

CALL FOR PRO BONO LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT PROPOSAL



Rolling Application Deadline

What Is The Pro Bono Collaborative?

The Pro Bono Collaborative, housed at Roger Williams University School of Law, connects law firms, attorneys and law students with community organizations that serve low-income people and that need pro bono (free) legal services for their organization and/or their clients. The Pro Bono Collaborative's pro bono service model is unique in that it involves a three-way partnership -- law firm/attorneys, RWU School of Law and a community organization—to identify unmet legal needs and create pro bono projects that address those needs. The Pro Bono Collaborative staff identifies and develops pro bono projects, facilitates ongoing pro bono projects and works to increase access to justice in an effort to leverage and maximize limited resources.

The **Pro Bono Collaborative is not a referral program**, i.e., we do not match individual attorneys with clients. Instead the Pro Bono Collaborative matches law firms and their attorneys with community organizations to provide pro bono legal assistance in a specific area of law that affects the organization or its clients and fits within the expertise and/or interest of the law firm's attorneys. An important goal of the Pro Bono Collaborative is to develop project partnerships, and ultimately long-lasting relationships, between law firms and community organizations. Each Pro Bono Collaborative project partnership includes one or more law firm attorneys, at least one RWU Law student to support the work of the attorney(s) and the community based organization staff.

The Pro Bono Collaborative works with community organizations that serve low-income people to develop four types of projects:

- Legal Education Rights Workshops
- Community Legal Clinics and Individual Representation;
- Legislative Advocacy and Research Projects; and
- Non-Profit Formation and Business Law Projects.

HOW CAN YOUR ORGANIZATION PARTNER WITH THE PRO BONO COLLABORATIVE?

As we prepare for upcoming semesters, we will be seeking new projects that can benefit the low-income communities of Southeastern New England.

We invite your organization to work with the Pro Bono Collaborative to develop a legal assistance project that we can then propose to our participating law firms. Applications may be submitted on a rolling basis. You will be contacted in November or July with regard to whether we can pursue a legal project with your organization.

In order to assist organizations as they prepare their applications, we are happy to answer specific questions by e-mail or by phone. We look forward to working with you in the future and encourage you to contact us should you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Pro Bono Collaborative

Roger Williams University School of Law

10 Metacom Avenue, Bristol RI 02809-2921

Website: <http://law.rwu.edu/pcb>



Application for PRO BONO COLLABORATIVE Project Assistance

Instructions: We encourage non-profit organizations that serve **low-income communities** to propose project ideas -that can benefit the organization or those the organization serves. Please fill out the Application for Pro Bono Collaborative Project Assistance, answering all applicable questions and including all supporting documents.

In order for any project to be considered for assistance, please complete the attached application and submit it to the Pro Bono Collaborative. If you are unable to answer any of the questions in the application, do not let that stop your organization from applying.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis:

Email: sharrington-steppen@rwu.edu
Fax: (401) 254-4559
Mail: Pro Bono Collaborative
Feinstein Center for Pro Bono & Experiential Education
Roger Williams University School of Law
10 Metacom Avenue, Bristol RI 02809-2921

Any questions regarding the application process can be directed to Suzanne at (401) 254-4559 or Eliza at 254-4597.

SECTION 1: Organization Information

Name of Organization:

Mailing Address:

Name of Project Contact Person(s):

Contact Information:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Type of Organization

- Public (school, CDC, etc.)
- Private (social service provider, religious, advocacy organization, etc.)
- Other (please explain)

Description of Organization and Mission:

Description of the population served by the Organization (the Pro Bono Collaborative only works with organizations that work with and/or serve individuals and families living at or below 300% of the federal poverty level):

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|--------------------------------|
| SECTION 2: Project Description |
|--------------------------------|

What type of legal project is your organization interested in? (check all that apply)

The Pro Bono Collaborative develops long term legal projects in partnership with community organizations, law firms and law students. Projects tend to fall into the following project types:

- Legal Education Rights Workshops
 - Legal Education Rights Workshops generally involve a presentation by a lawyer and law student on a specific legal topic. Workshop schedules range from 2 to 6 times per year depending on the needs of the organization. Examples include the Simple Wills Project with the Sargent Rehabilitation Center's Regional Resource Center; The Women's Center RI Domestic Violence Shelter's "Know Your Rights Workshop" for residents; and the Year Up Providence Criminal Law and Employment Issues Presentation.
- Community Legal Clinics and Individual Representation Projects
 - Community Legal Clinics and Individual Representation Projects work best when your clients/community are experiencing specific discrete legal need. For example, we have two criminal law expungement projects with McAuley House and the RI Coalition for the Homeless. Each month attorneys and law students meet with individuals in the community and provide 20 minute consultations on expungement of criminal records. Where appropriate, attorneys provide ongoing representation to individuals through the expungement petitioning process. We have also used the community legal clinic model with our Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Immigration Clinic Project.
- Legislative Advocacy and Research Projects
 - Legislative Advocacy and Research Projects provide the manpower that many non-profit organizations need to pursue or understand legislative initiatives and policies. Projects generally result in a legal memorandum or policy paper presented to the organization by the law firm and law students. Past projects include the Youth Pride Gender/Sexual Orientation Public Policy Research Project, as well as the Women's Development Corporation Affordable Housing Research Project.
- Non-Profit Formation and Non-Profit Business Law Projects
 - Non-Profit Formation Projects involve attorneys and law students assisting new organizations with incorporation and filing for 501(c)(3) status. Our non-profit business law projects involve attorneys and law students providing advice and counsel on business issues related to running and managing successful non-profits.
- Other

Legal Issue Area:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Benefits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment/Workers' Rights | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial/Consumer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expungement/Addressing Criminal Records | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigration | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Law and Domestic Violence ¹ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational/School | <input type="checkbox"/> Other_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guardianship | |

General Project Idea or Description of Legal Needs (*you may attach a longer narrative if necessary*):

Population to be served by the requested project:

Frequency with which your organization has the need for the requested project's legal assistance:

- Once
- Several times per month
- Once a month
- A few times a year

¹ Our partnering law firms generally provide pro bono assistance on Family Law matters through the Volunteer Lawyers Program of the RI Bar Association. Accordingly, for the most part, our projects have not included these issues. We welcome project ideas but please be advised that we may not be able to develop and/or successfully locate pro bono law firm matches .

Please provide the names and contact information for any staff members or volunteers who would be playing a primary role in the proposed Pro Bono Collaborative project.

SECTION 3: Project Outcomes

Please describe how this project will benefit your organization and the advancement of your mission:

Please describe how this project might benefit the overall community, including specific groups that could benefit from this project (i.e. target populations, neighborhoods, specific town/city/region).

SECTION 4: Financial Information

What is your organization's annual operating budget?

What are your major sources of funding?

How much funding from your annual operating budget is set aside for legal services for your non-profit, if any?

SECTION 5: Supporting Documents

Please include the following items when submitting your application:

- List of current Board (Advisory & Governing) members
- Pamphlets or materials about your organization
- Most recent annual report