

The Framework FAQs

This document provides a detailed outline to help you implement each of the four actions within The Chambers Pro Bono Framework in your Chambers.

Benefits for Chambers

1. What is the benefit to signing up?

- Help the increasing number of people in desperate need of legal assistance who cannot afford to pay and cannot obtain legal aid.
- Support your barristers to make use of the opportunities that pro bono work presents to develop their skills and expand their practice.
- Be listed among the [participating Chambers](#), and display The Chambers Pro Bono Framework logo to demonstrate your commitment to establishing a pro bono ethos in Chambers.

2. What is the benefit of completing the four actions?

- Chambers that complete all four actions will receive The Chambers Pro Bono Framework certificate for that year, alongside our digital marketing pack for promoting your pro bono work and your Chambers' commitment to access to justice. These can be used on your website, social media, award nominations, or submissions for the legal directories.

1. **APPOINT** Advocate [Pro Bono Champions](#) in Chambers.

1.1. What do Pro Bono Champions do?

Pro Bono Champions are Advocate representatives in Chambers and play a crucial role for Advocate as a key point of contact. The Advocate team are in touch monthly with resources to forward on to your members, and ideas of how to encourage pro bono in Chambers.

Every so often the Advocate Casework Team are in touch to share urgent cases, and ideally Champions would share these cases with members when relevant.

Champions could encourage their clerking team to regularly browse the case list through our [online website portal](#) to search for relevant opportunities.

To see the full list of actions, you can read our [Pro Bono Champion key actions](#) document.

For further ideas and resources, you can also read our [Pro Bono Guide for Chambers Professionals](#), made in partnership with the IBC and LMPA.

Finally – Pro Bono Champions oversee the actions in The Framework.

1.2. Who should we appoint as Pro Bono Champions in Chambers?

We find the role is best carried out by a barrister and a clerk together. Chambers ultimately decides who they think is best to appoint to the role, but you may find that pro bono work is best encouraged by more senior members and senior clerks.

To check if your Chambers already has a Pro Bono Champion, [click here](#).

1.3. What is the Advocate website portal and how do I gain access?

In the [Advocate website portal](#), or members' area of our website, you can view our full list of cases by area of law and browse pro bono cases at your own convenience.

The case list covers all areas of law, and all courts and tribunals. The list is updated every day.

We allocate cases on a first come, first served basis. This means that interesting opportunities or higher court cases can often go quite quickly. Browsing the website regularly can ensure that you are not missing out on the best opportunities for your members.

To request to see papers, simply fill out the case enquiry form.

[Sign in here](#) via your personal login.

To gain an individual login [please contact Kate](#).

2. ACTION pro bono and volunteering work as a Chambers.

2.1 What resources are available to action pro bono work in Chambers?

Explore the following resources to find out more.

- [Guide for Chambers Professionals \(joint with IBC and LPMA\)](#)

[Get in touch to receive:](#)

- A personalised email you can send around Chambers to encourage volunteering.
- Statistical updates of how much work your Chambers is undertaking with Advocate.

You can also promote the [Pro Bono Pledge and the Pupil Pledge](#).

2.2. How do the Pro Bono Pledge and the Pupil Pledge work?

[Pro Bono Pledge](#)

- Barristers pledge 25 hours of pro bono in 2023, by registering [here](#).
- Barristers track their own hours, as soon as they reach 25 hours or more, let us know by completing [this short form](#).
- The pro bono work can be through *any* pro bono scheme, law centre or other organisation, not just through Advocate. Reviewing and case-based mentoring with Advocate can also be counted.
- We then send a Pro Bono Pledge logo that can be included in their email signature and Chambers profile, as well as share their success on LinkedIn and Twitter.

[Pupil Pledge](#)

- Pupil barristers can choose to pledge **one** piece of pro bono during their second six, by registering [here](#).
- Upon completing **one** piece of pro bono, they fill in [this form](#).
- We then send the Pupil Pledge logo that can be included in their email signature and Chambers profile, as well as share their success on LinkedIn and Twitter.
- Once again, pro bono work can be through *any* pro bono scheme, law centre or other organisation, not just through Advocate.

2.3. What happens if we don't reach the target of 10% of our members taking on pro bono work?

We recognise that this is an aspirational target. If Chambers can report that they have: attempted to motivate people, shared pro bono opportunities, and that some members have taken on work, they will still receive The Chambers Pro Bono Framework Certificate in recognition of completing the four Framework actions.

2.4. Where can we undertake our pro bono hours?

Pro bono can be undertaken through any pro bono scheme, with a law centre or other organisation. This includes but is not limited to work through Advocate. Reviewing and case-based mentoring with Advocate can also be counted.

2.5 Information for pupil supervisors

Ideally, Chambers would establish the means for **all pupils** to gain experience of a pro bono case in their second six, either alone or alongside their supervisor.

Pupils are covered by Advocate's direct access license. The Bar Mutual Insurance Fund has confirmed that work from Advocate is covered by your basic policy. Pupils are therefore covered as normal with their pupil supervisor's insurance.

All work has first been reviewed by a senior barrister who has confirmed that the case is eligible for pro bono assistance. Reviewers authorise the case per piece of work, meaning you or your pupil are not tied into the whole case. You are able to read the review decision and can contact the reviewer if necessary.

Pupils can also participate in the [Pupil Pledge](#). The requirement is to undertake just one piece of work, for example either some advice, drafting or perhaps representation.

2.6. How can Chambers professionals be involved in The Framework?

The Framework provides the opportunity to strengthen and highlight the pro bono ethos of your Chambers and makes it possible for everyone, both barristers and staff, to contribute.

Chambers professionals should ensure they have read our [Pro Bono Guide for Chambers Professionals](#), made in partnership with the IBC and LMPA.

Please also ensure that the clerking team has good contacts within the [Advocate Casework Team](#) and regularly browse the case list through our [online website portal](#) to search for relevant opportunities.

Chambers Professionals should also explore [Bar in the Community](#) for volunteering opportunities available to them.

3. ORANGISE a seminar in Chambers on pro bono.

A seminar can help to establish your pro bono ethos among members and helps them to make use of the available opportunities.

See our detailed [Guide to arranging a seminar in Chambers](#), including publicity emails and speaking points.

Ideally your Head of Chambers and Senior Clerk would attend the seminar to show that pro bono work is encouraged. It is often good to have one or two members share their experience of undertaking pro bono work.

3.1. When is the best time to facilitate a seminar?

You can facilitate a seminar on pro bono in Chambers at any point throughout the year.

You can incorporate a small section on pro bono into an existing Chambers' seminar, drinks, or tea. Lunchtime webinars can also be popular.

You might consider timing the seminars to when your pupils are starting their second six, or Volunteers' Week (first week of June) or Pro Bono Week (second week of November).

3.2. Can someone from Advocate come and speak to Chambers?

A member of the Advocate team is very happy to speak at a seminar or webinar in Chambers.

Advocate will cover the benefits of taking on pro bono work for practice development, and the process of how to take on cases with Advocate, including the support available for barristers.

Advocate can also highlight [Bar in the Community](#) and how the opportunities could enable chambers professionals and barristers to use their professional skills in the wider community.

Please [get in touch with Bryony](#) to arrange this.

3.3. Do you have publicity for a seminar?

Please see our short blurb:

Advocate is the Bar's national charity, with over 4,500 barristers currently signed up to volunteer pro bono. Come and hear more about who Advocate are and how they make it possible for barristers to take on pro bono. They will share the impact that undertaking pro bono work has for career development (from second six through to KC) and on the lives of vulnerable litigants in person in need of help.

You will hear from Advocate Caseworkers and [NAME] will also be speaking from Chambers, sharing their experience of taking on pro bono work.

4. REPORT on the pro bono work done.

Participating chambers will be required to complete a short impact form at the end of the year and after they have completed the three previous actions. This ensures that:

- a. The commitment to The Framework has been met.
- b. Advocate can monitor and promote the impact of pro bono work across the Bar.

Advocate will be in touch regularly with updates on your progress and reminders to complete the actions.

4.1. What are the reporting requirements?

Advocate will send you a short impact form in order to report on:

- The number of individuals who have taken on pro bono work through any means or scheme. Advocate will provide data on how many barristers have taken on cases through Advocate.
 - The organisations and schemes they conducted their pro bono work with.
 - Two short case studies of the pro bono work undertaken.
 - How you as a Chambers have encouraged pro bono work throughout the year.
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To discuss how The Framework can be tailored for your Chambers, please arrange a short meeting with Advocate's Engagement Manager, Bryony at bwells@weareadvocate.org.uk

Thank you for your commitment to access to justice and we look forward to working with you!