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Pro Bono Research Project
Information and Research Associate Application Form

Why You Should Apply

Since 2003, the Pro Bono Research Project has offered free legal research services to public interest law practitioners and to private lawyers doing pro bono work. The goal is to match Rutgers Law School student researchers with supervising attorneys and organizations that can benefit from the students' legal research skills. The program is limited to second and third year law students. As a Pro Bono Research Associate, you may provide a practitioner with written or oral legal analysis or may gather legal research materials such as judicial decisions or regulations.

A pro bono research project is an excellent way to get a taste of legal practice, to investigate a new legal subject matter or client base, or to make contacts in a legal field you want to pursue in your legal career. Upper level law students work under the supervision of practicing attorneys with additional guidance from the Rutgers Pro Bono Research Project. Students can expect to improve legal research and writing skills and oral presentation skills. Students may want to follow up a Pro Bono Research Associate position with an externship placement or clinical program in a related field.

Your work for the Pro Bono Research Project will largely take place on your own time, whenever during the day or evening you prefer to complete the project, within the timeframe specified by the supervising attorney. Students who complete a pro bono research project satisfactorily will receive credit toward a pro bono award at graduation.

Logistics of the Pro Bono Research Project

The Pro Bono Research Project collects a variety of research projects that practitioners would like to be completed by a Rutgers law student, with the guidance of a supervising attorney. The Pro Bono Research Project will attempt to match Research Associate applicants with research projects in their chosen legal areas, where available. Generally, if a match between a public interest law organization and a student is not made within the first four (4) weeks of the semester, the student's application for a Research Associate position will be kept on file and considered the following semester.

Once a Research Associate applicant has been matched with a research project, and if the outside supervising attorney is available, the student is encouraged to briefly meet with the outside attorney twice: once shortly after the student begins work and again when the student is ready to brief the assigning attorney on the research results or has finished the initial project.

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In addition, the Research Associate will meet at least once with a law librarian, to lay out a research plan. The purpose of this requirement is to promote the highest possible quality legal research, and to inculcate Research Associates with the habit and inclination to think carefully about a research plan before embarking on a project.

The project will not be considered complete, and the Research Associate will not receive pro bono credit for work completed, until the supervising attorney or the faculty supervisor certifies that the work has been completed as assigned and satisfactorily.

Generally, new pro bono research projects will only be assigned during the first four weeks of each semester. The Pro Bono Research Associate's work should be limited to the first 10 weeks of the semester. There is no guarantee that a match between a public interest law organization and a student will be made during any semester; while every effort will be made to match a student with a research project, applying to be a Research Associate does not guarantee an assignment.

Disclaimers

Pro Bono Research Associates are not attorneys, and the Pro Bono Research Project is not able to provide legal advice. You should always endeavor to provide high-quality work to your supervising attorney. Your work must be supervised by an attorney—generally this will be the outside attorney for whom you will be performing work through the Pro Bono Research Project, in conjunction with a Rutgers faculty member. Your work product should be directed to the supervising attorney and discussed with him or her; you should not be providing services, advice or work product directly to that attorney's client or to any other member of the public.

Although the attorney supervising you is primarily responsible for ensuring that you work only within the boundaries of what is legally permitted, you have an independent obligation to refrain from engaging in illegal conduct (including holding yourself out as an attorney or as otherwise competent to provide legal services) and to perform your work under the attorney's supervision. You should always alert your supervising attorney if you perceive it may present a conflict of his or her client's interest for you to undertake a particular task or assignment. If you have any questions about whether it is permissible to undertake a particular task or assignment, you should consult with your supervising attorney, with Sarah Ricks, Clinical Professor, or with Jill Friedman, Associate Dean for Pro Bono and Public Interest, at the Rutgers Law School.

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Pro Bono Research Associate Application Form

Disclaimer: Applying for a Pro Bono Research Associate position is not a guarantee that a research match will be found or that an assignment will be made. The Rutgers Pro Bono Research Project can accommodate eight students per semester. New projects will generally only be assigned during the first four weeks of each semester, and work should be completed within the first 10 weeks of the semester.

Please type your responses below.

<u>Name</u>:

<u>Address</u>:

<u>Phone & e-mail</u>:

<u>Expected graduation month and year</u>:

- Will you be able to commit a minimum of 20 hours during one semester to researching, producing and presenting the project to the public interest law practitioner?

- Would you prefer to complete one large project, or to complete several shorter projects?

- Please list any special skills you offer that may be of interest to a public interest law practitioner, including any foreign languages, proficiency with Westlaw, Lexis, Bloomberg, Google Scholar, social science statistical background or computer skills, etc.:

- Please provide your resume and an unofficial transcript.

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Areas of Interest

The Pro Bono Research Project will try to match you with a project in an area of law or with a client base of interest to you. Please **check off all areas/client populations** of particular interest to you. Feel free to list others:

Substantive Law

Administrative	Divorce	Immigration
Attorney Fees	Domestic Violence	Intellectual Property
Bankruptcy	Education	International
Children's Rights	Election & Campaign	Labor/Employment
Civil Procedure	Employment/Labor	Legislation
Civil Rights	Energy	Pension
Computer Law	Environmental	Product Liability
Consumer	Ethics	Senior Citizens' Rights
Corporate	Evidence	Tax
Court Reform	Family	Women's Rights
Criminal	Health Care/Public	Other (list as many as
Death Penalty	Health	you wish):
Disability	Housing/Real Estate	

Preferred Client Base

Abused children	Employees	Religious group (please
Abused men	Farmworkers	specify)
Abused women	Federal government	Senior citizens
AIDS-affected	Gay, lesbian &	Speakers of particular
population	transgender	foreign language
Artists	Homeless	State or local govt.
Children	Immigrants	Tenants
Civil rights plaintiffs	Juveniles	Veterans
Criminal prosecution	Law enforcement/police	Other (list as many as
Criminal defendants	Low income	you wish):
Disabled	Municipalities/cities	
Dom. violence victims	Prisoners	

Please return this completed form, along with your resume and unofficial transcript, either in hard copy or via e-mail to:

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