

MANDATORY OR VOLUNTARY REPORTING OF PRO BONO HOURS

There is no universal rule in the United States regarding whether attorneys have to report their pro bono legal service. Some states have mandatory pro bono reporting, some states have voluntary pro bono reporting, and others have not implemented any procedure.

Currently, **twelve (12) U.S. states have a mandatory pro bono reporting requirement**, and **twenty-seven (27) U.S. jurisdictions** (26 states and the District of Columbia) **have voluntary pro bono reporting**.¹

Each jurisdiction makes its own determination about which system of reporting to implement, if any, either through a state rule or policy. Jurisdictions that have voluntary or mandatory reporting often ask attorneys to report their pro bono hours to the state bar with their annual attorney registration statements or license renewals. In some jurisdictions, the state access to justice commission, law foundation, pro bono resource center, or similar entities have a role in collecting data about pro bono hours.

An apparent difference between mandatory and voluntary reporting is that attorneys are subject to sanctions under a mandatory reporting regime if they fail to comply with deadlines. In a voluntary reporting jurisdiction, bar associations rely on an attorney's willingness to self-report hours for data collection. In some cases, the voluntary reporting is requested for purposes of qualifying the attorney for a "pro bono honor roll" or similar recognition.

The American Bar Association (ABA) has not taken a position on whether jurisdictions should implement mandatory or voluntary reporting. Rather, the ABA outlines the competing arguments for mandatory or voluntary reporting.²

A primary benefit of mandatory pro bono reporting is data collection; accurate and reliable data is integral for bookkeeping on a broader state-wide scale and a narrower individual attorney scale. Other positive considerations from mandatory reporting include increased access to justice/courts, attorney engagement in pro bono service, representation to poor communities, and compliance with an attorney's professional responsibility of pro bono contributions. Mandatory pro bono reporting has been shown to "create attorney and public awareness" as well as "narrow[] the gap between demand for free legal aid and its availability."³ Countervailing arguments against mandatory pro bono reporting include possible constitutional privacy rights violations, greater burden on attorneys, decreased pro bono activity, increased administrative costs and sanctions for noncompliance, and elimination of the pure motivation behind engaging in pro bono service.

A primary benefit of voluntary reporting of pro bono service is that it similarly achieves the

¹ Pro Bono Institute last updated this guide in October 2024.

² American Bar Association, "Pro Bono Reporting," https://www.americanbar.org/groups/probono_public_service/policy/arguments/.

³ Leslie Boyle, *Meeting the Demands of the Indigent Population: The Choice Between Mandatory and Voluntary Pro Bono Requirements*, *Geo. J Legal Ethics*, 415, 426 (2007).

outcomes from mandatory reporting but bypasses potential constitutional concerns. The optional reporting feature lessens the burden on attorneys but contributes less effectively to the broader goal of capturing pro bono service statistics. Voluntary reporting can produce some data collection, but the opposing argument raises the concern of low response rates that may lead to inconclusive information from an unrepresentative sample. Additionally, voluntary reporting may downplay the importance of an attorney's professional obligation to pro bono service because of its volitional nature.

Jurisdictions that have adopted a mechanism for either mandatory or voluntary reporting of pro bono hours can efficiently share information about attorneys' aggregate or average pro bono contributions, and monitor trends from year to year. Additionally, attorneys that meet or exceed their jurisdiction's pro bono service goals are often eligible for special recognition, in addition to the satisfaction that they met their ethical and professional obligation to represent pro bono clients who could otherwise not afford legal services.

Pro bono program leaders can remain aware of pro bono reporting rules impacting their firm or legal department's attorneys, to encourage colleagues both to engage in pro bono service, and to report their contributions.

The chart below reviews whether jurisdictions have mandatory pro bono reporting, voluntary pro bono reporting, or no reporting, for all fifty states and the District of Columbia. The chart contains a brief summary of the rule or policy on pro bono reporting, if any. (Please consult the rules for complete information.)

Summary of State Status on Voluntary or Mandatory Reporting of Pro Bono Hours

State	Mandatory or Voluntary Reporting	Rule	Rule or Policy Highlights
Alabama	Voluntary	No rule	Each year during Pro Bono Month the Alabama Access to Justice Commission and the Alabama Supreme Court will honor lawyers who provide 50 or more hours of qualified pro bono legal services under RPC 6.1. Attorneys may report their pro bono hours on the Alabama Law Foundation website. ⁴
Alaska	Neither	No rule	
Arizona	Voluntary	No rule	The State Bar of Arizona, in the Membership Fees Statement asks attorneys to enter any information regarding their pro bono legal services during the prior year. Providing this information is strictly voluntary and used only in the aggregate. ⁵
Arkansas	Voluntary	No rule	The Arkansas Access to Justice Commission gathers information about attorneys’ pro bono activities, such as their hours, for the purpose of assessing the provision of pro bono legal services in Arkansas. ⁶
California	Mandatory	CA AB 2505	CA AB 2505, passed into law in 2024, requires active members of the California State Bar to disclose annually whether they have provided pro bono legal services and certain other information through the licensee’s My State Bar online profile on the State Bar’s website.
Colorado	Voluntary	No rule	The Colorado Supreme Court, implementing RPC 6.1, recognizes those lawyers, law firms, and in-house counsel or government groups that have committed to the annual goal of providing 50 hours of pro bono legal services. Attorneys may report their hours by emailing the Access to Justice Coordinator. ⁷

⁴ Alabama Law Foundation, “Alabama Access to Justice Commission Pro Bono Public Service Recognition Program,” <https://www.alabamalawfoundation.org/reports-news/pro-bono-recognition-program/>.

⁵ State Bar of Arizona, “Membership Fee Statement Filing Instructions,” <https://www.azbar.org/licensing-compliance/membership-fees/membership-fee-statement-filing-instructions/>; “Frequently Asked Questions About Membership Fees,” <https://www.azbar.org/licensing-compliance/membership-fees/membership-fees-faqs/>.

⁶ Arkansas Judiciary, “Pro Bono Reporting Form,” https://attorneyinfo.aoc.arkansas.gov/info/Pro_Bono_Information.aspx.

⁷ Colorado Judicial Branch, “Recognition for Pro Bono Services,” <https://www.coloradojudicial.gov/recognition-pro-bono-services>. In 2022 the Colorado Access to Justice Commission proposed an amendment to Col. R. Civ. Proc. 227(A)(1)(b)(2)(a)(4) to require attorneys to annually report their pro bono hours in a confidential manner as

State	Mandatory or Voluntary Reporting	Rule	Rule or Policy Highlights
Connecticut	Voluntary	No rule	Connecticut's Free Legal Answers program invites attorneys to self-report their pro bono hours, including for consideration for state and national Pro Bono Recognition Awards. ⁸
Delaware	Neither	No rule	
District of Columbia	Voluntary	No rule	Attorneys may submit a declaration indicating that they provided 50 hours or more of pro bono work to be recognized on the Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll, or 100 hours or more to qualify for the High Honor Roll. ⁹
Florida	Mandatory	Fla. R. Prof'l Conduct 4-6.1(d)	Attorneys must report their pro bono hours on their annual membership fees statement as developed by the Florida Bar.
Georgia	Voluntary	No rule	Attorneys who have provided at least 50 pro bono service hours are requested to share their pro bono service hours with the State Bar of Georgia during each annual reporting period, and will appear on the state's Pro Bono Honor Roll. ¹⁰
Hawai'i	Mandatory	Haw. Sup. Ct. R. 17(d)(1)(B)	Attorneys shall file an attorney registration statement and provide required information to the Board of Directors, including hours of pro bono service, which will remain confidential and only reported in the aggregate.
Idaho	Neither	No rule	
Illinois	Mandatory	Ill. Sup. Ct. R. 756(f)	Attorneys shall report the approximate amount of pro bono legal service done during the preceding 12 months on the annual Illinois attorney annual registration fee statement.

part of their attorney registration information. *See* Colorado Access to Justice Commission, "2022 Access to Justice Commission Pro Bono Report,"

https://www.coloradoaccesstojustice.org/files/ugd/c659b2_ec0fae44f04021a9137e58f9bf9151.pdf. However, this proposal has not been adopted.

⁸ Connecticut Free Legal Answers, "Frequently Asked Questions from Volunteer Attorneys,"

<https://ct.freelegalanswers.org/AttorneyFAQ>. The Connecticut Public Service and Trust Commission Pro Bono Committee's 2014 report says, "as part of the annual electronic attorney registration process, the Pro Bono Committee once asked again registering Connecticut attorneys to voluntarily report their pro bono activities during the prior year." *See* State of Connecticut Judicial Branch, Public Service and Trust Commission Pro Bono Committee, "Annual Report," <https://www.jud.ct.gov/committees/pst/probono/ProBonoAnnualReport2014.pdf>. More recent information was not available online.

⁹ D.C. Access to Justice Commission, "Capital Pro Bono Honor Roll," <https://dcaccesstojustice.org/pro-bono-honor-roll/>.

¹⁰ State Bar of Georgia, "Pro Bono Awards and Recognitions," <https://www.gabar.org/programs/pro-bono-resource-center/pro-bono-awards-and-recognition>.

State	Mandatory or Voluntary Reporting	Rule	Rule or Policy Highlights
Indiana	Mandatory	Ind. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.7	Attorneys must report as part of their annual registration their hours of pro bono legal service and hours of services given for substantially reduced compensation during the prior calendar year. The information collected is confidential and will not be publicly disclosed.
Iowa	Voluntary	No rule	Each year lawyers have the opportunity to report on their annual report the number of hours of pro bono legal services they provide. The hours can be devoted to a charitable organization or directly to persons of limited means. ¹¹
Kansas	Voluntary	No rule	The Kansas Bar Association (KBA) invites members to record their pro bono hours in their KBA member profile, in an effort to learn more about the number of pro bono hours KBA members contribute each year. ¹²
Kentucky	Voluntary	No rule	Attorneys may report their pro bono hours on their annual dues statement furnished by the Kentucky Bar Association. ¹³
Louisiana	Voluntary	No rule	Attorneys may submit their pro bono hours from the prior 12 months online to the Louisiana State Bar Association via a Voluntary Pro Bono Reporting Form or in their online member account. ¹⁴
Maine	Voluntary	No rule	The State of Maine Judicial Branch established the Katahdin Counsel Recognition Program, to establish an annual process for recognizing and honoring the pro bono work of Maine's lawyers. Attorneys voluntarily report their pro bono hours and certify they have met the minimum 50-hour goal. ¹⁵

¹¹ Iowa Judicial branch, "Pro Bono Practice," <https://www.iowacourts.gov/opr/attorneys/attorney-practice/practice-information/pro-bono-practice>.

¹² Kansas Bar Association, "Pro Bono Opportunities," <https://ksbar.org/?pg=probono>.

¹³ Case Text, "Rule SCR 3.130(6.1) - Donated legal services," <https://casetext.com/rule/kentucky-court-rules/kentucky-rules-of-the-supreme-court/practice-of-law/rule-scr-3130-kentucky-rules-of-professional-conduct/rule-scr-313061-donated-legal-services>.

¹⁴ Louisiana State Bar Association, "Pro Bono Voluntary Reporting," <https://www.lsba.org/ProBono/ProBonoVoluntaryReporting.aspx>.

¹⁵ State of Maine Judicial Branch, "Katahdin Counsel Frequently Asked Questions," <https://www.courts.maine.gov/katahdin/faqs.html>.

State	Mandatory or Voluntary Reporting	Rule	Rule or Policy Highlights
Maryland	Mandatory	Md. R. Prof'l Conduct 19-503	Attorneys must submit a Pro Bono Legal Service Report via the Attorney Information System with their pro bono hours during the preceding fiscal year. The information collected is confidential.
Massachusetts	Voluntary	No rule	Administered by the Supreme Judicial Court Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services, the Pro Bono Honor Roll each year recognizes attorneys who do a minimum of 50 hours of pro bono during the prior year. Eligible attorneys or legal organizations may submit a Certification Form to verify their pro bono hours. ¹⁶
Michigan	Voluntary	No rule	Individual attorneys may submit a Pro Bono Honor Roll application to confirm they provided 30, 50, or 100+ hours of qualifying pro bono legal services in the prior calendar year. ¹⁷
Minnesota	Mandatory	Minn. Sup. Ct. Lawyer Registration R. 25	Attorneys must report their approximate pro bono hours for the preceding calendar year in their annual Lawyer Registration Statement.
Mississippi	Mandatory	Miss. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1(e)	Attorneys must annually certify if they have met their professional responsibility to provide pro bono legal services, including by reporting their pro bono hours on a form that is made part of the annual membership fees statement.
Missouri	Voluntary	No rule	The Missouri State Bar invites attorneys to voluntarily disclose their pro bono hours through the state bar website. Lawyers who complete 40 or more hours of pro bono work in a year are recognized on The Missouri Bar's Pro Bono Wall of Fame. ¹⁸
Montana	Voluntary	No rule	The State Bar of Montana and the Montana Supreme Court Office of the Court Administrator jointly manage the pro bono reporting process. Attorneys may voluntarily report their pro bono hours when they file their

¹⁶ Commonwealth of Massachusetts, "About the Pro Bono Honor Roll," <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/about-the-pro-bono-honor-roll>.

¹⁷ State Bar of Michigan, "2024 A Lawyer Helps Pro Bono Honor Roll," <https://www.michbar.org/alawyerhelps/honorroll>.

¹⁸ The Missouri Bar, "Celebrate Pro Bono with the Missouri Bar," <https://news.mobar.org/celebrate-pro-bono-with-the-missouri-bar/>; see also Missouri Free Legal Answers, "Attorney FAQ," <https://missouri.freelegalanswers.org/attorneyfaq>.

State	Mandatory or Voluntary Reporting	Rule	Rule or Policy Highlights
			mandatory annual Interest On Lawyers Trust Account (IOLTA) certification. ¹⁹
Nebraska	Neither	No rule	
Nevada	Mandatory	Nev. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1(b)	Attorneys must complete an Annual Pro Bono Reporting Form, which is provided to the Nevada State Bar on a form along with the member's fees statement.
New Hampshire	Neither	No rule	The New Hampshire State Bar Association and the Access to Justice Commission, with the support of 603 Legal Aid, are considering rules changes to implement voluntary pro bono reporting by the end of the 2023-24 reporting year. ²⁰
New Jersey	Mandatory	N.J. Ct. R. 1:21-12	Members of the New Jersey bar perform pro bono work for indigent litigants in cases where the legislature has made no provision for a public defender, as affirmed in Madden v. Delran, 126 NJ 591 (1992) . Attorneys who certify they performed at least 25 hours of voluntary pro bono work in the prior calendar year are exempt from taking court-appointed pro bono cases under <i>Madden</i> in the following year. Attorneys must report their compliance with pro bono requirements during the annual online registration process. ²¹
New Mexico	Mandatory	N.M. R. Prof'l Conduct 24-108	Attorneys shall annually certify whether they satisfied their professional responsibility to provide pro bono services to the poor, including by reporting their pro bono hours, on a form that is a part of the lawyer's annual membership fees statement."
New York	Mandatory	22 NYCRR § 118.1(e)(14)	Attorneys must file a report of their pro bono services and contributions in the prior two calendar years along with their biennial attorney registration statements, filed with the Chief Administrator of the Courts.
North Carolina	Voluntary	No rule	The North Carolina Pro Bono Resource Center provides attorneys, paralegal, and firms with an online form to report their pro bono hours each

¹⁹ Montana Judicial Branch, "Pro Bono Reports," <https://courts.mt.gov/ProBono/about/Reports>.

²⁰ Tom Jarvis, New Hampshire Bar Association, "Continuing to Mitigate the Justice Gap: NHSC Says Voluntary Pro Bono Reporting Is in the Early Stages of Implementation," <https://www.nhbar.org/continuing-to-mitigate-the-justice-gap-nhsc-says-voluntary-pro-bono-reporting-is-in-the-early-stages-of-implementation/>.

²¹ New Jersey Courts, "Pro Bono," <https://www.njcourts.gov/attorneys/pro-bono#262301>.

State	Mandatory or Voluntary Reporting	Rule	Rule or Policy Highlights
			year. Attorneys who report more than 50 hours of pro bono work will be inducted in the North Carolina Attorney Pro Bono Honor Society. ²²
North Dakota	Voluntary	No rule	The State Bar Association of North Dakota permits attorneys to voluntarily record their pro bono hours either on the state bar website or by submitting a Justice For All Lawyer Program Verification Form. Attorneys certify if they completed at least 50 hours of pro bono work. ²³
Ohio	Voluntary	No rule	The Supreme Court of Ohio & The Ohio Judicial System, along with the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation, encourages attorneys to complete a survey about their pro bono hours in the prior year. ²⁴
Oklahoma	Neither	No rule	
Oregon	Voluntary	No rule	Oregon attorneys may log into their online member portal to report their pro bono hours. The Pro Bono Honor Roll annually recognizes Oregon lawyers who provided at least 40 hours of direct pro bono legal services in the preceding year. ²⁵
Pennsylvania	Neither	No rule	
Rhode Island	Neither	No rule	
South Carolina	Voluntary	No rule	The South Carolina Bar provides an online form on their website for attorneys to submit their pro bono hours. Lawyers who self-report at least 50 hours are recognized on the Supreme Court's Pro Bono Honor Roll. ²⁶
South Dakota	Neither	No rule	

²² North Carolina Pro Bono Resource Center, “North Carolina Voluntary Pro Bono Reporting,” <https://ncprobono.org/report/>.

²³ North Dakota State Bar Association, “Pro Bono,” <https://www.sband.org/page/probono>; example of 2023 Pro Bono Justice For All Lawyer Program Verification Form: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.sband.org/resource/resmgr/docs/resources/justice_for_all_verification.pdf.

²⁴ The Supreme Court of Ohio & The Ohio Judicial System, “Pro Bono Survey,” <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/attorneys/pro-bono-survey/>. *See also* <https://www.ohiojusticefoundation.org/ohio-attorneys-theres-still-time-to-complete-the-2023-pro-bono-survey/>.

²⁵ Oregon State Bar, “Pro Bono Reporting – The Pro Bono Roll Call,” <https://www.osbar.org/probono/reporting.html>.

²⁶ South Carolina Bar, “Report Pro Bono/Public Service Hours,” <https://www.scbars.org/lawyers/bar-programs/pro-bono-program/>.

State	Mandatory or Voluntary Reporting	Rule	Rule or Policy Highlights
Tennessee	Voluntary	No rule	Attorneys may report their pro bono hours for the prior calendar year when renewing their legal license with the Board of Professional Responsibility. Attorneys meeting the Court's minimum goal of 50 pro bono hours annually will be named "Attorneys for Justice" by the Tennessee Supreme Court. Attorneys may also file a form to request recognition for their pro bono hours. ²⁷
Texas	Voluntary	No rule	Attorneys are encouraged to report their pro bono hours on the Texas State Bar website, and those who report over 75 hours will be invited to join the State Bar's Pro Bono College. ²⁸
Utah	Voluntary	Utah R. Prof. Cond. 6.1.	Each lawyer is urged to report annually to the Utah State Bar whether the lawyer has satisfied the lawyer's professional responsibility to provide pro bono legal services. Each lawyer may report this information through a simplified reporting form that is a part of the Bar's annual dues statement.
Vermont	Neither	No rule	
Virginia	Voluntary	Va. Sup. Ct. R. 22	Attorneys may voluntarily report their approximate pro bono hours as part of their annual license renewal application.
Washington	Voluntary	Wash. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	The Washington State Bar Association allows attorneys to report their pro bono service via the state bar website during the online license renewal process, and gives a commendation to any attorney who does at least 50 hours.
West Virginia	Neither	No rule	
Wisconsin	Voluntary	No rule	Attorneys may file a certification form available on the Wisconsin State Bar website to report their pro bono hours in the prior calendar year. Attorneys who do at least 50

²⁷ Tennessee State Courts, "Supreme Court Pro Bono Recognition Program," <https://www.tncourts.gov/ProBonoRecognition>.

²⁸ State Bar of Texas, Pro Bono FAQ, <https://www.texasbar.com/Content/NavigationMenu/LawyersGivingBack/LegalAccessDivision/ProBonoFAQ.htm>; see also State Bar of Texas, "Pro Bono College," https://www.texasbar.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Access_To_Justice&Template=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&ContentID=29992.

State	Mandatory or Voluntary Reporting	Rule	Rule or Policy Highlights
			hours of service annually join The Wisconsin Pro Bono Honor Society. ²⁹
Wyoming	Neither	No rule	

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²⁹ State Bar of Wisconsin, “Pro Bono Honor Society,” <https://www.wisbar.org/formembers/probono/pages/pro-bono-honor-society.aspx>.