



OFFICE OF PUBLIC SERVICE & THE CAREER PLANNING CENTER

Pro Bono, Networking, and Skill-Building Opportunities

As a recent graduate, you may be seeking opportunities to enhance your legal skills, wondering whether you can keep up your pro bono involvement, or considering whether to open your own practice. This handout provides a brief overview of some of the options for new Marquette attorneys navigating the landscape in the Milwaukee area. Remember, the Office of Public Service and Career Planning Center's staff, services, and resources are available to you as a graduate of Marquette University Law School.

Support for Pro Bono Attorneys

There are numerous pro bono opportunities for attorneys. Those listed below are opportunities that come with training and support; something essential for you as a new attorney.

- **Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinics**
 - o Make a 2-hour commitment to provide brief legal advice with the assistance of law students.
 - o Meet leaders in your field, celebrate with other volunteers at the annual volunteer appreciation party, and model the importance of pro bono work to law students.
 - o Attend free CLE training each month, either in-person at the law school or by webinar; MVLC volunteers are also invited to attend the substantial Legal Action of Wisconsin trainings each November.
 - o Choose from four Milwaukee-area locations, plus locations served by the Mobile Legal Clinic.
 - o Professional liability insurance provided.
 - o Visit the website for more information: www.marquettelegalclinic.org
- **Legal Action of Wisconsin's Volunteer Lawyers Project**
 - o Gain experience in several areas of law.
 - o Pro bono representation includes courthouse experience, extended service, and client contact.
 - o Flexibility in area of law you support and in scheduling volunteer hours.
 - o Mentoring available from attorneys who have years of hands-on experience with specific legal issues.
 - o Free annual CLE training for active volunteers, including professional responsibility training every November that satisfies the ethics CLE requirement. Trainings are focused on issues of greatest concern to low-income clients
 - o Comprehensive training manuals at no cost.
 - o Funding is available for extraordinary expenses.
 - o Legal Action conference rooms and library are available for volunteer use.
 - o Professional liability insurance provided.
 - o Visit the website for more information: www.legalaction.org
- **Kids Matter, Inc.**
 - o Take guardianship cases on behalf of children on a pro bono basis, or provide legal assistance in other areas of concern to children and their families.
 - o Work closely with staff attorneys; receive technical assistance and advice at each step of the process.
 - o Professional liability insurance and expense reimbursement provided.
 - o Free use of LexisNexis for legal research.
 - o Visit the website for more information: www.kidsmatterinc.org
- **Milwaukee Justice Center**
 - o Provide assistance to pro se litigants navigating family law processes at the family law help desk.
 - o Assist with the development of forms and materials as needed.
 - o Visit the website for more information: www.milwaukeejusticecenter.org
- **State Bar of Wisconsin – Pro Bono Programs**
 - o The State Bar has a variety of projects for pro bono involvement, including Wisconsin Wills for Heroes, the Modest Means Program, and the ABA Military Pro Bono Project.
 - o Visit the website for more information: www.wisbar.org

Support and Client Referral Systems for New Attorneys

- **State Bar of Wisconsin (www.wisbar.org)**
 - o Lawyer-to-Lawyer Directory: Approximately 500 lawyers listed in this directory have agreed to share their knowledge in particular areas of law with other lawyers – not the public – through brief telephone consultations. Read about the etiquette of using the list along with some good questions to ask the volunteer attorney at the Lawyer-to-Lawyer page of the State Bar website (found in the “Career” section under the “Membership and Benefits” portion of the site).
 - o State Bar Sections: The State Bar offers its members the opportunity to network with other lawyers who share a common interest through its 26 sections. Section membership includes access to newsletters, email lists to facilitate information sharing, and other resources.
 - o Lawyer Referral Information Service (LRIS): LRIS screens callers for legal need and ability to pay attorney’s fees, and when appropriate, directs callers to member attorneys. Call 1-800-723-7788 for more information or to register as an LRIS panel member.
 - o Law Office Management Assistance Program (LOMAP): Provides an array of law practice management resources.
- **Milwaukee Bar Association (www.milwbar.org)**
 - o Lawyer Referral and Information Service (LRIS): Attorneys register in specific areas of law and indicate if they are available for weekend or evening appointment, if they speak multiple languages, etc. Referrals are issued by computer rotation. For more information, call 414-276-5931.

Securing Public Appointments

Contracting with the Public Defender’s Office – the Assigned Counsel Division

The Circuit and Municipal Courts must appoint counsel for a variety of purposes. Contact the chief or presiding judge of the Circuit or Municipal Court about your interest and availability for appointment. You can also directly contact judges assigned to these dockets and ask about their respective appointing procedure. Most judges maintain lists of attorneys interested in accepting such appointments. The appointments are often paid, but at a reduced fee, usually the Wisconsin Supreme Court rate.

Appointments are made in the: 1) Misdemeanor and Felony Courts for criminal matters, 2) Children’s Court for juvenile delinquency matters, and 3) Civil Court for involuntary commitment matters in which defenders do not meet State Public Defender (SPD) legal representation standards, but meet the constitutional standard that they are unable to afford counsel.

SPD appointments are made pursuant to the completion of a Certification Application. Appointments can be made for both trial and appellate court matters. Appointments are paid at a pre-determined rate, but lawyers are encouraged to offer services on a pro bono basis.

FAQs about taking SPD appointments is available at the SPD website: <https://wispd.org/index.php/for-the-legal-practitioner/spd-assigned-counsel-division/faq-s-about-taking-spd-appointments>

GAL Appointments

The Probate, Family and Children’s Courts appoint guardians ad litem (GAL) for guardianships, domestic relations matters, child abuse and neglect, and termination of parental rights cases. Each court has a form to complete in which an attorney expresses interest in appointment and by which the attorney certifies s/he has completed the necessary GAL training or is otherwise eligible to accept appointments. Visit the local court of your choice to request the GAL appointment form. If no form is available, write a letter to the presiding judge in the particular division with a list of qualifications and ask to be put on the GAL list. The Wisconsin Supreme Court created SCR Chapters 35 & 36 requiring training to become eligible for appointment as a GAL for children and adults respectively. Thirty hours of approved training is required. Consult the rule for the complete requirements.