



The Pro Bono Pledge

I recognize the obligation of lawyers to seek improvement of the law, access to the legal system, the administration of justice and the quality of service rendered by the legal profession.¹ In keeping with this professional obligation, I pledge that I will volunteer a minimum of 50 hours² of law-related service to the community while I am a student at Duke Law School. I understand that this service can be performed through the Pro Bono Project (including the Southern Justice Spring Break Mission Trip and other organized pro bono efforts during the academic year that are recognized by the Office of Public Interest and Pro Bono), or through participation in Duke Law School clinical courses.

Printed Name

Date

Signature

Year of Graduation

Placement or Clinic

Semester/Year

Hours

This pledge will be kept on file in the Duke Law School Office of Public Interest and Pro Bono. Please be sure that your volunteer time is kept current and accurately reflected. Until this pledge is met, you will be periodically contacted by the Office.

¹The Preamble to the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct, paragraph 5, states:

As a public citizen, a lawyer should seek improvement of the law, access to the legal system, the administration of justice and the quality of service rendered by the legal profession. As a member of a learned profession, a lawyer should cultivate knowledge of the law beyond its use for clients, employ that knowledge in reform of the law and work to strengthen legal education. In addition, a lawyer should further the public's understanding of and confidence in the rule of law and the justice system because legal institutions in a constitutional democracy depend on popular participation and support to maintain their authority. A lawyer should be mindful of deficiencies in the administration of justice and of the fact that the poor, and sometimes persons who are not poor, cannot afford adequate legal assistance. Therefore, all lawyers should devote professional time, resources and civic influence to ensure equal access to our system of justice for all those who because of economic or social barriers cannot afford or secure adequate legal counsel. A lawyer should aid the legal profession in pursuing these objectives and should help the bar regulate itself in the public interest.

²Rule 6.1 of the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct states, in part: "Every lawyer has a professional responsibility to provide legal services to those unable to pay. A lawyer should aspire to render at least (50) hours of pro bono publico legal services per year." Although our pledge is more modest, many Duke Law students have met the more ambitious ABA goal and a few have well exceeded it.