

Supreme Judicial Court Pro Bono Recognition Program for Calendar Year 2011

The SJC honors each year those law firms, solo practitioners, in-house corporate counsel offices, government attorneys offices, non-profit organizations and law school faculties which certify that, in the relevant time period, they have met the criteria set forth below. This Program is entirely voluntary.

To qualify for the Program, the lawyer, firm or organization must certify the following:

1. That the pro bono legal services¹ hours per attorney, defined as the total number of pro bono hours provided by the Massachusetts Attorneys² divided by the number of Massachusetts Attorneys (full-time equivalents), is at least fifty (50); **or** more than seventy-five percent (75%) of the Massachusetts Attorneys have provided at least twenty-five (25) pro bono hours;³

AND

2a. (for law firms and solo practitioners) That for purposes of attorney retention and promotion, time devoted to approved pro bono legal services is treated the same as time devoted to billable time or its equivalent. If billable hours are not strictly or solely used as a criteria for retention and promotion (e.g., contingency fee work or salaried positions), pro bono legal

¹ Pro bono legal services, as defined in Rule 6.1 of the Massachusetts Rules of Professional Conduct, mean the provision of legal services “without compensation or expectation of compensation to persons of limited means, or to charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental, and educational organizations in matters that are designed primarily to address the needs of person of limited means.”

² For purposes of this certification, a Massachusetts Attorney is defined as an attorney who has been admitted to the Massachusetts Bar, who works primarily in Massachusetts and is engaged primarily in the practice of law within your organization

³ For law school faculties, the calculation divides the total number of pro bono hours performed by faculty who are Massachusetts Attorneys by the number of faculty who are Massachusetts Attorneys. For purposes of this calculation, work of clinical faculty members within the scope of their primary job duties shall be excluded from the calculation, although voluntary additional work within the scope of Rule 6.1 may be included. For non-profit agencies, the work of attorneys performing within the scope of their primary job duties shall be excluded from the calculation, although voluntary additional work within the scope of Rule 6.1 may be included.

services hours are treated the same as time that is recognized for purposes of retention and promotion; **and** that for purposes of attorney compensation, time devoted to approved pro bono legal services up to at least fifty hours (50) per year is treated the same as time devoted to billable legal work or its equivalent. If billable hours are not strictly or solely used to measure compensation (e.g., contingency fee work or salaried positions), pro bono legal services are treated the same as time that is determinative of compensation; **or**

2b. (for other organizations) An attorney may devote up to at least fifty (50) hours per year to pro bono services without any negative impact on the attorney's compensation, retention or promotion opportunities.

The law firms, solo practitioners, in-house corporate counsel offices, government attorneys offices, non-profit organizations and law schools which so certify shall receive a letter of acknowledgement and appreciation for their commitment to pro bono legal work, shall be listed on the *Pro Bono Honor Roll* on the SJC website, and if the certification is submitted by September 14, 2012, will be invited to send a representative to the October 2012 recognition event at the John Adams Courthouse. The certification form can be found on the SJC website at www.mass.gov/sjc.