

## **SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT PRO BONO PLAN**

*Revised May 2024*

**I. Introduction:** The Second Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee (the “Committee”) is tasked with designing and implementing a Pro Bono Plan (the “Plan”) in association with Administrative Order NO. 2013-10. The intent of this Plan is to provide guidance and framework for the Committee pursuant to 4-6.5(c) of the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar. The Plan aims to fulfill the pro bono legal needs of the Second Judicial Circuit (the “Circuit”) and enable the lawyers of the Circuit to easily fulfill their ethical obligations as set forth in Rule 4-6 of the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar, and to comply with the Florida Supreme Court’s order establishing judicial circuit pro bono committees. *In Re Amendments to Rules Regulating The Florida Bar – 1- 3.1(a) and Rules of Judicial Administration – 2.065 (Legal Aid)*, 630 So.2d 501(Fla. 1993). The State Pro Bono Plan and its definitions are incorporated by reference herein. The Rules referred to herein are the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar. The term “pro bono legal services” is not limited to the actual in-court handling of a case. It also includes, but is not limited to, the following: services for or on behalf of the guardian ad litem; community legal education to eligible client groups; participating in client intake and conducting interviews of eligible clients; participating in pro se clinics, mentoring or assisting other attorneys in pro bono matters; and presenting legal seminars designed to train attorneys and staff as to handle pro bono cases.

**II. Purposes:** The Plan’s purposes are to: (1) assure the continuation of existing Supreme Court approved pro bono opportunities within the Circuit; (2) increase the availability of legal services to the poor and indigent by recruiting pro bono volunteers and supporting pro bono programs within the Circuit; (3) increase the variety of pro bono opportunities available to lawyers to provide pro bono legal services to the poor and indigent; (4) improve the support offered to lawyers who provide pro bono legal services to the low income and indigent; (5) foster collaborative relationships among the Courts, pro bono attorneys and organizations providing pro bono services; and (6) recognize the pro bono efforts of attorneys, staff, organizations other individuals instrumental in achieving the goals of the Plan.

**III. Committee Makeup:** The Chief Judge of the Circuit shall designate the composition of the Committee, which shall consist of individuals and representatives of organizations which shall be specified within the Administrative Orders of the Chief Judge. Pursuant to such Administrative Orders, the composition of the Committee may be revised from time to time. As of the Effective Date of this Plan, Administrative Order 2013-10 Second Amendment is the most recent Administrative Order addressing the Committee, which lists the members of the Committee as of the Effective Date of the Order and is attached as Exhibit A hereto and is incorporated by this reference. If new Administrative Orders are issued with respect to the Committee, each such order shall replace the prior order and shall be substituted as Exhibit A.

A. The Chief Judge or the Chief Judge’s Designee shall appoint the Chair and/or Co-Chairs of the Committee at their discretion as is appropriate for the Circuit.

B. The Chair of the Committee may appoint coordinators or sub-committee chairs to address certain needs of the Committee.

C. Replacement and succession members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Chief Judge or the Chief Judge's designee, upon nomination by the association, the provider organization, or the Committee as deemed appropriate or necessary to ensure an active Committee.

**IV. Functions of the Committee:** The Committee will work to meet the pro bono needs of the Circuit by; (1) recruiting pro bono volunteers to increase the level of legal services available to low income and indigent individuals within the Circuit; (2) mobilizing community support for pro bono services; (3) fostering collaborative relationships to promote pro bono services within the Circuit; (4) soliciting input regarding pro bono needs from the community at large and from organizations that serve low income and indigent individuals; (5) recognizing attorneys, staff, organizations other individuals instrumental in achieving the goals of the Plan. The Committee will perform all of the reporting functions set forth in the Rules.

**V. Needs Assessment and Monitoring by the Committee:** The Committee is responsible for assessing the civil legal needs of low income and indigent individuals within the Circuit, for establishing case-acceptance priorities, and for monitoring the needs of pro bono service organizations in the Circuit. The priorities shall be in writing. The Committee shall monitor and evaluate the activities, results, and costs of the Plan. The Committee will have policy-making authority, and will conduct regular reviews of the Plan's substantive, administrative and financial performance. The Committee will also recommend the new pro bono opportunities, which can be implemented as resources allow. In assessing needs and setting priorities, the Committee shall consider all services and programs currently in place to meet the civil legal needs of the poor. The goal is to avoid duplication of programs. The Committee shall maintain an active and updated list of organizations in the Circuit which such legal services. If resources permit, the Committee may direct that a Client Needs Survey be conducted.

**VI. Annual Report:** The Committee shall submit to The Florida Bar Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services, the annual report described in Rule 4- 6.5(c)(2). The Administrator, on behalf of the Committee, will submit the annual report after conducting an assessment of attorney pro bono participation during the preceding year and such annual report shall include a plan for carrying out the pro bono plan in the coming year.

**VII. Meetings:** The Committee shall meet at least quarterly to consider and review the Plan, to monitor the success of the Plan, to oversee and allocate funding, and to make recommendations on the community's needs, the possible resources available to meet those needs, and a long-term plan to fulfill the legal profession's obligation to its community. Officers, coordinators and/or sub-committee heads, may meet more frequently as needed to assist the Committee in fulfilling its responsibilities.

**VIII. Training:** The Committee will sponsor or publicize training events to prepare attorneys to handle cases outside their areas of expertise. Experienced judges and attorneys will have the opportunity to teach at seminars since it may be necessary to train attorneys to handle cases outside of their areas of expertise. The Committee will coordinate with LAF, LSNF and other organizations with respect to joint Continuing Legal Education related to pro bono and volunteer topics. The Committee may form a training coordination group within the membership of the Committee.

**IX. Recognition of Pro Bono Efforts:** The Committee has the option to publicly recognize the pro bono services of lawyers, staff, organizations and/or other individuals who assist in the development, implementation, and continuation of the Plan. The implementation of recognition under this subsection requires a majority vote by the active members of the Committee and the details of such recognition may be determined at the Committee's discretion.