



TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
THURGOOD MARSHALL SCHOOL of LAW

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Experiential Education Department
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
PRO BONO PROGRAM

Q. Does Thurgood Marshall School of Law have a Pro Bono Program?

A. Yes, Thurgood Marshall School of Law has established a Pro Bono Program that we will officially launch during 1L Orientation.

Q. Are Pro Bono hours required to graduate?

A. No, the law school does not require students to participate in Pro Bono activities, however, we do highly recommend it. Participating in Pro Bono projects provides much needed quality legal services to members of our community who have been marginalized and who otherwise have no access to these quality legal services. Participating in Pro Bono projects also supports students as they develop their professional identity, while allowing them to inculcate professionalism. Students also benefit by increasing their knowledge, by increasing their marketability, by expanding their professional networks, by gaining practical experience, by developing skills, by enhancing their reputations and by exploring alternative career opportunities.

Q. Why should law students participate in Pro Bono projects?

A. Thurgood Marshall school of law believes that one of the greatest gifts of being an attorney is the unique opportunity offered to serve members, agencies and institutions within the community that need quality legal services, but for historical or socio-economic reasons traditionally, have not had access to these quality legal services.

With that as our foundation, the Thurgood Marshall Pro Bono program is guided by the principles and guidelines of the American Bar Association and the State Bar of Texas Pro Bono Program, in that it is "designed to inspire and to enable students to engage in pro bono service, uncompensated by course credit or pay, while in law school".

Q. What qualifies as Pro Bono work?

- A. "The services must be law-related and be provided free of any charge to:
- a. A person who qualifies as indigent under the federal poverty income guidelines;
 - b. Charitable, public interest organizations with respect to matters or projects designed predominantly to address the needs of poor persons; or
 - c. The State Bar or any other body or organization in furtherance of the rights of indigent persons. "

Q. Does training for the pro bono work count as pro bono hours worked?

- A. With the exception of travel time, any time spent working on the pro bono projects counts, including training sessions.

Q. What work does not qualify as pro bono work?

- A. Any work that resulted in monetary compensation to the student above and beyond reimbursement for expenses incurred in the delivery of pro bono services;

Any work that is performed as part of a course or other activity for which the student received any academic credit; or

Any work that was performed in connection with fundraising activities

Q. How do students get involved in Pro Bono projects?

- A. The Class of 2024 has a class pro bono event calendared for September 11, 2021. In addition, the Dean of Experiential Education maintains a data base of Pro Bono Activities and Pro Bono Partner agencies looking for student volunteers. Furthermore, each law school class, and many student organizations also help organize pro bono opportunities geared toward student participation. Contact Dean Ledesma at stephanie.ledesma@tmslaw.tsu.edu or any of the leadership boards of student organizations for additional information.

Q. How do students record their Pro Bono hours?

A. The law school has developed a module within the CORE Elements Experiential Education data management system that will be used by students to capture and by administration to verify all student data regarding pro bono participation.

Q. Does the law school recognize pro bono service done by the students?

A. For students who complete at least 50 hours of Pro Bono work per academic year, (September 1-August 31), are in good academic standing, and complete a State Bar of Texas Pro Bono College Application, these students are eligible to become members of the State Bar of Texas Law Student Pro Bono College. For more information on the State Bar of Texas Law Student Pro Bono College Program, please see the attached document.

For students who complete a cumulative number of 200 hours of Pro Bono work per their 6, Fall and Spring academic terms and 2 summer terms, no more than 25 hours per any term, are in good academic standing, has a minimum of a 2.6 cumulative GPA, and completes at Thurgood Marshall School of Law Pro Bono Order of Service Leaders application, these students are eligible to become members of the Thurgood Marshall School of Law Pro Bono Order of Service Leaders. Please feel free to ask me any additional specific questions about the Thurgood Marshall School of Law Pro Bono Program .

Q. If I have more questions about the Pro Bono program who I ask.

A. Dean Stephanie Ledesma, stephanie.ledesma@tmslaw.tsu.edu, 512-228-2307.