

# Columbia Law School Pro Bono Program

## STUDENT-INITIATED PETITION

**Filing Instructions:**

**What:** A Student-Initiated Petition must be completed for pro bono placements that are not “established,” (meaning they are not listed as an in-house project or in the LawNet database). Please read our FAQs for additional situations in which a Student-Initiated Petition is required. Please email [probono@law.columbia.edu](mailto:probono@law.columbia.edu) if you are unsure whether you need a Petition.

**When:** A Student-Initiated Petition must be filed *before you begin* pro bono service at this placement.

**Where:** Submit forms to [probono@law.columbia.edu](mailto:probono@law.columbia.edu) or in person to Social Justice Initiatives on the 8th floor of William and June Warren Hall (Big Warren). If you have any questions, call (212) 854-3318 or email [probono@law.columbia.edu](mailto:probono@law.columbia.edu).

**Group Petitions:** If the proposed project is to be performed by more than one student, the entire group should submit a single petition with a list of all participants attached. The group should designate a representative for the purposes of contact with SJI.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class/Grad Year:** \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

If this is a Group Petition, please attach a list of all participating students’ names.

**Name of Organization/Department/Firm for which you are seeking approval:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervising Attorney: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Task Supervisor (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Organization/Department/Firm** Please attach brochures/other written material and include website:

**Project Description** Please be specific about what you will be doing. If you are performing research, please explain how this research will be put to use. Attach extra pages if needed:

**Expected Start Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Number of Hours Committed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Compliance with Pro Bono Guidelines:**

For more information, visit [law.columbia.edu/social-justice/pro-bono](http://law.columbia.edu/social-justice/pro-bono)

A pro bono project is in compliance with Columbia’s Pro Bono Guidelines if it is:

- 1. Law-related.** The project requires knowledge of the law and skills learned in law school for completion.
- 2. Supervised by an attorney** (either directly or indirectly). The attorney should be available to answer questions related to the project, provide guidance as needed, and must sign off on the final work product.
- 3. In the public interest.** Examples include work that helps those who are underrepresented, educates the public about the law, or deals with an issue of public importance from any side of the political spectrum.
- 4. Uncompensated.** Students may not receive any form of financial remuneration (salary, stipend, grant, etc.) or academic credit (writing or other) for work associated with this project. If the work is being supervised through a clinic, the Professor must indicate that s/he is not currently enrolled in the clinic, or provide confirmation that the pro bono project is separate from the work required to receive academic credit. If the work is being done in a law firm, s/he may not receive pro bono credit for work done during a week in which s/he is being paid. Work done on behalf of paying clients at a law firm will not qualify for pro bono credit.

Please describe in detail the ways in which your project satisfies requirements 1-4. Attach extra pages if needed:

**Please have the Supervising Attorney review and sign the following statement. Petitions will not be approved without the signature of the Supervising Attorney.**

I acknowledge that \_\_\_\_\_ (name of student) is not an attorney who has been admitted to the bar and, as such, cannot represent or provide legal advice to \_\_\_\_\_ (name of organization/department/firm) or to its clients. The aforementioned organization/department/firm and its clients will not rely on the student’s work product in taking any action or forbearing from any actions that may subject the organization/department/firm, or its clients, to legal process.

Supervising Attorney’s Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by Social Justice Initiatives at Columbia Law School:**

Date Petition Filed with SJI: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Pro Bono Program Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_