



Pro Bono Is Now CLE: A Game-Changer for Volunteer Capacity

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Pro Bono Rule = CLE Credit

(Florida Supreme Court – SC2024-0964)

- Effective Dec 30, 2024
- Florida Supreme Court approved a major change:
- every hour of pro bono = 1 hour CLE (up to 5 hours per cycle)
- No CLE for money donations — only actual service.
- This literally turns impact into credit.

WHAT CHANGED?

(Florida Supreme Court – SC2024-0964)

- Before → you served because you cared.
- Now → serving ALSO satisfies your CLE requirements.
- New Rule 6-10.3:
 - • 1 hr pro bono = 1 hr CLE credit
 - • max 5 hours per 3-year reporting cycle
 - • “service,” not checks, not sponsorships, not donations
- This removes friction AND adds incentive.

WHY THIS MATTERS (macro)

(Florida Supreme Court – SC2024-0964)

- This rule is not symbolic – it is structural.
- It brings Florida into alignment with the idea that legal skill is not just a commodity – it’s a public good.
- This opens the door for:
 - young lawyers who need CLE fast
 - firms under billable pressure
 - Lawyers who always “meant to help” but needed a trigger
- The Bar is telling us plainly:
“Pro bono is professional development”.

WHY THIS IS HUGE FOR LEGAL AID (incl. FHJP)

(Florida Supreme Court – SC2024-0964)

- Legal aid organizations — statewide — are the exact ecosystem where one volunteer hour often unlocks outside impact
- This rule converts public-interest work from “optional service” into a smart CLE strategy:
- attorney serves → attorney earns CLE → vulnerable Floridians access justice → systems move
- This directly removes one of the top psychological barriers we hear constantly across legal aid: “I want to help, but I’m behind on my CLE.” Now that tension is eliminated.
- The solution IS the service.
- And FHJP — like every legal aid nonprofit — now gets to leverage this rule change as a direct recruitment tool.

Bottom Line Message

(Florida Supreme Court – SC2024-0964)

- This is leverage; This is momentum; This is the moment to scale.
- Pro bono = CLE.
- If we activate NOW – we can rapidly expand capacity.
- This is not a rule change to announce - This is a tool to weaponize.
- We can literally tell every lawyer in Florida:

“You can change a life AND knock out your CLE at the same time.”