

# 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.illinoislegalaid.org](http://www.illinoislegalaid.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](mailto:ainzano@chicagobar.org) or 312-554-4952. Keep in mind that these are pro bono opportunities and that most organizations also have internship opportunities.

## HOTLINE VOLUNTEER

First Defense Legal Aid (FDLA) seeks volunteers to provide high quality pro bono legal representation to low-income adults and children arrested at Chicago police stations and suburban Cook County stations for some juvenile suspects. Operators answer a 24-hour hotline and call the volunteers when needed to represent people at the police station during their shift. Representation is limited to the station visit. Later, a public defender is appointed. Volunteers may help clients assert their Fourth Amendment right not to consent to a search, Fifth Amendment right to remain silent and Sixth Amendment right to counsel, interview witnesses, view line-ups, and protect clients from police misconduct.

**Organization:** First Defense Legal Aid ([www.first-defense.org](http://www.first-defense.org))

**Practice areas:** Criminal law

**Opportunity type:** Legal on call station house representation

**Skills acquired:** Client counseling, client/witness interviewing, client representation

**Skills required:** No criminal defense experience is required; all attorneys are competent to handle this matter after the training provided. Law students and graduates that are eligible for a 711 license may also volunteer.

**Time commitment:** Completion of the required training (2 hrs.). Volunteers are then asked to commit to two, 4-hour on-call shifts per month.

**Contact:** Email [volunteer@first-defense.org](mailto:volunteer@first-defense.org) with the subject line VOLUNTEER INQUIRY

**Training and support:** Volunteers are required to attend a 2-hour training about the rights of detained individuals. In-person trainings are

offered twice per month and are available via recorded webcast. Licensed attorneys are available to answer questions during all volunteer shifts.

## EMERGENCY SERVICES VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Emergency Services volunteers provide brief services for litigants filing civil Orders of Protection. Volunteers conduct interviews, complete pleadings, and draft affidavits. Volunteers also thoroughly explain the court process and may accompany litigants to court to provide support. Volunteers do not provide representation and there is no ongoing case commitment. This opportunity is open to attorneys, students, and other legal professionals.

**Organization:** Domestic Violence Legal Clinic ([www.dvlcchicago.org](http://www.dvlcchicago.org))

**Practice area:** Domestic violence

**Opportunity type:** Litigation

**Skills acquired:** Interview, drafting pleadings

**Skills required:** All volunteers are competent to handle this matter after the training provided. Spanish or other language fluency is helpful but is not required.

**Time commitment:** Completion of a 2.5-hour formal training and then one 4-hour shift per week (students) or month (attorneys and legal professionals).

**Contact:** Cheryl DeMichele Price at [cprice@dvlcchicago.org](mailto:cprice@dvlcchicago.org) or 312.325.9155. Please submit a resume and short statement as to why you're interested in volunteering.

**Training and support:** DVLC provides formal training and ongoing supervision and support for our volunteers.

## LIVEHELP OPERATOR

The LiveHelp Program is a chat service that allows people looking for legal information and self-help resources on [IllinoisLegalAid.org](http://IllinoisLegalAid.org) to ask a remotely located LiveHelp volunteer for assistance in navigating the website. LiveHelp Operators empower more than 600 low-income [IllinoisLegalAid.org](http://IllinoisLegalAid.org) visitors a month to resolve their own legal issues when they can't find or afford an attorney. 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.

**Organization:** Illinois Legal Aid Online ([www.illinoislegalaid.org](http://www.illinoislegalaid.org))

**Practice areas:** All areas

**Opportunity type:** Non-representation, educating the public about the law, technology

**Skills acquired:** subject matter experience

**Skills required:** All volunteers are competent to handle this matter after the training provided.

**Time commitment:** Completion of the required training (2 hrs.), then 2 hours per week.

**Contact:** Tevin Williams at [livehelp@illinoislegalaid.org](mailto:livehelp@illinoislegalaid.org) or 312-977-9047, ext. 26 to request training materials or to sign-up for an in-person training.

**Training and support:** Volunteers must attend a 2-hour orientation and conduct a 30-minute "practice chat" with the LiveHelp Program Coordinator prior to volunteering. The Coordinator provides volunteers with ongoing support.