

Recognizing Your Commitment

By adopting the pro bono pledge, you are inspiring others and expressing your dedication to justice for all. Individual and firm pledge signatories will be recognized in the *Multnomah Lawyer*. Additionally, we would like to thank the following firms who have accepted the pledge:

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MULTNOMAH BAR ASSOCIATION

Pro Bono Pledge

Take a matter that matters

2019



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Thousands of low-income members of our community are facing serious legal problems. Families are losing their homes. Women are threatened by abusive relationships. People with disabilities are being unfairly denied benefits. Having the law on their side is not always enough. Sometimes they need a lawyer by their side. Unfortunately, only about 15% of low-income Oregonians receive needed legal representation.

The Multnomah Bar Association's Pro Bono Pledge seeks to dramatically increase access to justice by calling on attorneys to commit to at least one pro bono matter in 2019. In addition, law firms are asked to adopt a written pro bono policy and encourage participation in the individual pledge. Both are asked to financially support legal service organizations of their choice.

The benefits of pro bono representation are many. Lives are often changed and sometimes saved. Belief in our justice system is restored. Attorneys who accept pro bono work receive personal satisfaction and valuable training, and law firms often receive public recognition.

The MBA Pro Bono Pledge aims to mobilize lawyers' time and money to knock down the barriers that block access to the justice system for so many Oregonians. By giving a relatively small amount of each, together we can make a significant contribution to our community and a profound difference in the lives of individuals.

Attorneys and firms can sign the pledge online at www.mbabar.org.

**Take the 2019 Pro Bono Pledge
at www.mbabar.org.**



"Every Oregon lawyer has an obligation to help ensure access to justice for all. The MBA Pro Bono Pledge - to represent a client of limited means or an organization serving that community and to provide financial support for legal services for the poor - is a public commitment to that bedrock principle of democracy. I encourage all lawyers to take the Pledge - you will learn much about the interrelated nature of reality and you, your clients, and our system of justice will benefit immensely from your participation."

*Martha L. Walters
Oregon Supreme Court Chief Justice*

"Our system of justice works only if the people we serve believe that the system is truly fair and just for all. Lawyers make a difference. Without lawyers, many litigants are simply unable to navigate the legal system. Please make a difference for low-income people in this community. Take the Pro Bono pledge and help make access to justice for all a reality."

*Stephen K. Bushong
Multnomah County Circuit Court
Presiding Judge*

Resources

To aid you in fulfilling your pledge, consult the following resources available at:

www.mbabar.org

- **The Multnomah Bar Association Pro Bono Pledge**

Downloadable versions of both the individual and firm pro bono pledges.

- **Pro Bono Opportunities Handbook**

A handbook listing various pro bono opportunities available in Oregon.

- **Pro Bono Policy Toolkit**

An online resource to help your firm create a written pro bono policy.

- **Pro BonoOregon Listserv**

Allows attorneys to select pro bono cases online from a list emailed weekly.

"As lawyers, we are uniquely situated to recognize need and to help members of our community when they need access to justice. The demand - in numbers of people, of type of help needed, and their lack of ability to pay for legal help - is staggering. Take the pro bono pledge and offer your skills to help! This is a great way to give back, to honor our Oath of Office as Oregon attorneys, and to make sure that justice exists for all, not just the persons who can readily pay for it."

*Rima I. Ghandour
2018-19 MBA President*



"Taking the Pro Bono Pledge and accepting pro bono cases not only provides a critical need to members of our community, it is a commitment and contribution to the profession itself."

*Shayda Z. Le
2018-19 YLS President*

"[The volunteer attorney] was courteous, patient, did not make condescending remarks or assumptions. He explained the process fully and in plain English.... He was very pleasant to deal with."

*Client
Senior Law Project*

