of Ruth  
- Continue Pro Se

**Volunteer Lawyer:** provided brief advice only  
retained by client
EL PROYETO FAMILIAR DE
COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES

Fecha __________________________

Nombre del Cliente ___________ ___________
Apellido Nombre

Nombre del Lado Opuesto ______________________

Dirección __________________________________________

Dirección __________________________________________

Ciudad _____________ Condado _____________

Teléfono _______________________

Estado _____________ Código Postal ______

Teléfono _______________________

Idioma Principal Inglés / Español / Otro _______________________

Sexo m __________________ ___________

Estado Civil Casada/o Soltera/o Divorciada/o Viuda/o

Nivel de Educación Primaria / Secundaria / GED / Universitario / Otro

Grupo Étnico Africano-Americano / Africano / Asiático / Latino / Nativo de America / Multi-racial / Otro _______________________

Categoría Laboral: Tiempo Completo / Medio Tiempo / Desempleado / Jubilado / Incapacitado & desempleado / Otro _____________

Numero de adultos habitando en su casa incluyéndose Usted _____________

Numero de niños habitantando en su casa _____________

Ingreso mensual de todos los miembros de su hogar. Incluya toda ayuda que usted recibe.

Cliente $ _______ por mes. Otros adultos que viven en su casa: $ ______________ por mes

¿Esta usted aqui hoy para recibir ayuda con Child Support? Sí No

¿Tiene usted un caso con la Oficina de Manutención (Office of Child Support Enforcement)? Sí No

Por favor indique el área de su problema legal.

Divorcio Custodia Visitación Paternidad Manutención (Child Support) Violencia Doméstica Tutoría Cambio de Nombre Propietario/Inquilino Acreedor/Deudor Otro _____________

Notas del abogado: __________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

Tipo de Caso _________________

Referido/a a:

Abogado Voluntario __ Program Pro Bono __ PGCBA __ OCSE __ House of Ruth __ Continue Pro Se __

Volunteer Lawyer: provided brief advice only _______________ retained by client _______________
APPENDIX AI

Short-term Pro Bono
Client Satisfaction Form
FORECLOSURE SOLUTIONS WORKSHOP

Date: ______________________________

Location:___________________________

WORKSHOP EXIT SURVEY
(To be completed by homeowner)

Why did you attend this workshop today?
______________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

How did you hear about this event?

☐ Internet  ☐ Pamphlet/ Flyer  ☐ Word of Mouth

☐ Newspaper  ☐ Elected Official’s Office  ☐ Housing Counselor

Were your expectations for the workshop met? ☐ Yes  ☐ No

If not, please describe the expectations that were not met.
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

How helpful was it to meet with an attorney?

☐ Very helpful  ☐ Somewhat helpful  ☐ Not helpful

Additional Comments?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Would you recommend any improvements to future workshops? ☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, please describe.
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Sponsored by the Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland and Civil Justice, Inc.
APPENDIX AJ

Short-term Pro Bono Client Checklist
Based upon the advice of my limited consult with a Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project volunteer attorney today, my roadmap for attempting to resolve my situation with my mortgage includes all of the following recommended (checked) steps:

1) ___ My mortgage company [loan servicer] is participating in Making Home Affordable. To apply for a loan modification under Making Home Affordable, send your completed “Request for Modification & Affidavit” and IRS Form 4506T-EZ, by certified mail, return receipt requested, to your servicer’s address shown at www.makinghomeaffordable.gov. I can apply even if I am current on my payments. Do not send to the payment address. Call my mortgage servicer to confirm the mailing address. Keep a copy of everything I send. For more information, go to www.makinghomeaffordable.gov

1A) ___ I think I have a Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac loan. Ask my mortgage company if I am eligible to refinance my first mortgage loan under President Obama’s Making Home Affordable Plan. For information, go to www.makinghomeaffordable.gov (I must be current on my payments.)

2) X Keep a log of my attempts to contact my mortgage company to resolve my mortgage situation. Write the dates and times that I called, mailed, and faxed documents to my mortgage company.

3) ___ Meet with a nonprofit housing counselor to help me negotiate with my mortgage company. Call the Maryland HOPE Hotline at 1-877-462-7555 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. (7 days a week) for a referral to a housing counselor near me. My housing counselor will also be able to refer me to free or reduced fee legal services at an appropriate time and if I am eligible.

4) ___ Call the Maryland HOPE Hotline at 1-877-462-7555 or go to www.mdhope.org to find out about resources available to help homeowners avoid foreclosure.

5) X Ignore letters and phone calls from strangers offering to help save my home from foreclosure.

6) ___ File a complaint with the Commissioner of Financial Regulation against the company or individual who took my money and falsely promised to help with my mortgage. Call 1-888-784-0136.

7) ___ File a complaint with the Commissioner of Financial Regulation against a mortgage lender, mortgage broker or mortgage servicer. Call 1-888-784-0136.

8) ___ File a complaint with the Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing, Real Estate Commission against a real estate agent. Call 410-230-6206.
9) ___ Consider selling my house. If my mortgage balance is greater than the sale price of my home, I must obtain my mortgage company’s approval for a “short sale.” I will work with a real estate agent who has experience in short sales.

10) ___ If I consider a short sale, consult an attorney to negotiate with my mortgage company to ensure that my mortgage company will waive the deficiency between the amount owed on my mortgage and the amount my mortgage company accepts on a short sale. Consult a tax attorney or certified public accountant to find out if forgiveness of debt is taxable income in my case.

11) ___ Consider offering my lender a deed in lieu of foreclosure [if I have only one lien on my house]. Consult a tax attorney or certified public accountant to find out if forgiveness of debt is taxable income in my case.

12) ___ Make an appointment with a bankruptcy attorney to find out if bankruptcy is an option for me. I can call Civil Justice at 410-706-0174 to obtain a referral and I will discuss the attorney’s fees with the bankruptcy attorney.

13) ___ Make an appointment with a counselor at Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Maryland and Delaware, Inc. (CCCS) to obtain help to manage my monthly expenses and pay down my credit card debt. 800-642-2227

14) ___ Contact the Office of People’s Counsel to find out if I am income eligible for assistance to help with my utility bills. (410) 767-8150/1-800-207-4055 www.opc.state.md.us

15) ___ I may be eligible for free legal services through Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service (MVLS) in connection with my foreclosure mediation session or to help me negotiate with my lender. If MVLS determines that I am eligible, MVLS will use its best efforts to place my case with a pro bono attorney. To apply to MVLS, I should call 1-800-510-0050 / 410-547-6537 Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., or complete the on-line intake application available at www.mvlslaw.org.

16) ___ I may be eligible for free legal services through the Maryland Legal Aid Bureau (LAB) in connection with my foreclosure mediation session. To apply to LAB and determine whether I am eligible, I should call 1-888-213-3320.

17) ___ I may be eligible for free legal services through the Maryland Legal Aid Bureau (LAB) to help me negotiate with my lender. To apply to LAB and determine whether I am eligible, I should call my local Legal Aid office at (410) 951-7750 / (866) 635-2948 (Baltimore City) or (301) 560-2100 / (888) 215-5316 (Prince George’s and Montgomery Counties).

18) ___ I may be eligible for a “low bono” lawyer through Civil Justice Inc. in connection with my foreclosure mediation session. If Civil Justice determines that I am eligible, Civil Justice will use its best efforts to place my case with a “low bono” attorney who will represent me at my mediation session for a flat fee of $500. To apply to Civil Justice, I should call (410) 706-5649 Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

19) ___ I am not eligible for a pro bono or “low bono” attorney, but I can call Civil Justice Inc. for a referral to an attorney with whom I will negotiate services and fees. I should call Civil Justice at (410) 706-0174 Monday through Friday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. I can also call the Lawyer Referral Service in my county of residence at ______________ for referral to an attorney with whom I will negotiate services and fees.
20) ___ Borrower or co-borrower is at least 60 years old. Call Legal Aid (for all counties) at 800-896-4213 for legal assistance with my mortgage or help to file bankruptcy. Ask for “Senior Hotline.” If I am a Baltimore City resident, I can also call the Bar Association of Baltimore City Legal Services to the Elderly Program at 410-396-1322.

-OR-

Call __________________________ at phone # __________________ for legal assistance to help me avoid foreclosure.

Additional Attorney Recommendations (Please Print):

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
Foreclosure Prevention Pro Bono Project
Foreclosure Solutions Workshop
Roadmap

**Attorney Copy/Return to Folder **

Date ___________________ Volunteer Attorney Name(s) ______________________________
Homeowner’s Name(s) _____________________________________________________________

1) ___ Send completed “Request for Modification & Affidavit” and IRS Form 4506T-EZ to apply for a loan modification under President Obama’s Plan.

1A) ___ Ask mortgage company if eligible to refinance Fannie Mae/Freddie Mac loan under Obama’s plan.

2) ___ Keep a log of attempts to contact mortgage company.

3) ___ Meet with a nonprofit housing counselor/Call MD HOPE hotline for referral to housing counselor.

4) ___ Call the Maryland HOPE Hotline or go to www.mdhope.org for resources.

5) ___ Ignore letters and phone calls from strangers offering to help save my home from foreclosure.

6) ___ File complaint with Financial Regulation against the company or individual who took my money and falsely promised to help with my mortgage.

7) ___ File a complaint with Financial Regulation against lender, broker or servicer.

8) ___ File a complaint with the Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing, Real Estate Commission against a real estate agent.

9) ___ Consider selling the house. If the sale is a short sale, use experienced real estate agent.

10) ___ If the sale is a short sale, consult attorney to avoid deficiency. Consult tax attorney or certified public accountant.

11) ___ Consider deed in lieu of foreclosure [if only one lien on property]. Consult tax attorney or certified public accountant.

12) ___ Consult with a bankruptcy attorney. Civil Justice can provide referral [not pro bono].

13) ___ Contact Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Maryland and Delaware, Inc.

14) ___ Contact the Office of People’s Counsel/income eligible homeowners for assistance with utility bills.

Foreclosure Solutions Workshop Roadmap, ATTORNEY COPY
page 1
15) ___ Call MVLS (Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service) or go to www.mvlslaw.org to apply for free legal services.

16) ___ Call LAB (Maryland Legal Aid Bureau) to apply for free legal services (mediation).

17) ___ Call LAB (Maryland Legal Aid Bureau) to apply for free legal services (negotiation).

18) ___ Call Civil Justice for “low bono” lawyer (mediation).

19) ___ Call Civil Justice/local Lawyer Referral Service for referral to an attorney with whom I will negotiate services/fees.

20) ___ Borrower or Co-borrower is at least 60 years old. Call Legal Aid (all counties) re mortgage or help to file bankruptcy. If Baltimore City resident, can also call Bar Association of Baltimore City Legal Services to the Elderly.

-OR-

Call ____________________________ at phone # _____________________ for legal assistance to help me avoid foreclosure.
APPENDIX AK

Record Retention Policy
**RECORD RETENTION POLICY (ADOPTED NOVEMBER 2008)***

Volunteer Lawyers Network (VLN) takes seriously its obligations to preserve information relating to litigation, audits, and investigations.

The information listed in the retention schedule is intended as a guideline and may not contain all the records VLN may be required to keep in the future. Questions regarding the retention of documents not listed in this chart should be directed to the Operations Director/Executive Director.

From time to time, the Operations Director/Executive Director may issue a notice, known as a “legal hold” suspending the destruction of records due to pending, threatened, or otherwise reasonably foreseeable litigation, audits, government investigations, or similar proceedings. No records specified in any legal hold may be destroyed, even if the scheduled destruction date has passed, until the legal hold is withdrawn in writing by the Operations Director/Executive Director.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Record Documents</th>
<th>Retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Resolutions</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board and Executive Committee meeting agendas and minutes</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict of interest disclosure forms</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finance and Administration Documents</th>
<th>Retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial Statements (audited)</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Excerpt from Volunteer Lawyers Network Strategic Plan: July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2014
Obtained from the October 29, 2009, National Association of Pro Bono Professionals (NAPBPro) Webinar
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record Category</th>
<th>Retention</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auditor management letters</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll Records</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check registers and checks</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank deposits and statements</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chart of accounts</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General ledgers and journals (includes bank reconciliations)</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment performance reports</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment file and maintenance records</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts and agreements</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence – general</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Insurance Records**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record Category</th>
<th>Retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policies – occurrence type</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies – claims made type</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accident reports</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety (OSHA) reports</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claims (after settlements)</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group disability records</td>
<td>7 years after end of benefits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Real Estate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Record Category</th>
<th>Retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deeds</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record Type</td>
<td>Retention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leases (expired)</td>
<td>7 years after all obligations end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortgages, security agreements</td>
<td>7 years after all obligations end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tax</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRS exemption determination and related correspondence</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRS Form 990s</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charitable Organizations Registration Statements (filed with Minnesota Attorney General)</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Personnel Files</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Handbooks</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement plan benefits (plan descriptions, plan documents)</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers Comp claims (after settlement)</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee orientations and training materials</td>
<td>7 years after use ends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment applications</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRS Forms I-9 (store separate from personnel file)</td>
<td>Greater of 1 year after end of service, or three years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With-holding tax statements</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timecards</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technology</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software licenses and support agreements</td>
<td>7 years after all obligations end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Management Forms¹</td>
<td>Retention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Closing Forms – other than Full Representation (Attorney writes his/her name and indicates level of service and advice. Client does not sign.)</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinic Data Sheets (Attorney fills in his/her name, indicates level of service and advice. Client completes personal information and signs.)</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Expungement Clinic Records (Mostly printouts of court records.)</td>
<td>Shred (If actual work product keep 3 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Representation Paperwork (Includes: retainer agreement, final court orders, case closing form and intake sheet print out)</td>
<td>6 years from case closing date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Representation Paperwork, Supplemental (Other items pertaining to case not listed above if VLN is storing the actual case file; copies may be shredded.)</td>
<td>6 years from case closing date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperwork from brief services (as opposed to full rep) (Examples: letters to creditors, negotiated payment plans, summons and complaints, answers, etc.)</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperwork from individuals who did not become VLN clients (Examples: verification of income, summons and complaints, etc.)</td>
<td>Return Originals Shred Copies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperwork from individuals who were merit screened by VLN and rejected (Examples: summons and complaints)</td>
<td>Return Originals Shred Copies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other/Miscellaneous</th>
<th>Retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referral Log Tally (tally sheets upon which VLN Staff track clients who call VLN and are immediately referred out.)</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Certification Letters (Letters from law schools verifying student is or is not eligible to work as a certified student attorney.)</td>
<td>Send to law firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VLN Attorney Volunteer Applications (Filled out by volunteer attorney but not signed)</td>
<td>Keep Indefinitely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Policy set by the executive committee on 11/2/07. Pertains to both paper and digital documents
1. **Electronic Documents and Records.**

   Electronic documents will be retained as if they were paper documents. Therefore, any electronic files that fall into one of the document types on the above schedule will be maintained for the appropriate amount of time. If a user has sufficient reason to keep an email message, the message should be printed in hard copy and kept in the appropriate file or moved to an “archive” computer file folder. Backup and recovery methods will be tested on a regular basis.

2. **Emergency Planning.**

   VLN's records will be stored in a safe, secure and accessible manner. Documents and financial files that are essential to keeping VLN operating in an emergency will be duplicated or backed up at least every week and maintained off-site.

3. **Document Destruction.**

   The Operations Director/Executive Director is responsible for the ongoing process of identifying its records which have met the required retention period, and overseeing their destruction. Destruction of financial, personnel-related documents and client legal files will be accomplished by shredding.

   Document destruction will be suspended immediately, upon any indication of an official investigation or when a lawsuit is filed or appears imminent. Destruction will be reinstated upon conclusion of the investigation.

4. **Compliance.**

   Failure on the part of employees to follow this policy can result in possible civil and criminal sanctions against VLN and its employees and possible disciplinary action against responsible individuals. The Operations Director/Executive Director and Board Chair will periodically review these procedures with legal counsel or VLN's certified public accountant to ensure that they are in compliance with new or revised regulations.
Sample
Whistleblower Protection Policy

[Organization’s name] requires directors, officers and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of the [Organization’s name], we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Reporting Responsibility
This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns internally so that [Organization’s name] can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. It is the responsibility of all board members, officers, employees and volunteers to report concerns about violations of [Organization’s name]’s code of ethics or suspected violations of law or regulations that govern [Organization’s name]’s operations.

No Retaliation
It is contrary to the values of [Organization’s name] for anyone to retaliate against any board member, officer, employee or volunteer who in good faith reports an ethics violation, or a suspected violation of law, such as a complaint of discrimination, or suspected fraud, or suspected violation of any regulation governing the operations of [Organization’s name]. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Reporting Procedure
[Organization’s name] has an open door policy and suggests that employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with their supervisor. If you are not comfortable speaking with your supervisor or you are not satisfied with your supervisor’s response, you are encouraged to speak with [insert here another title, such as Executive Director, or a board member, if the organization is very small and involving the board would be appropriate]. Supervisors and managers are required to report complaints or concerns about suspected ethical and legal violations in writing to the [Organization’s name]’s [Compliance Officer] [or designated employee or board member], who has the responsibility to investigate all reported complaints. Employees with concerns or complaints may also submit their concerns in writing directly to their supervisor or the Executive Director or the organization’s Compliance Officer [or other designated person].

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Compliance Officer [or other title that is appropriate for your organization]
The [Organization’s name]’s [Compliance Officer] is responsible for ensuring that all complaints about unethical or illegal conduct are investigated and resolved. The Compliance Officer will advise the [Executive Director and/or the Board or Directors] of all complaints and their resolution and will report at least annually to the [Treasurer/Chair of the Finance Committee/Audit Committee] on compliance activity relating to accounting or alleged financial improprieties.

Accounting and Auditing Matters
The [Organization’s name]’s [Compliance Officer] shall immediately notify the Audit Committee/Finance Committee of any concerns or complaint regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls or auditing and work with the committee until the matter is resolved.

Acting in Good Faith
Anyone filing a written complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

Confidentiality
Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Handling of Reported Violations
The [Organization’s name]’s [Compliance Officer] will notify the person who submitted a complaint and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

Compliance Officer: * [Note: The Compliance Officer may be a board member, the Executive Director, or a third party designated by the organization to receive, investigate and respond to complaints.]

[Name]
[Title/Organization]
[Contact information]

Policy approved by the Board of Directors on [Date].

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Sample Letter from Judge Encouraging Pro Bono Participation
December 11, 2010

Dear [Attorney]:

The number of low-income residents in [ ] County who are unable to obtain representation for critical civil legal matters continues to grow. Legal Aid and other legal services providers are able to assist only a fraction of the financially eligible applicants who seek their services. As a result, the urgent legal problems of needy members of our community are going unmet, creating a serious issue for our courts and the legal community.

As the Administrative Judge for the Circuit Court for [ ] County, I am writing to seek your assistance in addressing this problem. If each attorney in [ ] County were to accept one or two pro bono cases each year, many of our citizens would be helped with little burden to each individual attorney. The greatest need for pro bono representation is in the family law area but there are a wide range of civil matters, including foreclosure prevention, landlord/tenant, consumer rights, bankruptcy, tax, contract disputes, employment and more which call for help.

The Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland (PBRC), which serves as the statewide coordinator of volunteer civil legal services, assists volunteer attorneys in finding the pro bono program that best matches their interests. PBRC also has a wide range of training opportunities available for attorneys who accept cases outside their normal practice areas, including webcast trainings in foreclosure prevention, consumer bankruptcy, veteran’s benefits, and criminal record expungement. In addition, Judicare funds are available to attorneys who accept family law cases ($80 per hour with a cap of $1,600 for 20 hours of work) through Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service and the Women’s Law Center of Maryland [as well as Allegany Law Foundation, Community Legal Services of Prince George’s County, Harford County Bar Foundation, Mid-Shore Pro Bono (serving Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s and Talbot Counties), Montgomery County Bar Foundation, and the YWCA of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County]. The Pro Bono Resource Center has a variety of additional resources available for pro bono attorneys, including a mentoring program and Litigation Fund. Malpractice insurance for volunteer attorneys is available through pro bono programs around the state.

There are many reasons to perform pro bono service, the most compelling of which is the tremendous unmet need of our low-income residents and our responsibility as legal professionals to help ensure representation for those in need. In addition, for many volunteer lawyers their pro bono service is among the most stimulating and meaningful work they do. Pro bono provides an opportunity to connect with the community and help others who could be harmed or taken advantage of without pro bono representation. Many pro bono attorneys are amazed at the courage and fortitude of their clients in the face of tremendous
odds, and they feel grateful for the opportunity to have a positive influence on their clients’ lives. A recent ABA study found that lawyers do pro bono work at a rate three times that of the general public’s volunteer work. It is not surprising, then, that pro bono attorneys find great personal satisfaction in doing this important work.

I hope you will agree to become a part of the solution to the challenge of a lack of meaningful access to the justice system. Please take a moment to complete the enclosed Volunteer Registration Form and return it to the Pro Bono Resource Center, 520 W. Fayette, Baltimore, Maryland 21201, or visit the PBRC website to register on-line at www.probonomd.org. I believe that you will be a better practitioner for it.

Thank you in advance for your service.

Sincerely yours,

Administrative Judge
Appendix AN

Local Pro Bono Committee Chairs
2010–2011
# Local Pro Bono Committee Chairs
## 2010 – 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Chair</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
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<th>Standing Committee Liaison</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Allegany        | Kathleen M. Callan, Esq.       | Kathleen M. Callan Circuit Court for Allegany County  
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Cumberland, MD 21502 | 301-268-3293  
evittmtn@gmail.com | Sharon E. Goldsmith, Esq.  
Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland  
520 West Fayette Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
410-837-9379  
sgoldsmith@probonomd.org |  |
| Anne Arundel    | Dan Andrews, Esq.  
Elizabeth Leight, Esq. | Office of Administrative Hearings  
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Hunt Valley, MD 21030  
3541 Forest Haven Drive  
Laurel, MD 20724-1931 | 410-229-4154  
eyleight@aol.com | Joan Bellistri  
Anne Arundel County Law Library  
P.O. Box 2395, 7 Church Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
410-222-1407  
library@circuitcourt.org |  |
| Baltimore City  | Gustava Taler, Esq.  
J. Allen Cohen, Esq. | Legal Aid Bureau, Inc.  
500 East Lexington Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
23 Centre St.  
Baltimore, MD 21202 | 410-951-7682  
gtaler@mdlab.org | Diane Lach, Esq.  
Office of the Public Defender  
6 Saint Paul Street  
Suite 1400  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
3410-767-8460  
dlach@opd.state.md.us |  |
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mjeffers@mdlab.org | Ann Baer Cogan, Esq.  
5 S. Hickory Avenue  
Bel Air, MD 21014  
410-939-1114  
abcogan@verizon.net |  |
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<tr>
<td>Calvert</td>
<td>Amy Welch Lorenzini, Esq.</td>
<td>Cumberland and Erly 481 Main Street</td>
<td>410-535-5300 301-855-1414</td>
<td><a href="mailto:welch@celawfirm.com">welch@celawfirm.com</a></td>
<td>Hon. Cathy Hollenberg Serrette</td>
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<td>P.O. Box 840 Prince Frederick, MD 20678</td>
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<td>410-952-3132 <a href="mailto:chserrette@co.pg.md.us">chserrette@co.pg.md.us</a></td>
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<td>580 Taylor Avenue Annapolis, MD 21401</td>
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<td>410-479-2303 <a href="mailto:karen.jensen@courts.state.md.us">karen.jensen@courts.state.md.us</a></td>
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<td>Carroll</td>
<td>Fred S. Hecker, Esq.</td>
<td>Miller &amp; Hecker, LLC 75 E. Main Street</td>
<td>410-876-0011 410-876-1839</td>
<td><a href="mailto:fhecker@miller-hecker.com">fhecker@miller-hecker.com</a></td>
<td>Hon. Miriam Brown Hutchins</td>
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<td>5800 Wabash Ave. Baltimore, MD 21215</td>
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<td>410-878-8014 <a href="mailto:miriam.hutchins@courts.state.md.us">miriam.hutchins@courts.state.md.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cecil</td>
<td>Master Jane Cairns Murray</td>
<td>Circuit Court for Cecil County 129 E. Main Street</td>
<td>410-996-1153 410-392-4727</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jane.murray@mdcourts.gov">jane.murray@mdcourts.gov</a></td>
<td>Hon. Angela M. Eaves</td>
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<td>Elkton, MD 21921</td>
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<td>410-638-3264 <a href="mailto:angela.eaves@courts.state.md.us">angela.eaves@courts.state.md.us</a></td>
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<td>Charles</td>
<td><em>James E. Farmer, Esq.</em></td>
<td>3475 Leonardtown Rd. Suite 200 Waldorf, MD 20601</td>
<td>301-843-3890</td>
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<tr>
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<td>410-228-1770</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bluecrab@fastol.com">bluecrab@fastol.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Frederick</td>
<td><em>Peter Fitzpatrick, Esq.</em></td>
<td>Rupli &amp; Fitzpatrick, P.C. 11 W. Patrick Street Suite 10 Frederick, MD 21701-5211</td>
<td>301-620-9357</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pfitz@fitz-law.com">pfitz@fitz-law.com</a></td>
<td>Sharon M. Grosfeld, Esq. Paula J Peters P.A. 1410 Forest Drive, Suite 27 Annapolis, MD 21403 301-651-9058 <a href="mailto:sharon.grosfeld@gmail.com">sharon.grosfeld@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Garrett</td>
<td><em>Miriam Sincell Burton, Esq.</em></td>
<td>3 South 2nd Street Oakland, MD 21550</td>
<td>301-616-2547</td>
<td><a href="mailto:miriam.sincell@gmail.com">miriam.sincell@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Miriam Sincell Burton, Esq. 3 South 2nd Street Oakland, MD 21550 301-616-2547 <a href="mailto:miriam.sincell@gmail.com">miriam.sincell@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harford</td>
<td><em>Gwendolyn S. Tate, Esq.</em></td>
<td>Sexual Assault / Spouse Abuse Resource Center, Inc. P.O. Box 1207 Bel Air, MD 21014</td>
<td>410-836-8431 x234</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gate@sarc-maryland.org">gate@sarc-maryland.org</a></td>
<td>Hon. Angela M. Eaves Circuit Court for Harford County 20 W. Courtland Street Bel Air, Maryland 21014-3737 410-638-3264 <a href="mailto:angela.eaves@courts.state.md.us">angela.eaves@courts.state.md.us</a></td>
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<td>Howard</td>
<td>Cecilia B. Paizs, Esq.</td>
<td>Law Office of Cecilia B. Paizs P.A.</td>
<td>410-750-6710</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ceecee@paizlaw.com">ceecee@paizlaw.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>Hon. John E. Nunn, III</td>
<td>District Court for Kent County 103 N. Cross Street Chestertown, MD 21620</td>
<td>410-810-3362</td>
<td><a href="mailto:john.nunn@mdcourts.gov">john.nunn@mdcourts.gov</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Montgomery</td>
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<td>301-657-0185</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mjgoecke@lerchearly.com">mjgoecke@lerchearly.com</a></td>
<td>Ms. Jo Benson Fogel, Esq. 5900 Hubbard Drive Rockville, Maryland 20852 301-468-2288 <a href="mailto:jfogelpa@aol.com">jfogelpa@aol.com</a></td>
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<td>Prince George's</td>
<td>Janet Hart, Esq.</td>
<td>14735 Main Street Suite 272B Upper Marlboro, MD 20772</td>
<td>301-952-2122</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jhart@opd.state.md.us">jhart@opd.state.md.us</a></td>
<td>Manuel R. Geraldo, Esq. 802 Swan Creek Road Ft. Washington, MD 20744 240-462-0662 <a href="mailto:mgeraldo@rglaw.net">mgeraldo@rglaw.net</a> <a href="mailto:manuelgeraldol@gmail.com">manuelgeraldol@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Queen Anne's</td>
<td>Lance G. Richardson, Esq.</td>
<td>136 N. Commerce Street Centreville, MD 21617</td>
<td>410-758-2264</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lrichardson@qac.org">lrichardson@qac.org</a></td>
<td>Hon. Karen Murphy Jensen Circuit for Caroline County 109 Market St., Room 200 Denton, Maryland 21629 410-479-2303 <a href="mailto:karen.jensen@courts.state.md.us">karen.jensen@courts.state.md.us</a></td>
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<td>Saint Mary's</td>
<td>Samuel C.P. Baldwin, Jr., Esq.</td>
<td>Baldwin &amp; Briscoe PA Suite 2030</td>
<td>301-862-4400</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sbaldwin@baldwinbriscoe.com">sbaldwin@baldwinbriscoe.com</a></td>
<td>Bonnie Sullivan, Esq., Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service 1 North Charles Street Suite 222 Baltimore, MD 21201 443-451-4060 <a href="mailto:bonnie@mvlslaw.org">bonnie@mvlslaw.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerset</td>
<td>John K. Phoebus, Esq.</td>
<td>P.O. Box 70 Crisfield, MD 21817</td>
<td>410-968-9200</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jphoebus@dmv.com">jphoebus@dmv.com</a></td>
<td>Robert D. Anbinder, Esq., Baltimore City Office of Law 100 Holiday St., Suite L1 Baltimore, MD 21202 410-396-3204 <a href="mailto:Robert.Andbinder@baltimorecity.gov">Robert.Andbinder@baltimorecity.gov</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Talbot</td>
<td>Leigh Roberts, Melton, Esq.</td>
<td>Parker Counts Melton LLP 129 N. Washington Street P.O. Box 1209 Easton, MD 21601</td>
<td>410-822-1122</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lmelton@parkcountsmelton.com">lmelton@parkcountsmelton.com</a></td>
<td>Hon. Karen Murphy Jensen Circuit for Caroline County 109 Market St., Room 200 Denton, Maryland 21629 410-479-2303 <a href="mailto:karen.jensen@courts.state.md.us">karen.jensen@courts.state.md.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Tracey B. Eberling, Esq.</td>
<td>Steptoe &amp; Johnson, PLLC P.O. Box 2629 Martinsburg, WV 25402</td>
<td>304-263-6991</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tracey.eberling@steptoe-johnson.com">tracey.eberling@steptoe-johnson.com</a></td>
<td>Shawn Boehringer, Esq., Legal Aid Bureau 500 East Lexington Street Baltimore, MD 21202 410-951-7637 <a href="mailto:sboehringer@mdlab.org">sboehringer@mdlab.org</a></td>
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Baltimore City Office of Law  
100 Holiday St., Suite L1  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-396-3204  
Robert.Andbinder@baltimorecity.gov |
| Worcester | Michael Farlow, Esq.         | 225 South Washington Street                           | 410-726-3458  | michael.farlow@gmail.com   | Robert D. Anbinder, Esq.  
Baltimore City Office of Law  
100 Holiday St., Suite L1  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-396-3204  
Robert.Andbinder@baltimorecity.gov |
Appendix AO

Sample Joint Pro Bono Advertising Campaign: Maryland Lawyers Care Brochure
HARFORD COUNTY FREE (PRO BONO) AND REDUCED FEE CIVIL LEGAL SERVICES DIRECTORY

The attorneys servicing Harford County Maryland are working hard to make civil legal services available to all residents, regardless of income.

If you have additional questions, or if your particular legal need was not addressed inside, please contact the Harford County office of the Legal Aid Bureau at the number below.

410-836-8202

Developed by:
The Harford County Pro Bono Committee
The Maryland Court of Appeals’ Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services
And

Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland
An MSBA/Legal Services Partnership

Produced through the generous contribution of:
Administrative Office of the Courts
Bar Association’s Insurance Trust Fund
Maryland Bar Foundation
And
Maryland Legal Services Corporation

If you have additional questions, or if your particular legal need was not addressed inside, please contact the Frederick County Lawyer Referral Service at 800-649-1091 (in Maryland) or 410 857-1151 (out of state).

Produced by:
Harford County Pro Bono Committee
Court of Appeals’ Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services
Pro Bono Resource Center of Maryland, Inc.,
with generous contributions from:
Administrative Office of the Courts
Bar Association’s Insurance Trust
Maryland Bar Foundation
Maryland Legal Services Corporation
Local and Statewide Programs with County Services

Most of the following programs have income requirements that must be met in order to be eligible for assistance.

Harford County Bureau of Support Enforcement — Assistance in securing child support from absent parents. 800-332-6347.

Lawyer Referral Service of Harford County — All civil and criminal cases. No eligibility screening. Fees set by attorney. 410-836-0123.

Statewide Resources

Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service — General Legal Services 410-547-6537 or 800-510-0050. Intake hours 9 AM to 1 PM M-TH and 9 AM to Noon on Friday.

Family Law Hotline — 800-845-8550.

House of Ruth Domestic Violence Legal Clinic — Domestic Violence Victims. 410-889-RUTH.

Maryland Disability Law Center — Legal assistance for problems related to disabilities, except criminal, domestic or employment. 410-727-6352.

CASA of Maryland — Immigration and Employment issues. 301-431-4185

Homeless Persons Representation Project — Services for homeless or at risk of homelessness. 410-689-6589 or 800-773-4340

Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc. — Provides information concerning rights and responsibilities in landlord/tenant disputes. 410-243-6007


Alternative Directions — Family Law assistance for incarcerated persons. 410-889-5072.

Other Assistance

American Civil Liberties Union — 410-889-8555

Public Justice Center — 410-625-9409

Dept. of Human Resources Spanish Hotline — 410-767-7985 or 800-732-7850.

Maryland Department of Aging — 410-767-1100 or 800-AGE-DIAL

Maryland Human Relations Commission — 410-767-8500 or 800-637-6247.

Pro Se Legal Forms Helpline — 800-818-9888


Sixty Plus Legal Program — Limited legal services for individuals 60 years of age and older. 800-999-8904

Long Term Care Assistance Project — 410-296-6703 or 800-367-7563.

Civil Justice — Reduced fee, civil and criminal legal assistance. 410-706-0174.

MD HOPE — Mortgage Foreclosure Assistance. 877-462-7555.
APPENDIX AP

Sample Strategic Plan
**Volunteer Lawyers Network Strategic Plan:**  
**July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2014** *

**Purpose:** This strategic Plan sets forth the goals and the strategies for achieving those goals to guide the Board and staff of VLN in the operation of VLN through June 2014. The Executive Director is charged with annually preparing a plan of action to implement this Strategic Plan and the Secretary is charged with overseeing the implementation and updating of the annual plans and this Strategic Plan.

**Overview:** The Strategic Plan starts with a statement of VLN’s mission followed by a discussion of six key areas of focus identified by the Committee to achieve that mission: (1) Legal Services, (2) Volunteers, (3) Personnel, (4) Governance, (5) Finance, and (6) Relationships with Outside Entities. Within each of these areas of focus, guiding principles and initiatives are set forth. The Plan concludes with a section on implementation.

**Mission:** To promote access to justice and the administration of justice by providing legal services to low-income people primarily in Hennepin County through volunteer lawyers.

**Tag Line:** When using the VLN logo, it may also be followed by the tag line: Connecting Clients in Need with Volunteer Lawyers.

---

**I. Legal Services**

**A. Guiding Principles**

1. High quality legal services to low-income persons is the core of VLN’s mission;

2. The goals of VLN should be consistent with the protection of basic human needs, including but not limited to:
   a. **Shelter** (including housing and real estate).
   b. **Sustenance** (including employment and unemployment compensation); Bankruptcy (and letters to creditors); Debtor rights (including consumer civil lawsuits and garnishment issues); Criminal Expungements; Tax; Administrative
Law (especially DHS reconsideration cases); Non-consumer tort defense; Spousal Maintenance (advice only).

c. Safety (including OFPs/Restraining Orders; Marital Dissolutions).

d. Child custody (including Parental access/visitation; Adoption; Juvenile advice; Establishment of Paternity).

3. On a regular basis VLN will continue to review these focus areas of law to determine if other program areas should be added.

4. VLN shall use its best efforts to maximize client outcomes in all cases. The Clinics and Quality Control Committee will regularly review available best practices literature and implement best practices appropriate for VLN.

For example, in advice and brief service cases, implement procedures which help the clients follow the lawyers’ advice and increase the client’s chance to have a successful outcome. These include:

a. Provide written information to clients concerning their legal problem, e.g., generic legal fact sheets.

b. Write clients notes or letters on the legal and factual analysis of their matter and next steps the client should take.

c. Provide more brief service where appropriate, including making phone calls, writing letters, getting information from agencies, assisting in filling out forms, and other limited tasks which may help solve the client’s legal problem.

d. Develop protocols for identifying and addressing specific client limitations that are associated with less favorable outcomes such as limited English proficiency, inability to read and write, mental illness, etc.

e. Develop follow-up procedures to: a) provide the client with additional information, or to get additional information from the client; and b) determine whether client was able to follow the advice and whether a favorable outcome was achieved.

These best practice standards and procedures should be included in new attorney trainings.

**B. Initiatives**

1. **Level of Service** – VLN will create internal procedures to effectuate guidelines below. VLN seeks to assist as many clients as possible given the volunteer attorney time available. When determining which service to provide a client (e.g., full representation, brief services, legal advice), VLN shall consistently evaluate which service, as defined by the Legal Services Advisory Commission, will most effectively and efficiently maximize client outcome:

a. Brief service\(^1\) by a volunteer attorney is preferred when it is sufficient to resolve the client’s issue (e.g., in those situations in which well-drafted pleadings can on their own significantly affect the outcome of a case).
b. **Extended representation** by a volunteer attorney is preferred when it is necessary to protect a basic need. Some factors to consider in determining whether representation should be provided include:

i. The extent to which full representation is necessary to maximize client outcome.

ii. The extent to which power imbalances would be likely to affect case outcome, e.g.,:

   - The presence of an attorney on the other side of the case
   - The complexity of the law related to the client’s issue
   - The complexity of the procedures that the client must follow to prevail

iii. The extent to which the individual is unlikely to be able to pursue the matter without the assistance of an attorney due to language barriers, mental or physical handicaps, mental illness, lack of understanding of the legal system, etc.

iv. The extent to which the individual is unlikely to be able to pursue the matter without the assistance of an attorney due to language barriers, mental or physical handicaps, mental illness, lack of understanding of the legal system, etc.

v. The extent to which the client, if able, has demonstrated a commitment to participating in the litigation, as evidenced by return of completed paperwork on a timely basis and/or payment of a nominal administrative fee.

vi. The timeliness of the client’s request for services and VLN’s ability to find an attorney to assign to the client.

c. **Legal advice only** serves an important function in VLN’s delivery of legal services, including when:

i. It is an efficient and/or timely way to connect client and attorney (especially in situations in which a client needs assistance immediately or has access or transportation issues);

ii. The client receives legal advice about merits of the case (which intake staff cannot do);

iii. The client does not qualify for other VLN services (because the case is not within VLN’s areas of service or the client does not meet income or residency guidelines); and

iv. VLN cannot provide the client with an attorney for whatever reason, including when the client’s case does not have merit.

d. **Legal referral services** are an important service to the community and are provided when, for whatever reason, a higher level of service is not possible. (Definitions of legal services are in the end notes.)
2. **Client Eligibility.** A key part of VLN’s provision of effective legal services is to determine how to serve those in the greatest need. A part of this determination includes determining client income and asset eligibility so as to: serve as many people as possible; not compete with the private bar; and not tax VLN resources.

Staff will, on an ongoing basis and pursuant to the supervision of the Executive Committee, review eligibility guidelines to determine whether changes are appropriate. The Executive Committee will make recommendations to the board of directors for final decision.

3. **Client Investment.** Client participation is essential to maximize client outcomes. VLN staff will seek to establish client investment prior to connecting them with a volunteer attorney in various ways, which may include asking clients to: get their paperwork to VLN in advance; attend a class on their legal rights and VLN processes; make their own copies of documents, and, in limited circumstances, pay small administrative fees.

### II. Volunteers

#### A. Guiding Principles

VLN is committed to providing its clients with excellent legal services and, whenever possible, positive outcomes. While this relies in part on VLN internal procedures, it also depends on the quantity and quality of the services the volunteers provide.

#### B. Initiatives

1. **Recruiting.** Under the direction of the Volunteer Committee, VLN staff will continue to recruit new volunteers using best practices for volunteer recruiting, identifying and addressing specific challenges that prevent attorneys from volunteering, and offering quality trainings and mentor services to address attorney concerns about practicing in areas of law new to them. The Volunteer Committee will establish annual recruiting goals and develop strategies and promotional activities with VLN staff to achieve the annual goals. New recruitment materials will be developed to reflect the core areas of service as outlined in this plan.

2. **Retention.** Under the direction of the Volunteer Committee, VLN staff will continue to implement volunteer retention strategies, including regular contact with existing volunteers and volunteer recognition programs. The Volunteer Committee will review existing retention programs with VLN staff on an ongoing basis and work to develop new retention strategies and guidelines regarding deployment of VLN staff resources for retention versus recruitment.

3. **Trainings and Expectations.** Under the direction of the Volunteer Committee, VLN staff will provide clear expectations and adequate training and support to volunteer attorneys.

4. **Review of Volunteers.** Under the direction of the Clinics and Quality Control Committee, and to monitor client experiences of our volunteer attorneys’ services, VLN staff will conduct routine evaluations of services. In addition, VLN staff will report to the Clinics and Quality Control Committee on at least an annual basis any client grievances.
as well as their resolution. VLN staff will use positive client feedback for volunteer retention as much as possible.

5. **Best Practices.** Under the oversight of the Clinics and Quality Control Committee, VLN staff will keep abreast of best practices in the field and implement them appropriately. The Clinics and Quality Control Committee will review available best practices studies and make recommendations for VLN staff implementation. The Board of Directors will review quarterly data reports, which show the numbers of services provided by level of service and area of law, and will review the Clinics and Quality Control Committee’s recommendations on an annual basis.

### III. Personnel

#### A. Guiding Principles

VLN is committed to retaining high quality staff and as such aspires to provide competitive staff compensation and incentives. VLN endorses appropriate oversight of non-attorney staff by attorneys as provided by the ABA Guidelines for Pro Bono Programs (Standard 4.8).

Currently VLN has Family and Housing Law Resource Staff Attorneys. The focus of the staff attorneys is to provide support to volunteers, not the direct provision of legal services.

#### B. Initiatives

1. **Attorneys on Staff.** VLN will strive to retain Resource Attorneys on staff and continue the focus on volunteer support, not direct services, especially in critical areas of law. Given the current client needs, VLN will explore the feasibility of hiring a Bankruptcy and/or Civil Resource Attorney.

2. **Development, Staff Compensation, Retention Strategy.** The executive director will:
   a. Propose to the executive committee a plan for executive director transition.
   b. Consult with an efficiency expert and/or business analyst to review different models that would assist VLN to do its work as efficiently as possible.
   c. Within budget confines, routinely review other ways to reward employees and support morale.
   d. Periodically, work with one or more board members to review the VLN employee manual to ensure policies and procedures are in compliance with state and federal laws and staff retention and compensation strategies meet best practices and promote staff retention.
IV. Governance

A. Guiding Principles

VLN seeks to comply with best practices as they relate to governance in order to bring the highest quality services to clients as possible.

VLN’s Bylaws were revised in 2009 to achieve best practices and increased efficiencies by including:

- Specific directives to maintain a board composition of greater ethnic, gender and skills diversity;
- Establishment and enforcement of board meeting attendance standards;
- Restructuring of officers’ duties and terms to encourage healthy rotation of positions and meaningful participation; and
- Establishment of a finance committee to increase the board’s oversight and understanding of the organization’s financial situation.

B. Initiatives

1. The first fiscal year board meeting will include an annual board orientation as described in Addendum B.

2. At each year’s executive committee annual retreat, the executive director will present a proposed annual plan. This proposed annual plan shall be developed with staff input, derived from the strategic plan and complementary to the budget, with specific quantifiable goals including specific duties of the volunteers and the staff. The executive committee shall approve a plan and present to the board at the first board meeting of each fiscal year.

3. The Executive Committee shall annually revisit the organization’s bylaws to evaluate ongoing effectiveness of achieving board best practices.

4. Each of the VLN working committees will develop a charter, based on a uniform template.

5. Staff may propose the creation of new committees or other committee changes to the Board of Directors for final approval based upon establishment of the demonstrated need for same.
V. Finance

A. Guiding Principle

The board, as well as appropriate committees of the board, will closely monitor the fiscal health of the organization; it will do so in connection with preparing annual budgets; and it will establish and maintain adequate reserves.

B. Initiatives

1. Finance Committee. As provided in the revised by-laws, VLN will create a standing Finance Committee. The committee will include the treasurer, an outside financial expert, staff members, and other interested board members. The committee will meet from September to June of each fiscal year. The duties of this finance committee will include the following:

   a. Improve accessibility of VLN’s financial reports and facilitate the board’s financial knowledge and understanding of the organization;

   b. Establish a reasonable timeline by which the preliminary budget will be presented to the Executive Committee and the final budget presented to the board for voting.

   c. Participate in creating the annual budget and recommend priorities for the coming year’s budget.

   d. Participate in coordination with the Executive Committee to develop a sequence of steps (i.e., contingency plan) to be taken if income is under budget.

   e. Provide recommendations as to whether and when VLN shall employ additional fundraising staff (internal or external) and/or otherwise increase fundraising.

   f. Review the annual audit before such time as the treasurer presents it to the board.

   g. Establish a goal and implementation plan for VLN’s financial reserves.

2. Budget Narrative. The executive director will timely send board members the proposed budget with: 1) a narrative document that describes the underlying assumptions of the budget as well as deviations from the prior year; and 2) a “budget fundamentals sheet” reminding people of some of the key budget provisions contained in the budget each year.

VI. Relationships with Outside Entities

A. Guiding Principles

VLN staff time should primarily be used to further VLN’s commitment to providing its clients with excellent legal services. VLN staff should, given priorities and resources, have appropriate dialogue and collaboration with other organizations providing legal services to low income
persons, law firms and the Courts to improve the network of delivery of legal service to low income persons.

B. Initiatives

1. Considering current priorities and resources, staff will develop a plan for the appropriate level of interaction with the legal services organizations, law firms and the courts for review by the Executive Committee.

2. In developing its plan, staff will give priority to recruiting and developing lawyer and law firm volunteers and support. Staff should be mindful of the findings of Supporting Justice II, A Report on the Pro Bono Work of American’s Lawyers, American Bar Association, 2009; including that training and CLE credit for pro bono are powerful incentives to encourage greater pro bono activity.

VII. Implementation

1. The Executive Director will annually prepare a plan of action to implement the objectives of the Strategic Plan.

2. The Secretary will oversee the implementation and updating of the annual plans and the Strategic Plan. The Secretary will submit a report to the Executive Committee at quarterly meetings and to the full board on at least a quarterly basis providing a status report addressing:

- Are initiatives being met? If so, report on success;
- If not, why? Does staff have sufficient resources to achieve?
- Are the timelines being met? Do they need to be changed?
- Are the goals and initiatives still realistic? Are changes recommended?
- Should priorities be changed?

3. In June 2013, the Chair will appoint a new strategic planning committee to create the strategic plan to guide VLN from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2019.

Approved and adopted by unanimous board vote on May 7, 2009.

Alysia Zens, BLN Board Chair 2008/09

1 Legal Services Advisory Commission defines Legal Advice: Contact between attorney and client where the attorney provides only legal advice to the client (e.g. the advocate reviewed the relevant facts, interpreted the facts presented by the client, applied the law to the facts presented and counseled the client concerning his or her legal problem). Advice Only service would
include legal advice clinics and legal advice hotlines where no follow up work is done on behalf of the client.

2 The Legal Services Advisory Commission defines Brief Service as: Advocate provides limited services for client without participating in formal proceedings (e.g. letter or phone call to a third party, or preparation of a routine legal document). Brief Service would include assisted pro se clinics where forms are completed with the client, but the client is not represented in court.

3 The Legal Services Advisory Commission defines Extended Representation as: Representation or preparation for litigation (whether in court or an administrative tribunal) or extended transactional representation. Examples include:
   - Negotiated Settlement without Litigation – Counsel negotiated and reached an actual settlement on behalf of a client without any court or administrative actions pending. Should be reserved for cases in which the program conferred with another party to reach a resolution of the client’s legal problem.
   - Negotiated Settlement with Litigation – Counsel negotiated and reached an actual settlement on behalf of a client while a court or formal administrative action was pending.
   - Administrative Agency Decision – Counsel represented a client in an administrative agency action that resulted in a case-dispositive decision by the administrative agency after a hearing or other formal administrative process.
   - Court Decision – Counsel represented a client in a proceeding that resulted in a case dispositive decision by the court.

Extensive Service – Counsel undertook extensive research, preparation of complex legal documents, extensive interaction with third parties on behalf of an eligible client, or extensive on-going assistance to clients who are proceeding pro se. This would also include cases where extensive work is done on behalf of a client, but the client withdraws from representation or becomes income ineligible.

**Addendum A**

**Strategic Planning Process**

As one of her first actions as 2008–2009 Board Chair, Alysia Zens appointed a committee to undertake strategic planning.

She appointed Jonathan Bye (Partner, Lindquist & Vennum and VLN vice Chair) as the Chair of the strategic planning committee and the following as members of that committee:

- Matt Boos (Shareholder, Fredrikson & Byron; VLN Chair 2006/07)
- Lawrence Buxbaum (Executive Director, Hennepin County Bar Association)
- Karen Canon (Associate General Counsel, U.S. Bank; VLN Chair 2003/04)
From July 2008 through April 2009, the Committee, both as a whole and as various subcommittees, met on numerous occasions to consider VLN as it currently exists, where it should be going over the next five years, and how it should get there. In doing so, the Committee assessed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of VLN and sought the input of representatives of its various constituencies, including current and former Board members, current and former Executive Directors, executive officers of the Hennepin County Bar Association and the Hennepin County Bar Foundation, law firm pro bono coordinators, fundraising consultants, judges and other judicial personnel, representatives of other legal service providers, and VLN staff.

**Addendum B**

**VLN NEW BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION AND BOARD TRAINING PROCEDURE**

- Upon nomination and confirmation of a new board member, an officer or previous board member and VLN staff member (Executive Director or Assistant Director) shall meet with said new member for approximately one hour to provide and review the following:
  1. Board Member Manual;
  2. VLN Mission Statement;
  3. Fiduciary Duties of a Board Member;
  4. Bylaws;
  5. Strategic Plan;
  6. Annual Plan
  7. Most Relevant Governance Policies (such as Conflict of Interest);
  8. Financial Statement and Budget

- All new board members should be asked to attend the MAP for Nonprofits *Board Boot Camp* basic training session.¹

- Each initial board meeting of the new fiscal year (typically in August/September) shall be an extended meeting held in the evening and will include the following:

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¹ This two hour session is offered a variety of dates and times (and webinar) at a cost of $35.00.
1. Short Business Meeting
2. VLN Volunteer Orientation presentation
3. *Customized Board Boot Camp*\(^2\) or an alternate volunteer presentation
4. Board/Staff Mixer (if this is not feasible, arrangements should be made for times for the board and staff to get acquainted)

- Officers or nominated officers are encouraged to attend the MAP for Nonprofits *Advanced Board Boot Camp* or *Board Chair Training*.
- The Finance Committee shall participate in the free *Financial Needs Assessment* offered by the Nonprofits Assistance Fund on an as needed basis.
- The Board of Directors shall consider participating in the *Financial Clarity for Nonprofit Boards* training also offered by the Nonprofits Assistance Fund.\(^3\)

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\(^2\) This is an onsite board training/workshop conducted by MAP for Nonprofits and usually costs $500-700.

\(^3\) Includes advance meeting with staff/treasurer, review of finances and onsite BOD training ($200).