



"I began my legal career in Washington, D.C., where I volunteered at local organizations providing legal assistance to low-income and disadvantaged individuals in the community. I now live and work in Ohio, but as an attorney licensed outside the state, I couldn't follow my passion for pro bono service. I'm grateful that the Ohio Supreme Court has recognized corporate status attorneys as another valuable resource in giving a legal voice to Ohio's most vulnerable children, veterans, seniors and victims of domestic violence."

Sushupta Sudarshan
Intellectual Property Counsel
GE Aviation Evendale

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO AT:
<http://www.sconet.state.oh.us>**



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CORPORATE COUNSEL STATUS AND PRO BONO

Beginning April 1, 2015,
corporate status attorneys may
provide pro bono
legal services in Ohio





WHY WAS THIS NEW RULE AMENDMENT PROPOSED?

The rule amendment allows more members of Ohio's in-house legal departments to join other Ohio lawyers in providing much-needed pro bono help. Fewer than one in four low-income Ohioans get the civil legal assistance they need from pro bono or legal aid lawyers. As a result, thousands of unrepresented Ohio children, seniors, veterans, and victims of domestic violence face life-changing problems without a legal voice.

Ohio's corporate status attorneys, many of whom volunteered as pro bono attorneys in the state in which they are licensed, are well-qualified to give Ohio's most vulnerable a legal voice. This rule change is an important step that significantly improves in-need Ohioans' ability to receive legal information, advice or representation.

I'M AN OHIO CORPORATE LAWYER WHO IS ADMITTED TO THE PRACTICE OF LAW IN ANOTHER STATE, AND AM REALLY INTERESTED IN DOING PRO BONO LEGAL WORK IN OHIO. HOW DO I GET STARTED?

First, you must register for or verify corporate counsel status under Gov. Bar R. VI, Section 3. For more information on corporate counsel attorney registration, visit:

www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/AttySvc/AttyReg/corporatestatus.asp

Once corporate counsel status has been established, you can now provide pro bono legal services as a volunteer for an organization recognized by the Ohio Supreme Court:

- An organization receiving funding for pro bono programs or services from the Legal Services Corporation or the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation
- A metropolitan or county bar association
- The Ohio State Bar Association
- The Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation
- Any other organization recognized by the Ohio Supreme Court Commission on Continuing Legal Education

IS A CORPORATE STATUS ATTORNEY REQUIRED TO HAVE MALPRACTICE INSURANCE COVERING PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES?

No. The organizations recognized by the Ohio Supreme Court for providing civil legal services to persons of limited means all provide malpractice insurance coverage for pro bono volunteer attorneys. The legal aids are a great option for pro bono because they provide attorney volunteers with training, mentoring and malpractice insurance coverage on any case or matter. For more information on how to volunteer with the legal aid in your area, visit:

www.ohiolegaid.org/pro-bono/find-your-las-pro-bono/

FROM RULE VI, SECTION 3(E) OF THE RULES FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE BAR OF OHIO:

Section 3(E): Pro bono legal service.
[A]n attorney registered for corporate status under this section may provide pro bono legal service if the legal service is provided to either a person of limited means or a charitable organization and the legal service is assigned or verified by any of the following:

1. An organization receiving funding for pro bono programs or services from the Legal Services Corporation or the Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation;
2. A metropolitan or county bar association;
3. The Ohio State Bar Association;
4. The Ohio Legal Assistance Foundation;
5. Any other organization recognized by the [CLE] Commission

HOW HAVE AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE BAR CHANGED THE PRACTICE OF LAW BY ATTORNEYS ADMITTED IN OHIO UNDER CORPORATE COUNSEL STATUS?

Previously, attorneys admitted to practice in Ohio under corporate counsel status were only permitted to perform legal services for their employer or appear in court for their employer or themselves. Effective April 1, 2015, attorneys on corporate counsel status may now also provide pro bono legal services to persons of limited means or charitable organizations, provided the pro bono legal work is assigned to the corporate counsel attorney by an organization recognized by the Ohio Supreme Court.

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS ARE RECOGNIZED BY THE OHIO SUPREME COURT TO ASSIGN PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES TO AN ATTORNEY ADMITTED UNDER CORPORATE COUNSEL STATUS?

Pro bono work by attorneys admitted on corporate counsel status is permitted if the legal work is assigned to the attorney by organizations recognized by the Ohio Supreme Court to grant CLE credit for pro bono legal services. A partial list of those organizations may be found at:

www.sconet.state.oh.us/AttySvc/CLE/proBono/Organizations.pdf

"If you have a special skill, you should use it to improve the world."

- Sherrille Akin, pro bono lawyer