

VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

PRO BONO REQUIREMENT

(Adopted by Faculty in 1988 graduating in 1991 and thereafter- amended in 2003, 2009)

1. **Rule-** In order to graduate from the Valparaiso University School of Law each student enrolled prior to August of 2009 must complete twenty (20) hours of pro bono service under the supervision of an attorney. Students enrolled as of and after August 2009 must complete forty (40) hours of pro bono service under the supervision of an attorney. Full-time students must perform the service **after completion** of their first year and part-time students must perform the service **after completion** of thirty (30) credit hours. Students must return the completed forms to the Assistant Registrar when the pro bono work is completed and **may submit only ONE final pro bono report. DEADLINE:** One week before the last day of classes prior to graduation. Failure to submit reports by this deadline will result in a delayed graduation date.
2. **Purpose-**
 - a. To introduce law students to the professional obligation of attorneys, the benefits of public service and the needs of the under-represented in society;
 - b. To encourage attorneys in this area to fulfill their pro bono obligation and thereby expand legal services to those with limited access to the system;
 - c. To improve relations between the law school, students, attorneys and judges in this community; and
 - d. To introduce attorneys and judges to our law students, thereby expanding employment opportunities.
3. **Acceptable Activities-** In general the intent is to make students available to assist attorneys in the representation contemplated by Rule 6.1 of the Indiana Rules of Professional Conduct, which states:

A lawyer should render public interest legal service. A lawyer may discharge this responsibility by providing professional services at no fee to persons of limited means or to public service or charitable groups or organizations, by service in activities for improving the law, the legal system or the legal profession...

This includes assisting a private attorney on matters handled without a fee or a reduced fee (e.g., court-appointed criminal defense work), assisting an attorney who represents government (e.g., city attorney, prosecutor, etc.), assisting a judge, and assisting an attorney employed by a public interest organization. The activity should be of the nature that one would expect an attorney or law clerk to perform, i.e., not clerical. Students may not count hours in court observation as pro bono unless it pertains to the case preparation work and accounts for less than 20% of total hours worked.

SUPERVISION BY AN ATTORNEY IS IMPORTANT TO GUARD AGAINST THE UNAUTHORIZED PRACTICE OF LAW.

1. **Administration** - The program will be administered by the Director of Experiential Education. All forms necessary are available in the Pro Bono course packet on the Career Planning Center's web page (with a link on the Registrar's website, as well). **Students MUST keep a copy of all submissions for their records and submit final pro bono reports to Assistant Registrar only when the work is completed.**
2. **Site Selection** – Only when a student proposes to work for a private law firm or corporation, students must submit the Site Confirmation Form to the Career Planning Center and **receive approval prior** to beginning the work. This form is not necessary if student is working for an employer in the public (non-profit) sector. Form is returned to the student to submit with all final reports to the Assistant Registrar.
3. **Compensation-** Students cannot receive compensation (credit or wages) for the hours of service used to satisfy the requirement.

Satisfactory completion of the requirement will be demonstrated by a written certification from both the student and supervisor(s). The honor code applies to the student's certification.