

PRO BONO PROGRAM QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

Pro Bono Graduation Requirement

As a condition of graduation, a student entering the Law School in fall 2012 or thereafter must perform forty hours of supervised pro bono work. Students may begin performing pro bono work after completion of fifteen hours of academic coursework and after completion of the Pro Bono Orientation.

Pro Bono Service Defined

Pro bono service is supervised law-related public service that a student provides without compensation or academic credit. Pro bono service may be legal in nature or may be charitable public service. Prior approval is necessary for charitable public service to fulfill this requirement and will only qualify as pro bono legal service if it responds to a legal problem. Some examples of pro bono work that qualify include:

- Unpaid work for a judge;
- Unpaid work for a government entity;
- Unpaid work for a public interest organization, e.g., Memphis Area Legal Services Inc., Community Legal Center, Court Appointed Special Advocates Association (CASA);
- Unpaid work for a licensed attorney, law firm, or corporate counsel undertaken on behalf of a low-income individual who does not pay for the students' work or the work of a lawyer, firm, or corporate counsel for representation; or
- Pre-approved unpaid work for a nonprofit charitable organization that responds to a legal problem, e.g., work for a domestic violence shelter or a defender re-entry program.

Pro Bono Work That Does Not Qualify

Pro bono service undertaken in an externship or legal clinic for academic credit or while in a paid position does not fulfill the pro bono requirement. Service at a private firm that a student undertakes after completion of a clerkship *does* qualify for pro bono credit, so long as the student receives no compensation for the service and performs the service on a pro bono case or matter.

Student service in a Registered Student Organization ("RSO") does not count toward the pro bono requirement unless the service is law-related public service. For example, a student will not receive credit for attending an RSO general meeting, but may receive credit for participating in a charitable project that an RSO sponsors, e.g., VITA, Project Homeless Connect.

Commuting, Training, & Observation Time

The hours that a student spends commuting to and from a placement site do not count towards fulfillment of the pro bono requirement. The time that a student spends in training or observing may count towards fulfillment of the pro bono requirement, so long as such time does not exceed 20 percent of the time that the student spends at a particular placement. The time spent in Pro Bono Orientation does not count toward fulfillment of the pro bono requirement.

More information on the Pro Bono Program can be found at <http://www.memphis.edu/law/career/probono.php>.
To access the handbook, go to <http://www.memphis.edu/law/career/theprobonohandbook.pdf>.