

## **Pro Bono FAQs**

### **1) Is Pro Bono a required course?**

Yes, 310-A Pro Bono is required for graduation. Pro bono work may not be started until after the completion of the first year for full-time students or completion of 30 hours for part-time students. All pro bono hours must be completed two weeks before the last day of classes in the student's final semester of law school before graduation.

### **2) When I secure a pro bono position, how do I enroll for Pro Bono?**

You must add 310-A Pro Bono to your class schedule in DataVU preferably in the semester in which you plan to complete the pro bono hours. However, you can begin your pro bono work before registering for the 310-A course.

### **3) How many Pro Bono hours must I complete during my three years of law school?**

Enrolled students must complete forty (40) hours of pro bono service.

### **4) May I complete more than the required number of Pro Bono hours?**

Yes, students may receive a Pro Bono Commendation on their law school transcript if they complete 60 or more pro bono hours.

### **5) How do I find a Pro Bono site at which to work?**

Please check [Strategy](#) for current pro bono job postings.

### **6) May I complete my Pro Bono work with a private law firm/attorney?**

Students may complete pro bono work with a private law firm or corporation. However, the work assigned by the private law firm or attorney will qualify **only if** the attorney is also working for the client on a pro bono basis or for a reduced fee.

### **7) Are Pro Bono sites only offered locally? If not, are sites available in other regions?**

Pro Bono sites are available all over the country, although the majority of sites featured in **Strategy** are located in northern Indiana and the Chicago metropolitan area so students can participate in pro bono work during the semester while completing coursework at the law school.

### **8) May I propose a Pro Bono site of my own choosing?**

Yes, students are allowed and encouraged to contact qualified employers with whom they wish to complete their pro bono hours. This is a great opportunity to gain legal experience in your desired geographic region or practice area.

### **9) Must my work be supervised by an attorney, law professor or judge to qualify for Pro Bono?**

Yes, supervision by a licensed attorney, law professor or judge is important to guard against the unauthorized practice of law.

**10) Can I complete Pro Bono work in the summer?**

Yes, many attorney supervisors are delighted to have students complete their pro bono work during the summer. Paid positions may not be offered as often, therefore, completing your pro bono hours in the summer allows you to add legal experience to your resume when other opportunities are not available.

**11) Can I receive payment or a stipend for my Pro Bono work? Are travel and accommodations reimbursed?**

You may not be compensated in any fashion for your pro bono work. Your travel and parking costs are your responsibility and travel is not counted as part of your time logged.

**12) May I receive Summer Public Interest Stipend money while I complete my pro bono hours?**

NO, you must decide whether you wish to receive SPIS money for your work or pro bono service hours . You may not count the same hours for both programs.

**13) If I have completed my externship hours, may I stay to work additional hours and count those as Pro Bono hours?**

Yes, often extern students will complete their required hours well in advance of the end of the semester. Be sure to complete your extern hours and required reports prior to starting and tracking your pro bono hours.

**14) What documentation is needed for verification that I have fulfilled my Pro Bono requirement?**

A Student's pro bono experience(s) will be documented through his or her **Strategy** Account. (Strategy is the web-based career planning system used by Valpo students.) Students can confirm and seek approval for their pro bono positions and track their pro bono hours on-line in their individual **Strategy** accounts.

**15) What should I write about in my reflection paper?**

Preparing a reflection paper provides you with an opportunity to reflect on your experience and your professional obligation as an attorney. Briefly summarize your activity and identify the office at which you worked. More importantly, discuss your assessment of your experience, e.g., what you learned about both the law and pro bono activity, the professional obligation imposed on attorneys to facilitate access to the justice system, any frustrations you experienced, any satisfaction you experienced, and any insights you gained about yourself. The paper should be 2-3 pages.

**16) What is the purpose of the Pro Bono Plenary Session in my final year of law school?**

In this session, outside presenters and students will share their experiences and discuss the value of engaging in pro bono work as an attorney. A session is scheduled in November and in April each year. Students in their final year of law school are required to attend one session.