

# PRO BONO PARTNERSHIP

## A Client Who “Feeds My Soul”: Why You, Too, Should Do Transactional Pro Bono

By Nancy Eberhardt

Do you wonder how your colleagues find time for pro bono projects or question if pro bono opportunities for transactional attorneys even exist? Pro Bono Partnership (the Partnership) answers yes to both. The Partnership is a 501(c)(3) organization that was founded 22 years ago with the goal of making it easy and enjoyable for in-house and law firm attorneys to provide valuable pro bono services to nonprofits in their communities.



practitioner and volunteer since 2014, the *EASL Journal's* editor, Elissa D. Hecker, Esq., recently commented:

Pro Bono Partnership brings volunteering opportunities directly to my inbox. I look forward to the emails detailing what wonderful organizations need assistance that I can provide. The Partnership finds and screens the nonprofits, lists matters by practice area, location, and cause, and makes it incredibly easy for me to take projects that are within my areas of interest and expertise. The nonprofits I've worked with are so appreciative, the work is really gratifying, and often long-term relationships are created. I have also come to know and appreciate the Partnership staff attorneys, who are excellent. The fact that I'm indirectly helping hundreds or even thousands of people served by my nonprofit clients feeds my soul.

### Making an Impact in Our Communities

The Partnership's clients are charitable organizations that serve the disadvantaged and enhance the quality of life in our tristate-area neighborhoods by feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, promoting the arts, protecting the environment, and providing essential programs to children, the elderly, the disabled, and the unemployed. These nonprofits have the same business legal needs as for-profit entities. However, many choose to forgo legal advice because they are unable to pay for legal services without significantly impacting resources for programs.

### One-Stop Resource for Transactional Pro Bono Opportunities

The Partnership addresses the legal needs of almost 900 nonprofit clients each year by partnering with more than 1,400 volunteer attorneys who provide top-notch pro bono business legal services to these organizations. Our in-house legal team, with expertise in nonprofit law, carefully screens each nonprofit client and identifies each organization's legal issues, recruits volunteer attorneys from major corporations, law firms, and solo practitioners to work on the identified projects, and works closely with the volunteer attorneys on the project.

Together, the Partnership and our pool of volunteers help area nonprofits increase their effectiveness and minimize risks. This work has an enormous positive impact for our clients, their constituents, and our communities. It makes quite an impression on volunteers as well. As solo

### Transactional Pro Bono That Is Meaningful and Manageable

Volunteer attorneys are not asked to handle all of a client's legal needs. Rather, a volunteer takes on an individual project that is within his, her, or their existing area of expertise. The Partnership volunteer attorneys typically handle the same types of matters that they deal with in their daily practices: contracts, employment law, intellectual property, and other non-litigation-based projects. Many projects take a few hours or less to complete, and the benefit it has for nonprofit organizations is lasting and immeasurable.

The Partnership's volunteer opportunities are uniquely structured to satisfy not only the volunteer's area of expertise, but also the needs of busy in-house and law firm lawyers:

- Clients and matters are thoroughly screened.
- As we do not handle litigation, most projects are discrete, manageable, and not time-sensitive.
- Projects can be completed remotely, from your desk.

- Every project is coordinated and overseen by a Partnership staff attorney experienced in nonprofit law.
- Model documents, training, and other resources are available as needed.
- Where appropriate, counsel can work together as a team – with colleagues and/or with lawyers from outside firms.
- The Partnership provides liability insurance coverage for our volunteer attorneys as needed.

### It's Easy to Get Started

Current volunteer opportunities can be viewed at <https://www.probonopartner.org/attorneys-volunteers/volunteer-opportunities/>, or email [volunteer@probonopartner.org](mailto:volunteer@probonopartner.org) to receive opportunities in your inbox bi-weekly. You can sort opportunities by location, practice area, or type of organization to quickly find what interests you most. Signing up to receive information, or even indicating your interest in an opportunity, does not obligate you to take on a matter.

To learn more about becoming a Pro Bono Partner volunteer, visit <https://www.probonopartner.org/attorneys-volunteers/become-volunteer-attorney/>.

### Spread the Word About Accessible Transactional Pro Bono

I hope you'll help me raise awareness about the much needed, widely available, and easy-to-access transactional pro bono opportunities that will, indeed, make our neighborhoods better places to live. Please pass along the [probonopartner.org](http://probonopartner.org) website to a few colleagues, sign up for our emails, complete the form to become a volunteer attorney, or share our posts on social media. I know from experience that any and all of these things will be a valuable use of your time, so thank you in advance.

**Nancy Eberhardt is the Executive Director of Pro Bono Partnership ([www.probonopartner.org](http://www.probonopartner.org)). She is responsible for advancing the mission of the organization and leading the staff and legal programs. Nancy's bio is available at <https://www.probonopartner.org/about/staff/nancy-eberhardt/>.**

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