



Statement of Principles for The Chicago Bar Foundation Law Firm Leadership Circle

As a profession, lawyers have a special responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to our justice system. Fulfilling that responsibility requires contributions of time and money as well as a strategic use of the influence lawyers have in our community. By committing to this Statement of Principles and becoming part of *The Chicago Bar Foundation Law Firm Leadership Circle*, law firms demonstrate their leadership and make a critical investment in the future of our profession and our system of justice.

- 1. Provide Financial Support for Pro Bono, Legal Aid and Access to Justice**
 - We will make financial support for legal aid and related access to justice initiatives a priority within our firm's overall charitable giving.
 - Specifically, our firm will annually contribute a combined amount equal to at least \$300 per attorney in our Chicago office to support legal aid and public interest law organizations serving the Chicago area. Recognizing that this is a minimum threshold that many firms already exceed, our firm will aspire to contribute at higher levels, with the **Gold** (\$600 per attorney) and **Platinum** (\$1000 per attorney) giving levels as aspirational goals.
 - Above and beyond the firm's other contributions, we also will participate in The Chicago Bar Foundation's annual *Investing in Justice Campaign*; encourage lawyers in the firm to contribute to the *Campaign*; and match, in whole or in part, *Campaign* contributions from individual lawyers in the firm.

- 2. Adopt Written Policies and Practices to Encourage and Support Pro Bono Work**
 - We will adopt and periodically distribute written policies that encourage each attorney in the firm to provide pro bono legal services, adopt practices that encourage our lawyers to do pro bono work, and provide our lawyers with credit for compensation and/or advancement purposes for pro bono work.
 - Specifically, our firm will encourage each lawyer in the firm to devote at least 35 hours per year to pro bono work. Recognizing that this is a minimum threshold that many firms already exceed, our firm will consider policies with higher hourly targets for pro bono work, with the **Gold** (50 hours or more per attorney) and **Platinum** (50+ hours per attorney) levels as aspirational goals.
 - We will consider a full-time attorney position devoted to leading and coordinating the firm's pro bono and public interest activities, or adopt an alternative structure that underscores the firm's commitment to pro bono and provides meaningful support to our attorneys for pro bono work.

3. **Adopt Additional Policies and Practices to Support Legal Aid and Access to Justice**
 - a. **Maximize Income from the Firm’s IOLTA Accounts**
 - We will maximize the use of *IOLTA* accounts within the firm in accordance with the Illinois Supreme Court Rules and advocate with our bank(s) to maximize interest rates payable on these accounts.
 - b. **Advocate for Adequate Government Funding for Legal Aid and Access to Justice**
 - We will support advocacy efforts at the federal, state, and local levels dedicated to ensuring adequate funding for legal aid and access to justice.
 - c. **Promote Cy Pres Awards for Pro Bono, Legal Aid, and Access to Justice**
 - We will encourage our attorneys to advocate for cy pres awards to go to support pro bono, legal aid, and access to justice initiatives when there are opportunities to do so.
 - d. **Provide Marketing, Training and Administrative Support for Legal Aid and Public Interest Law Organizations to the Extent Practicable**
 - To the extent practicable, we will make approved CLE programs available to legal aid and public interest attorneys; provide marketing, administrative and legal support for legal aid and public interest law organizations; host meetings and events for these organizations; and encourage the firm’s vendors to provide pro bono support to these organizations.
 - e. **Support Public Interest Law Internships, Fellowships and Rotations Where Practicable**
 - We will support *Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI)* Fellowships to the extent practicable and will strive to sponsor at least one *PILI* Internship each year.
 - We will consider adopting paid rotation programs that allow our attorneys up to one year working at a local legal aid or public interest law organization.
 - We will consider sponsoring public interest law fellowships through Equal Justice Works or similar programs.

Our firm commits to this Statement of Principles for the Chicago Bar Foundation Law Firm Leadership Circle

Firm: _____

Signed: _____

Name (print) and Title: _____

Date: _____

(Optional)

Our Firm Commits to Meeting the Criteria for the Gold Level of the Leadership Circle _____

Our Firm Commits to Meeting the Criteria for the Platinum Level of the Leadership Circle _____

For more information about the Law Firm Leadership Circle and Statement of Principles, please contact CBF Executive Director Bob Glaves at (312) 554-1205 or bglaves@chicagobar.org.