

KEY FINDINGS FROM 2003 MARYLAND PRO BONO REPORTING RESULTS

Maryland Rule 16-903 (effective July 1, 2002) requires all Maryland attorneys authorized to practice law in the state to annually report on their pro bono activities. The definition of pro bono service was redefined by the Court of Appeals in Rule 6.1 with an “aspirational” goal of 50 hours of service for full-time practitioners with a “substantial portion” of those hours dedicated to legal services to people of limited means.

The Administrative Office of the Courts contracted with an independent company (ANASYS) to administer the process and compile the reporting results. Some of the key findings from the *Current Status of Pro Bono Service Among Maryland Lawyers, Year 2003* report are summarized below. The full report can be found at:

<http://www.courts.state.md.us>.

- 31,153 Maryland lawyers **filed their pro bono service report** by the final cutoff date and were included in the report (representing a **99% compliance rate**).
- A higher proportion of lawyers with offices in Maryland provided pro bono services in 2003 than in 2002.
- **Among full-time lawyers with business addresses in Maryland, 63.7%** reported engaging in **some pro bono activity** (compared to 61.8% in 2002). Overall, full-time lawyers proportionately increased their pro bono service, while part-time lawyers proportionately decreased their service.
- Among lawyers who filed in both 2002 and 2003, 48.9% reported some pro bono activity and the hours increased overall by 24,992 hours.
- Among all 31,153 lawyers who reported, 47.4% (14,776 lawyers) reported some pro bono activity--a slight decrease of 0.4% from 2002. The slight decrease in pro bono service among all reporting lawyers is due to the significant percentage of lawyers who moved out of Maryland in 2003 and went to other states, many of whom appear to have entered government service, as well as a decrease in the pro bono service of part-time lawyers and first time pro bono filers.
- **Lawyers provided a total of 1,031,216 hours** of pro bono service in 2003 (as compared to 995,615 in 2002, a 3.6% increase).
- Tracking Rule 6.1, the breakdown of services provided by Maryland lawyers was as follows:
 - 50.2% rendered their services to people of limited means;
 - 14.5% assisted organizations serving people of limited means;
 - 8% worked with entities on civil rights matters; and
 - 27.3% gave organizational help to non-profits.
- Of those hours donated to assist people of limited means, 33.6% were provided through a pro bono or legal services organization.

- The **largest number of pro bono hours** was donated in the **family/domestic** practice area even though family/domestic law ranked seventh as a primary practice area. About 60% of the family law pro bono service was rendered by lawyers who identified their primary practice areas as family, litigation or general.
- The **Eastern and Western parts** of the state continued to **have higher proportions** of lawyers rendering pro bono services than lawyers in other regions.
- The **Eastern region** also reported the **highest percentage of lawyers with 50 hours** or more of pro bono service **followed by the Western region**. Garrett County ranked first with 47.4% of full-time lawyers reporting 50 or more hours followed by Caroline (47.1%), Queen Anne's (45.5%), Cecil (39.6%), Kent (30.3%), and Worcester (39.3%) counties.
- **All counties in metropolitan areas saw improved pro bono activities among their lawyers, with the exception of Baltimore City and Anne Arundel County.** Full-time lawyers significantly increased their pro bono service in the Southern and Western parts of the state (e.g. 17.8% increase in Southern Maryland and 14.8% increase in Western Maryland).
- 18.2% of all Maryland lawyers reported 50 hours or more of pro bono service while among full-time lawyers, 22.9% reported more than 50 hours.
- Lawyers generally provide a **high percentage of their pro bono service in their primary practice area.**
- In addition to direct service hours, lawyers spent a total of 402,018 hours participating in activities to improve the law, the legal system, or the legal profession.
- Lawyers who dedicated hours to improve the legal profession and who made financial contributions to legal services organizations provided significantly more pro bono service hours.
- Those lawyers not engaged in pro bono service tend to be younger and in practice areas such as government, criminal, intellectual property and other.
- The **total financial contribution** to organizations that provide legal services to people of limited means was **\$3,812,263 (an increase of 72.7% from 2002).**

Compiled by Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service

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