

LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF MID-NEW YORK, INC.

PRO BONO PROGRAM

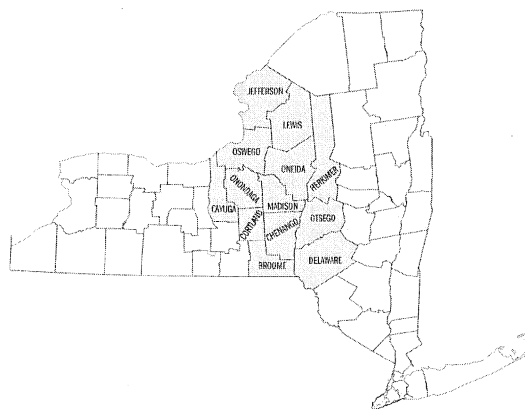


**Serving low-income persons in
thirteen central New York counties**

The Pro Bono Program

The Pro Bono Program is a collaboration between Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York, Inc. (LASMNY) and private attorneys to provide free legal services to low income persons across LASMNY's 13 county service area:

*Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland,
Delaware, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis,
Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego,
Otsego*



According to "Documenting the Justice Gap in America," a 2009 report by Legal Services Corporation, only a very small percentage of legal problems experienced by low-income persons (one in five or less) are addressed with the assistance of an attorney.

Pro bono attorney involvement is crucial to help meet the pressing legal needs of the indigent in our communities.

Volunteer Opportunities

Divorce Screening Clinics: meet individually with clients to advise on divorce matters

Pro Se Divorce Clinics: instruct a group on filling out the uncontested divorce packet

Divorce Referrals: represent clients in contested or uncontested divorce matters

Consumer Clinics: meet individually with clients to advise on debt collection matters

Bankruptcy Referrals: represent clients in Chapter 7 bankruptcies

Landlord-Tenant Project: be a lawyer for the day for tenants in housing court

Estate Planning Project: prepare simple wills, health care proxies and powers of attorney

Child Support Clinics: provide advice and counsel on child support matters

Unemployment Insurance Project: represent clients in UIB hearings by phone or in-person

Veterans Clinics: be a lawyer for the day at local veterans center

Legal HelpLine Referrals: accept referrals on civil legal matters of your choice or give telephone advice from your office as a HelpLine volunteer.



In 2011 pro bono attorneys accepted 838 new cases and completed 706 cases for LASMNY clients. Since 2000 more than 350 attorneys have participated in our pro bono programs.

FAQs about the Pro Bono Program

I already do "pro bono" work on my own. Why should I volunteer through LASMNY?

- We pre screen applicants; no referrals are made unless they qualify for LASMNY.
- We provide malpractice coverage for all pro bono cases referred.
- We provide research, forms and other support.
- We can provide CLE credit if you spend at least 2.5 hours on pro bono work.
- We annually recognize attorneys in local bar newsletters and nominate outstanding volunteers for county and statewide pro bono honors.
- Our *Student Intern Program* recruits and trains outstanding pre-law students as pro bono interns. We can place student interns at the offices of pro bono attorneys to assist with LASMNY assignments.

I probably don't do the kinds of work your clients need. Can I really be of help?

The Legal HelpLine established in 2007 gives legal advice on *any civil legal matter* to qualified applicants within LASMNY's 13 county service area. This enables us to refer cases in almost any area of civil law. Attorneys can also give telephone advice from the convenience of their own offices as a Legal HelpLine volunteer.

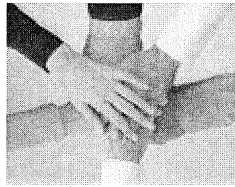
Can I help in an area that is new to me?

Yes. We can train and mentor attorneys learning a new area of law.

What are "reverse referrals"?

If you are contacted by a low-income person that you want to help pro bono, we can tell you within minutes if they meet our guidelines. If so, the pro bono case is opened and automatically "referred" back to you.

Pro Bono Partnerships



LASMNY frequently partners with local bar associations, universities, and other service providers. Some recent collaborations include:

- American Civic Association - Immigration Forum
- Binghamton U. - Student Internship Program
- Binghamton Vet Center -Talk to a Lawyer Series
- Broome Co. Bar Assoc. - Senior Legal Clinics
- Colgate U.-Bankruptcy Consumer Project
- Crime Victims Assist. Center-Immigration Clinics
- Onondaga Bar Assoc. - Elder Law Fair
- Onondaga Bar Assoc. - Pro Se Divorce Clinics
- Utica Veterans Center - Pro Bono Advice Clinics



Contact Us

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