NKU CHASE COLLEGE OF LAW

THE PRO BONO SERVICE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

Why the Pro Bono Requirement:

Public service is a fundamental aspect of the role of lawyers as members of a public profession. Lawyers have an obligation to work *pro bono publico* – for the public good – by rendering some legal services without fee. NKU Chase College of Law is committed to pro bono service as a fundamental aspect of preparing future lawyers. The Pro Bono Service Program at Chase provides students with a vehicle to gain legal skills, exposes them to substantive areas of the law, and enhances their contact with the legal community.

The Requirement:

Effective May 2021, as a prerequisite for graduation, all students must complete 30 hours of pro bono service during their law school tenure. Students may satisfy the hourly requirement at one placement site, or may satisfy the requirement with several different projects involving fewer than 30 hours, so long as they ultimately complete a total of 30 hours of pro bono service. Thirty (30) hours is a minimum requirement; students are encouraged to perform additional hours if they so choose.

Note for Students Who Enrolled at the Law School Prior to May 2021:

Students who enrolled at the College of Law prior to May 2021 may elect to be governed by the 30-hour pro bono service graduation requirement applicable to students who first enrolled at the law school in May 2021 and thereafter. Students who make this election may use any pro bono hours previously recorded toward the 30-hour requirement but only if those hours meet the definition of **law-related work** as defined below.

Timing for Completion:

The 30-hour requirement will generally be completed after the student's first year of law school, although first year students may engage in pro bono service during the spring semester. Many placements will only be open to and appropriate for students who have completed their first year of law school.

The weekly hourly requirements will vary depending on the placement and the type of project. Students are under no obligation to accept an assignment requiring more than 30 hours of service. However, students must complete the project and the number of hours they agreed to perform in order to receive credit towards the pro bono requirement.

Every student must complete the pro bono requirement prior to his/her anticipated graduation date. Students will not be certified for graduation until the pro bono requirement is completed, and so will not be able to sit for a bar examination.

Definition of Pro Bono Work:

Pro bono work is broadly defined as **law-related work** performed:

1. In public interest or pro bono organizations, or other non-profit organizations.
2. In the public sector (governments, legislatures and courts).
3. With private practitioners or law firms when the work is performed at no cost or at a reduced fee on behalf of underrepresented clients (e.g., volunteer lawyer cases).

In addition, the work performed by the student must be uncompensated and not for academic credit, and must be performed at an approved placement site.

Supervision Required:

Student pro bono work must generally be supervised by an attorney, judge, or faculty member. Students performing work involving direct client representation and litigation must be supervised by a licensed attorney. Students who do advocacy work on behalf of a non-profit organization may be supervised by an advocate with expertise in the relevant subject matter. Student work with legislators and policymakers must be confined to research on policy and legislative matters. Student work for non-profits and legislators/policymakers may not be used as a substitute for consultation with legal counsel. All approved pro bono placement sites will have a designated supervisor for the student assignment.

Approved Organizations for Pro Bono Placements:

Students perform their pro bono work with organizations that have been approved by the Coordinator of the Pro Bono Project. The following types of organizations are pre-approved:

- Legal Aid societies
- Public Defender offices
- Public interest law firms
- Government law offices
- Judicial clerkships
- Faculty based pro bono projects
- Law-related education
- Courts/judges
- Volunteer Lawyer Project pro bono cases being handled by private attorneys
- Externship placements sites (with the exception of for-profit organizations)

If students wish to complete pro bono work with an organization that is (i) not on the approved list or (ii) not one of the pre-approved types of organizations, students may request approval of an opportunity at another organization by submitting the placement for approval in their Chase Connect Experiential Learning profile. (see instructions in the Pro Bono How-To list at the end of this document for information).

Types of Work and Assignments:

Students can perform a broad range of law-related work including:

- community legal education
- client intake
- client interviews
- preparing a case for trial
- assisting attorneys in a trial or appeal
- factual investigation
- legal research and writing
- legislative and policy analysis
- preparing law related documents

Students cannot receive pro bono credit for clerical work, event planning, or fundraising activities. Travel time to and from a placement is generally not counted toward the 30-hour requirement. For approval in exceptional circumstances contact Kathy Kelly, Pro Bono Project Coordinator.

Training:

Up to 5 hours of training necessary to work at a particular placement can be credited toward the 30-hour requirement. Some placements will require much more training than others. The approximate number of training hours required will be indicated in the organization's placement opportunity information.

Uncompensated Requirement:

"Uncompensated" means that the student receives no monetary compensation or academic credit for work done to satisfy the pro bono requirement. To ensure that work credited toward the pro bono requirement is distinguished from work receiving compensation or academic credit, the following rules will apply:

1. *Pro bono work related to employment*: If a student is employed by an approved placement site, work performed by the student may qualify for pro bono credit only if the student is compensated on an hourly basis and receives no compensation for the work for which pro bono credit is sought. Any additional hours counted as pro bono work must be registered and logged as an approved pro bono opportunity.

2. *Pro bono work related to a clinical course or externship*: If a student has worked in a clinical course or in an externship program at an approved pro bono placement site, additional work performed by the student at that placement site may qualify for pro bono credit only if that work is in addition to the work required in satisfaction of the externship/clinic. Any additional hours counted as pro bono work must be registered and logged as an approved pro bono opportunity.

3. *Pro bono work for a faculty member*: Work provided under the auspices of a faculty member relating to a pro bono project may qualify for pro bono credit if that work is not performed by a student for academic credit or compensation.

4. *Pro bono work related to a funded public interest fellowship*: Work provided under the auspices of a funded public interest fellowship may qualify for pro bono credit only if the work is in addition to

the work that the student is expected or required to complete in fulfillment of the fellowship. Any additional hours counted as pro bono work must be registered and logged as an approved pro bono opportunity.

Placement Process:

1. A student selects an approved organization (see "Approved Organizations for Pro Bono Placements" section on page 2 of this handbook for pre-approved types of opportunities). The student then calls or emails the contact person at the organization to express interest in a pro bono opportunity.

2. Alternatively, the student may submit for approval through Chase Connect, a pro bono project at an organization not listed as an approved placement site. See instructions in the Pro Bono How-To list at the end of this document for information on how to submit a placement for approval. Students must receive approval before the work begins.

3. A student in need of assistance in finding or choosing a pro bono placement should set up an advising appointment with the Pro Bono Project Coordinator, Kathy Kelly at 859-572-7853 or kellyk3@nku.edu.

4. After the student verifies that an approved placement is available and of interest (or obtains approval of a student-initiated placement), the student must create and submit the pro bono experience in their Chase Connect profile (see instructions in the Pro Bono How-To list at the end of this document) and have the placement approved by the Career Development Office.

5. The student keeps a Log of Hours as he/she works on the project using Chase Connect (see instructions in the Pro Bono How-To list at the end of this document). Hours may not be logged until the pro bono placement has been approved by Kathy Kelly, Pro Bono Coordinator.

6. Upon completion of the pro bono project, the student (i) asks the placement supervisor to complete a Supervisor Evaluation form and ensures the signed evaluation has been received by Kathy Kelly; and (ii) completes the Student Evaluation form in Chase Connect (see instructions in the Pro Bono How-To list at the end of this document).

7. When the student has completed all registration and reporting requirements (and all are approved) and has completed all 30 hours of pro bono service, a notation indicating that the pro bono requirement has been met will be made on the student's transcript.

Pro Bono Service Program Student's Role and Responsibilities

- ***Securing an Appropriate Placement.*** Students should select an approved placement or initiate a new placement based on their interests and schedule availability. By ensuring that the pro bono placement is a good fit, a student will receive the most benefit from the opportunity.

- ***Initial Meeting with Supervisor.*** Students are responsible for arranging an initial meeting or phone call with the supervisor to discuss the assignment and working arrangements in detail. If the placement is determined to be agreeable to both student and supervisor, the student must create and submit the pro bono experience in Chase Connect.

- ***Confidentiality.*** All work performed for client cases is protected under attorney/client privilege and shall be kept confidential. Students may discuss client case work only with the supervisor or other members of the legal team working on the case.

- ***Professionalism.*** Students should perform all work in a timely and professional manner. If any circumstances prevent the satisfactory completion of a project, the student should immediately consult with the supervisor and the Pro Bono Coordinator.

- ***Conflicts of Interest.*** The student should identify and address any potential or actual conflicts of interest with the assignment and the placement prior to beginning work. The student should contact the supervisor and the Pro Bono Project Coordinator if questions arise regarding conflicts of interest while working on the project.

- ***Academic Conduct.*** Students shall comply with all requirements, policies and responsibilities prescribed by the NKU Chase College of Law Honor Code and the NKU Student Code of Conduct.

- ***Completion of forms/information.*** It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all information (including initial registration form, hours worked, evaluation forms, etc.) is properly entered into Chase Connect and all required forms have been received by the Pro Bono Service Program office. Students should keep a copy of all forms for their own records. Opportunities must be registered and information completed at the time the hours are completed. **All pro bono information must be completed by graduation; students who have not completed the pro bono graduation requirement are unable to sit for a bar examination.**

Pro Bono Service Program Supervisor's Role and Responsibilities

- ***Initial Meeting with Student.*** The supervisor should meet or speak with the student to discuss the assignment, expectations for the student, hours required and work schedule. If the supervisor and student determine that the placement is mutually agreeable, the supervisor should sign the Initial Pro Bono Registration Form (prepared by the student) which the student will return to the Pro Bono Service Program office.

- ***Training and Supervision.*** The supervisor is responsible for training and continued oversight of the student during his/her work on the pro bono assignment.

- ***Compensation and Expenses.*** Students may not receive any compensation for doing pro bono work. However, students should not incur any expenses related to a pro bono assignment such as copying costs or materials.

- ***Evaluation.*** The supervisor should meet with the student at the end of the assignment to discuss the student's work on the project. The supervisor should complete Supervisor Evaluation form which is available in the student's profile in Chase Connect.

- ***Problems or Concerns.*** Contact Kathy Kelly, 859-572-7853 or kellyk3@nku.edu with any issues or concerns relating to the student's performance or the pro bono program generally.

PRO BONO HOW-TO LIST

Overall Process

1. Create and submit pro bono experience in Chase Connect
2. Approval of placement
3. Add hours
4. Complete Student Evaluation of Placement
5. Complete Supervisor Evaluation of Student
6. Final Approval

Create your pro bono record

1. Access your student account in Chase Connect
2. Click **Experiential Learning** in the menu on the left
3. Click **New Experience** at the top right
4. Under the **Basics** section, select **Experiential Learning Type**, and then click **Pro Bono**
5. Complete required information
6. When all information has been entered, click **Save**. This action will take you to a preview of your pro bono experience before final submission
7. If you need to make edits to your record before submission, select **Action** at the top right and click **Edit**
8. If you do not need to make edits to your pro bono experience, click **Submit for Approval** at the top right
9. Once you have submitted your pro bono experience for approval, your status will change to **Pending Initial Approval** at the top of the page

Pending Initial Approval

10. Once the Career Development Office has approved your pro bono experience, your status will change to **In Progress**

In Progress

11. Now that your status is **In Progress**, you may enter your hours into the hour log

Add hours to your pro bono record

1. Once you have created your pro bono experience, you can add hours by clicking on the **Hour Log** tab at the top of the page
2. Under the **Hour Log** tab, click **Add Hours** at the top right and a new window will appear called **Create New Hour Log Entry**
3. Under **Create New Hour Log Entry**, enter the date, hours, and the description of your service
4. Once complete, click **Save** and the hours will be added to your pro bono experience
5. *Hours can only be entered on a daily basis. If you are recording hours weekly, put the date of the hours completed and then note the week (e.g. 8/26-8/30/19) in the description box along with your work performed.

Submitting placement for final approval

1. Once your pro bono placement has come to an end and you have logged all of your hours, you must complete the Evaluation and Information Form and share the Pro Bono Supervisor Evaluation of Student with your supervisor
    a. To complete the Evaluation and Information Form, click the ellipsis to the right and select **Complete Form**
    b. Once you click **Complete Form**, fill out all of the required fields and click **Save** when done
    c. When you click **Save**, the status of your selected evaluation will be changed to **Completed**
    d. To send the Pro Bono Supervisor Evaluation of Student to your supervisor, click the ellipsis to the right and select **Share**; the form will be sent to your supervisor to the email provided.
2. Once your supervisor completes the evaluation, the status will be changed to **Completed**
3. You may not submit your placement for final approval until both the Evaluation and Information Form and Pro Bono Supervisor Evaluation of Student forms are marked **Completed** in your profile.