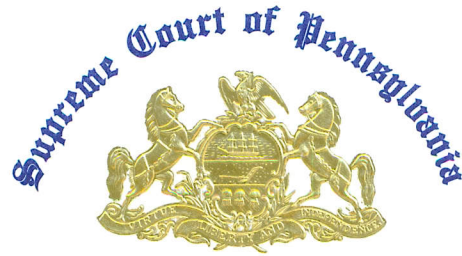


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Chief Justice Debra Todd

May 2023

Dear Pennsylvania Lawyer:

As we commemorate Law Day, I join PBA President Michael J. McDonald in thanking Pennsylvania lawyers and judges for their support of legal aid and pro bono service.

All Pennsylvania lawyers contribute to civil legal aid programs through their annual registration fees. We direct a portion of those fees, along with class action residual funds, to legal services organizations through the IOLTA Board. Further, under an IOLTA grant administered by the PA Bar Foundation, our Loan Repayment Assistance Program, funded by pro hac vice admissions fees paid by out-of-state attorneys, provides student loan forgiveness to attorneys working for legal service agencies, making it easier for law school graduates to pursue positions in public service.

Still, it is *lawyers who volunteer* who have the most direct impact on those in need. The PBA and county bar associations encourage attorneys to "render public interest legal service" pursuant to Pa.R.P.C. 6.1 by contributing their time and expertise to representing individuals who have critical needs but cannot afford to retain private counsel. The PA Legal Aid Network, in partnership with legal aid providers and programs, provides a framework for legal assistance.

Any lawyer may now receive CLE credits for pro bono work performed through an accredited Pro Bono CLE Provider. In addition, our Court created an "Emeritus" status which allows retired attorneys to perform pro bono service with a minimal annual registration fee and reduced CLE requirements under the auspices of non-profit legal aid organizations.

Finally, the PBA's newest pro bono outreach program, PA Free Legal Answers, is another great way to get involved. Clients post questions, and participating lawyers answer the questions they feel able to address. This service is not a substitute for full legal representation, but it is a way every Pennsylvania lawyer can assist a client in need.

If you already donate your time to pro bono service, I thank you. And, if you have not yet found the time to perform pro bono service, I urge you to commit to doing so and to encourage the young lawyers who work for you to do the same.

Together, we truly can make a difference.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Debra Todd".

Debra Todd