

30-Hour Pro Bono Requirement for Graduation – Quick Facts

Below is a quick reference to assist you with understanding your 30-hour Public Service requirement and to fulfill it. A more comprehensive Public Service Manual which contains all the policies and procedures of Greenebaum Public Service Program is available in the Document Library on Symplicity and on the law school intranet.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENT: Because of the Brandeis School of Law's strong commitment to public service, each law student is required to perform a **minimum of thirty (30) hours of law-related public service work** at an approved placement prior to graduation.

RATIONALE: Performing public service while in law school fosters an awareness of an attorney's pro bono obligation, it provides legal services to persons of limited means and it gives students practical, real world experience.

DEFINITION OF PUBLIC SERVICE: In order for a placement to meet the pro bono requirement, it must be performed at an organization or agency dedicated:

- Primarily, for persons of limited means or for charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental and educational organizations in matters which are designed generally to address the needs of persons of limited means and for governmental organizations in matters in furtherance of their organizational purposes.
- Secondly, for groups or organizations seeking to secure or protect civil rights, civil liberties, animals, the environment, or public rights; or
- In special cases (not routine clerk work), in activities for improving the law, the legal system or the legal profession, or educating the public about the law and the legal system.

HOUR RESTRICTIONS: Only two (2) hours of your required public service may be for Orientation Training and only one (1) hour may be for observation (i.e. watching a trial in court) when you are not actively engaged in performing work that will assist your placement site.

ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS: Because this is a graduation requirement, students must adhere to the following guidelines to ensure your placement is properly approved, hours documented, and evaluations and other paperwork timely received by the OPD before you may meet your 30-hour public service requirement.

- The work must be legal-related under the direction of a licensed attorneys.
- The work must be a for a pre-approved placement site or a student must seek and obtain approval from Dean Hajek to work for the employer prior to beginning to volunteer (see below).
- You must notify Jina Scinta in the Office of Professional Development, who serves as the coordinator for the Greenebaum Program, before you begin your public service hours and indicate which semester you plan to complete the hours. She will have you complete a *Reservation Form* to sign up with the placement.

GREENEBAUM FORMS: The following forms are required for your public service placement: *Confirmation Form, Timesheet, Student Evaluation and Supervisor Evaluation.*

- *Confirmation Form:* must be signed by you and returned to Jina Scinta at jina.scinta@louisville.edu before you begin your volunteer work.
- *Timesheet:* must be completed as you complete your hours.
- *Student Evaluation:* must be completed by you when you completed your placement and submitted to Jina Scinta in room 180 or emailed to jina.scinta@louisville.edu.

- *Supervisor Evaluation*: must be completed by your supervisor when you completed your placement and they should directly email the form to Jina Scinta at jina.scinta@louisville.edu.

All the above documents need to be signed by both you and your supervisor and returned to Jina Scinta or Dean Hajek by the end of the semester in order for you to receive credit for your public service hours. You have until the last day of final exams of the semester in which you perform your hours to turn in your public service documents to receive credit. If you want to continue to volunteer with this placement into the next semester/summer you may do so, but you must contact Jina Scinta or Dean Hajek before the semester ends and complete any necessary paperwork to do so.

TIMELINE TO BEGIN, END AND SUBMIT HOURS: Students may not begin working on their public service hours until they have completed the coursework of their first semester. Therefore, 1L students may begin acquiring hours after their last exam is taken their first semester.

- All 30 hours must be completed by the semester a student is graduating. In order to review and confirm that a student has met their graduation requirement, the OPD requires that all December graduates submit their public service hours no later than November 20 of the semester in which they plan to graduate and all May graduates submit their public service hours by March 20 of the semester in which they plan to graduate.
- If the submission date falls on a weekend, then all paperwork required for a student to meet their public service obligation are due to the OPD the Friday prior to the 20th, regardless of whether it falls on a vacation day or school break.
- In order to receive credit for your pro bono hours, you must submit your completed *Confirmation Form*, *Timesheet*, and *Student Evaluation* by the last day of exams in the semester in which you completed your service hours. For a form to be “complete”, it must have all necessary signatures and other required information (i.e. dates, times properly documented on timesheet). In addition, you must make repeated good faith efforts to have your supervisor from your placement site email their *Supervisor Evaluation* of your work product to the Greenebaum Public Service Program.

SUPPORT: The following people are happy to answer any questions you may have about the Greenebaum Public Service Program and your pro bon requirement for graduation:

- Jina Scinta, Greenebaum Public Service Program Coordinator, Room 180. (502) 852-5647 or Jina.scinta@louisville.edu.
- Dean Hajek, Director Samuel L. Greenebaum Public Service Program. Room 182. (502) 852-6096 or laurel.hajek@louisville.edu.

How do I Sign Up for My Public Service?

PROCEDURES:

Pre-Approved Placements: Over 150 placements with non-profits, judges and government agencies have been pre-approved. If you would like to complete pro bono hours at one or more of these placements, Jina Scinta in the OPD will assist you with reaching out to the placement contact, checking their availability to take an intern for the current semester or summer, and providing you to the necessary forms to begin your placement, if approved. To find a pre-approved placement, you should:

- Consult the *Public Service Catalog*, which contains over 150 pre-approved placements, to find one or more placements where you would like to perform your hours. The *Public Service Catalog* may be viewed on the Document Library in Symplicity or you may log onto the law school intranet and view the Catalog at <http://louisville.edu/law/intranet/students/psp>.

- Choose one or more placements in which you are interested and fill out the online *Reservation Form*, also located in the Document Library in Symplicity and the on the intranet, listing your placements in order of preference. Because not all placements are available every semester, you are encouraged to have a list of a few placements in which you are interested, especially if you are limited to which semester you must perform your public service hours.
- After you complete and submit the Reservation Form, Jina Scinta, the Public Service Program Coordinator, will email you further instructions and next steps.

Self-Initiated Placements: In addition to the placements above, students may request approval for an agency, non-profit or judge not on the pre-approved list provided that the work they perform meets the definition of public service adopted by the law school which is listed above. This option is particularly popular with students who wish to complete their pro bono hours outside of Louisville. To submit a placement proposal for consideration:

- Download the *Student Initiated Placement Form* located in the Document Library on Symplicity or on the intranet.
- Complete the Form and submit to Jina Scinta either by e-mail or in person.
- Dean Hajek will review your proposal to determine whether it meets the criteria of the public service program definition. If your proposed placement is approved, you will receive an email from Jina Scinta with further instructions.

Any questions about the above procedures may be directed to Jina Scinta or Dean Hajek.