PRO BONO
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR LAW STUDENTS SEEKING TO FULFILL PRO BONO HOUR REQUIREMENTS

Many opportunities exist for law students to fulfill mandatory or aspirational hours requirements set by states or law schools.

Pro bono not only helps people in need, but also allows law students to develop legal skills, create a network within the legal community and gain the emotional satisfaction that comes with helping people in need. Law students of all experience levels can get involved.

Additional pro bono opportunities can be found in the CBF Guide to Pro Bono Opportunities and at www.IllinoisProBono.org. Recent law school graduates should feel free to contact any of the organizations directly. If you have questions or would like assistance getting involved, contact Angela Inzano at ainzano@chicagobar.org or 312-554-4952. Keep in mind that these are pro bono opportunities and that most organizations also have internship opportunities.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEGAL CLINIC (DVLC)
The Domestic Violence Legal Clinic provides free legal assistance to survivors of domestic violence including in Orders of Protection, Divorce and Parentage cases, and Immigration matters. Law student volunteers help to provide direct legal services for DVLC clients. Their duties include interviewing clients, communicating with clients, legal research, and preparing pleadings and other court documents. Students licensed under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 711 may also act as counsel in court under the supervision of the clinic’s attorneys.

Practice areas: Domestic violence
Opportunity type: Litigation
Time commitment: Volunteers should be available to work either (1) at least one full day per week for any eight week period or (2) at least five full days at a time for a shorter time period, such as school breaks of 1-2 weeks.
Training and supervision: Prior to beginning work at DVLC, volunteers must undergo on-site training and DVLC provides ongoing mentoring and support for volunteers.
Contact: Danielle Parisi Ruffatto, 312.325.9155, druffatto@dvlcchicago.org (please send resume and cover letter as well as area of interest, time period, and expected availability)

FIRST DEFENSE LEGAL AID (FDLA) HOTLINE
First Defense Legal Aid seeks volunteers to provide high quality pro bono legal representation to low-income adults and children arrested at Chicago police stations. Volunteers answer a 24-hour hotline and represent people at the police station until a public defender is appointed, which includes asserting their Fifth Amendment right to remain silent and Sixth Amendment right to counsel, interviewing witnesses, view line-ups, and protecting clients from police misconduct. No criminal defense experience is required.

Practice areas: Criminal Law
Opportunity type: Legal Hotline
Time commitment: Volunteer shifts are six hours in length and volunteers are asked to commit to at least one volunteer shift per month.
Training and supervision: Volunteers are required to attend a two-hour orientation and conduct a 30-minute practice chat with the LiveHelp Coordinator prior to volunteering. Staff members provide volunteers with ongoing support.
Contact: Samoane Williams, 586.484.3581, samoane@first-defense.org

ILLINOIS LEGAL AID ONLINE (ILAO) LIVELHELP OPERATOR
LiveHelp is a chat service that allows people looking for legal information and self-help resources on IllinoisLegalAid.org and AyudaLegalIL.org to ask a remotely located LiveHelp Operator for assistance in navigating the websites. LiveHelp volunteers provide direct person-to-person online help so that people in need of legal assistance can obtain the information they need to achieve more positive outcomes to their legal problems. Volunteers can participate from any computer with internet access. Bilingual LiveHelp operators are needed to staff the service on ILAO’s Spanish website AyudalLegalIL.org.

Practice areas: All areas
Opportunity type: Non-representation, educating the public about the law, technology
Time commitment: Completion of the required training (two hours) and two hours per week
Training and supervision: Volunteers must attend a two-hour orientation and conduct a 30-minute practice chat with the LiveHelp Coordinator prior to volunteering. Staff members provide volunteers with ongoing support.
Contact: Amy Clark, 312.977.9047, ext. 23, aclark@illinoislegalaid.org