

## **Pro Bono Research Project Research Request Form**

The Pro Bono Research Project of the Rutgers Law School offers free legal research services to public interest law practitioners. The goal of the project is to match upper level (2L 3L or 4L) law student researchers (“Research Associates”) with supervising attorneys and organizations that can benefit from the students’ legal research skills. Research Associates may provide written or oral legal analysis or may gather legal research materials such as judicial decisions or legislation. Research Associates typically devote a minimum of 20 hours to the project within one semester.

You must be an attorney to request legal research from the Rutgers Law School Pro Bono Research Project. You must also be willing to supervise and evaluate the Research Associate undertaking your research project.

This Research Request Form has been designed to help you focus the research request and to anticipate likely questions the Research Associate may have. Please complete the Research Request form carefully to save time for both you and the Research Associate.

Please return completed and signed forms to:

Jill Friedman  
Associate Dean, Pro Bono and Public Interest Program  
Rutgers Law School - Camden  
217 N. 5th St., Suite 315E  
Camden, NJ 08102  
856-225-6263  
jill.friedman@rutgers.edu

## I. Description of legal organization requesting legal research

Please check off the type of public interest legal organization you represent:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local government       | <input type="checkbox"/> Attorney in private practice requesting research for a pro bono client |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State government       | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal services program   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal government     | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Defender  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 501(c)(3) organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain)   |

Please provide a brief description of your legal organization (e.g., mission; client base; services provided)

NAME OF ORGANIZATION:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

WEBSITE ADDRESS:

YOUR NAME (and contact information if different from above):

LANGUAGES NECESSARY FOR RESEARCH PROJECT:

## II. Timeline for pro bono legal research project

Preferred date for Research Associate's completion of pro bono research project:

Outside date for useful completion of pro bono research project:

Today's date:

## III. Description of the public interest legal research project you would like to assign to a student Research Associate

What service(s) would you like a Research Associate to provide (e.g., draft a research memo, draft a brief, provide you with an oral briefing on the analysis of the issue, etc.)?

Please identify the legal issue you would like researched as precisely as possible.

Please describe any key facts the Research Associate will need to analyze the legal problem. If applicable, please attach any key documents (e.g., client interview, lease, contract, federal regulation, deposition etc.).

Should the legal research be limited to particular jurisdictions? If so, please list all relevant jurisdictions.

Should the research be limited to a particular time period?

What are the most likely sources of law applicable to your public interest legal issue (e.g., federal appellate case law, federal environmental regulations, New Jersey court opinions of any level, etc.)

- If any of the sources of law that the law student may need to analyze your legal issue are not likely to be available on Westlaw, Lexis or Google Scholar, or through the Rutgers-Camden Law Library, where should the Research Associate locate the relevant sources of law?

- Are any particular websites or blogs likely to be useful to the Research Associate in researching your legal issue?

If you were starting to research this legal issue, where would you begin?

Approximately how long do you predict a law student may need to analyze your legal issue, including any time necessary to draft a memo, brief or other legal document?

Are there any specific requirements for the Research Associate who volunteers to assist you with this legal research project?

#### **IV. Supervision of the Rutgers Law School Student Research Associate**

Supervision is required for all research projects. The supervising attorney need not be a staff member of the non-profit entity seeking advice; however, the attorney must have a formal relationship with the group, e.g. be a board member, and must also be willing to commit to supervision and evaluation.

The Rutgers-Camden Pro Bono Research Project encourages the assigning attorney to meet briefly with the Research Associate twice if possible: once shortly after the student begins work and again when the student has finished the initial project and is ready to brief the assigning attorney on the research results. The meetings should take place in your office.

- Are you available to meet briefly with the Research Associate (in your office) shortly after the student begins work?
- Are you available to meet briefly with the Research Associate (in your office) when the student has finished the initial project?
- If applicable, please indicate how often you would like interim updates on the research from the student.
- Please indicate the best way for the student to contact you (e-mail, phone, in-person):

Do you or does your organization currently carry legal malpractice insurance? \_\_\_\_\_

In the extremely unlikely event that Rutgers Law School or a current or former Rutgers law student or member of the faculty, staff or administration is named as a defendant in any lawsuit arising from the research project you request, would your malpractice insurance provide coverage? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, do you agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Law School, its faculty, staff and administration, and its students? \_\_\_\_\_

Disclaimer: Please note that the Research Associates are not attorneys and that the Pro Bono Research Project of Rutgers Law School is not a legal referral or similar service and is not able to provide legal advice.

By making a request for the assistance of a Research Associate, you acknowledge: (i) you will delegate or assign to the Research Associate only such tasks or projects as are appropriate for a non-attorney to perform; (ii) you have an obligation to supervise, review and evaluate the work of the Research Associate; (iii) it is your responsibility to maintain direct contact with your client, if applicable; and (iv) you are responsible for the use or application, or the consequences thereof, of any work product, in whatever form, of the Research Associate. Use of the Research Associate's work product shall in no way be construed to create an attorney-client relationship, and you agree that this representation shall be effective as to any third-party claimant.

The Law School assumes no responsibility, and makes no claim, promise, guarantee or warranty, express or implied, as to the accuracy, completeness, adequacy or legal enforceability of any work that a Research Associate may conduct for you. Any statement, testimonial, endorsement, opinion or recommendation contained in a Research Associate's work does not constitute a guarantee, warranty or prediction regarding the ultimate result or outcome of a particular matter.

By using a Research Associate's work product, in whatever form, you agree that the Law School, its faculty and staff, and the student are not responsible for: (i) any information included in or omitted from such work product; (ii) any person's, including your own, reliance on the Research Associate's work product, whether or not the Research Associate's work product is complete, current or correct; (iii) the consequences of any actions that you or any other person takes or fails to take, whether or not based on information provided by or as a result of the Research Associate's work; (iv) any person's, including your own, satisfaction with the quality of the Research Associate's work, whether relating to competence, diligence or otherwise; and (v) the failure of the Research Associate or the Law School (including its faculty, staff and administration) to respond to or consult with you or any other person with respect to the Research Associate's work.

Your use of the resources available through the Rutgers Law School's Pro Bono Research Project, including, without limitation, use of a Research Associate and use of briefs, memos or other materials drafted by Law School students, constitutes your agreement to hold the Law School, its faculty, staff and administration, and its students harmless from any consequences resulting from such use, and to indemnify them for reasonable expenses, legal or otherwise, incurred as a result of any claims arising from your use of the aforementioned resources.

Not all requests will be appropriate for student assistance; acceptance is at the discretion of the law school and may depend on student availability. Please bear in mind that student schedules mean research may not be immediately available, and will not be available during certain times during the year.

You must be an attorney to request free legal research from the Rutgers Law School Pro Bono Research Project. You must also be willing to directly supervise and evaluate the 2L, 3L or 4L student Research Associate undertaking your research project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of attorney requesting pro bono research

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date