



Pro Bono Policy

Adopted 26 June 2009

1. The Law Society encourages its members to provide pro bono legal services as part of their wider professional responsibility as legal practitioners and confirms that the conduct of pro bono work has been, and continues to be, part of practice traditionally adopted by the legal profession.

2. Pro bono legal services involve:

(a) the exercise of professional legal skills at no fee or at a substantially reduced fee to:

- individuals who can demonstrate a need for legal assistance but cannot obtain legal aid or otherwise access the legal system without incurring significant financial hardship or other relevant hardship; or
- individuals or organisations whose matter raises an issue of public interest which would not otherwise be pursued; or
- charities or other non-profit organisations which work on behalf of low income or disadvantaged members of the community or for the public good;

(b) conducting law reform and policy work on issues affecting low income or disadvantaged members of the community, or on issues of public interest;

(c) participating in the provision of free community legal education on issues affecting low income or disadvantaged members of the community or on issues of public interest; or

(d) providing a lawyer on secondment at a community organisation (including a community legal organisation) or at a referral service provider such as a Public Interest Law Clearing House.

3. Pro bono practice is a voluntary activity. The Law Society notes that the National Pro Bono Resource Centre has an aspirational target of at least 35 hours pro bono work per year.

4. Members of the Law Society are encouraged to participate in the Law Society Pro Bono Referral Scheme.

5. Pro bono legal services are not a substitute for the proper funding by government of Legal Aid agencies, Community Legal Centres and other government funded legal services. The promotion of pro bono legal services should not lead to a reduction of legal aid or to a failure by government to properly fund Legal Aid, Community Legal Centres and other government funded legal services.