



District of Columbia Courts

Superior Court Committee on Pro Bono & Affordable Counsel

WHAT ARE YOUR PRO BONO GOALS?

I just want to be of service to my local community.

- **Excellent.** Each *pro bono* opportunity will meet this important goal – our community and our justice system need your service! And you will have the opportunity to learn from skilled attorneys working at local legal services organizations. We encourage you to consider your secondary goals, subject matter that interests you, and/or time commitment to select the type of *pro bono* work that will provide you with the experience to allow you to become a long-term *pro bono* lawyer.

I want to get into a courtroom!

- **Not a problem!** Superior Court representations are one of the fastest and easiest ways to get stand-up experience and will allow you to demonstrate leadership skills by first-chairing evidentiary hearings or trials. Your best options are contested custody matters on behalf of parents, a third-party caregiver, or as guardian *ad litem*; eviction defense; housing conditions cases; domestic violence matters; or debt collection/consumer matters. Please communicate your skill development goals when speaking with the organization(s) you contact.

I want the opportunity to negotiate a resolution (and stay out of a courtroom).

- **We encourage you** to step out of your comfort zone and try an individual representation to address the significant community need. But if you're not ready yet, providing same day legal advice will allow you to interact with clients and potentially negotiate resolutions outside the courtroom. See "I want to have a specific and predictable time commitment" section below.

I want to work with an individual client.

- **Taking on a full representation** will allow you to work one-on-one with an individual client on all aspects of their needs in a specific matter throughout the litigation process. All projects under the "I want to get into a courtroom!" above provide full representation options.

I want to have a short-term or predictable time commitment.

- **Same day advice clinics are a great way to touch the lives of many, while keeping your commitment discrete and time limited.** Consider the D.C. Bar Pro Bono Center's Free Legal Advice Clinic or volunteering in one of the court's self-help centers.

I want to start small and gain experience and confidence.

- **This is how many of us got started.** Speak with the legal services organization about the difficulty level of available matters. Also consider partnering with a more experienced lawyer or starting with a same day advice clinic to familiarize yourself with a specific subject matter, working with individual clients, and meeting attorneys at legal services organizations.