

PRO BONO AND PUBLIC SERVICE INITIATIVE

MISSION STATEMENT:

To deliver first class legal services to the underserved and disadvantaged by fostering an environment which encourages and promotes public service.

To promote and sponsor activities which provide opportunities for all Firm personnel, independently, and in partnership with our clients, to contribute to the well-being of the communities in which we practice and live.

SERVICE AVENUES

<p>LEGAL SERVICES</p> <p>Mission: To create and foster an environment that encourages and supports attorneys to provide legal service to the disadvantaged and underserved in our communities.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop institutional support for delivery of pro bono legal services through our regional and local pro bono and public services committees • Select legal services organizations with which to partner that best meet the interests and training needs of each office and develop working relationships with these organizations to serve the public • Recruit, train and mentor attorneys to take on free legal services matters 	<p>CLIENT PARTNERING</p> <p>Mission: To advise and guide clients in developing a pro bono and public service program within their organizations.</p> <p>To partner with clients in joint service to the public and to maximize the quality and capacity of pro bono and public service provided by both the Firm and its clients.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory interest and established commitment to issues of social significance for key clients of each office • Develop and initiate Partners To Serve projects • Develop tool kit for initiating client partnering projects • Design marketing strategy for Partners To Serve projects 	<p>EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERISM</p> <p>Mission: To support, encourage, and create opportunities for Firm employees to dedicate time and energy to a public service organization or cause.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory ongoing activities in each regional office • Identify organizations/projects and establish ongoing relationships on both the office and regional level • Provide administrative support to assist employee volunteers giving their time and services • Seek opportunities for crossover to organizations with which the Firm has a relationship in another Service Avenue
<p>CIVIC PRESENCE</p> <p>Mission: To achieve prominence for the Firm by being known for providing leadership to the most respected civic organizations in our communities.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify worthy civic organizations and place office attorneys in active, important roles (director/trustee/officer) with such organizations • Provide resources and support to attorneys serving as civic leaders to help support the discharge of their responsibilities to such organizations • Encourage and mentor partners and associates to become significant contributors to civic leadership 	<p>FELLOWSHIPS</p> <p>Mission: To be a Firm committed to providing financial sponsorship to public interest practitioners in Public Service.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify projects which advance our legal system and provide regional financial support to fellows and interns engaged in those well organized, clearly articulated legal assistance projects in cities where we have offices • Develop strategy for supporting future fellowships 	<p>CHARITABLE GIVING</p> <p>Mission: To provide financial support to help meet the needs of our communities.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop charitable giving strategies in individual offices • Identify organizations worthy of our financial support to which Firm personnel have made commitments with their time in another Service Avenue • Prefer organizations for which we provide pro bono legal Services

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BAKER & MCKENZIE
CHICAGO

PARTNERS TO SERVE
LIST OF OPPORTUNITIES

(1) Case Determinations – CDEL

Jointly conduct case determinations in person with potential CDEL clients at Baker & McKenzie on a Saturday morning or some other designated time. Potential CDEL clients would come to Baker & McKenzie and meet with Baker & McKenzie attorneys and in-house counsel who would conduct an initial interview to provide a case determination to both the client and CDEL at the end of the intake session. The case determination would then be used by CDEL to solicit pro bono representation for that individual. Significant training would have to be conducted prior to the intake sessions.

(2) Predatory Lending

Law firm attorneys present training for in-house counsel about how to screen loan documentation for predatory lending issues. The public interest agency supervises this training, provides materials, and sends potential predatory lending files to the corporate counsel for a review of the issues. Where the screening in-house counsel volunteers find evidence of a predatory lending issue, that attorney summarizes the file and forwards it to the Firm for litigation consideration. This work was piloted by Baker & McKenzie in our "Partners To Serve" Project in 2002.

(3) Naturalization Clinic

Applicants for citizenship are interviewed and a naturalization application is completed jointly by Firm and in-house counsel attorneys. Firm attorneys complete the filing of application as legal counsel and in-house attorneys are recorded on applications as preparers. This work was piloted by Baker & McKenzie in our "Partners To Serve" Project in 2002.

(4) Community Economic Development Law

Public interest agency attorneys and law firm attorneys provide training to in-house counsel about how to obtain Federal Section Eight Housing. Attorneys from the law firm and corporation assist Section Eight voucher holders to purchase homes with supervision, guidance, client selections and screening by the public interest agency.

(5) Review Prisoner Requests for Criminal Representation

Corporate and law firm paralegals, under attorney supervision, review and answer inmate letters seeking assistance with their appeals written to law school criminal law legal clinics and law firms.

(6) Food Stamp Eligibility

Following training on food stamp eligibility by a public service agency, firm and corporate counsel meet with clients seeking correction of their food stamp eligibility designation. Correction requests are filed by attorneys by phone following interview and document review.

(7) Child Custody and Protection Issues

Firm attorneys appointed in family court advocate as *guardian ad litem* or *attorney ad litem* for children for whom the court is making a custody decision. Teams of firm attorneys, partnered with in-house counsel, interview child clients, provide them advice and counsel, and report to the court on the best interest of the child. Continued involvement by counsel following the court report would be at the discretion of the individual attorney volunteer.

(8) Clemency/Expungement

Teams of attorneys assist adults to expunge records of previous findings of delinquency or adult convictions for non-violent offenses, and who have shown the ability to turn themselves and their lives around. An application for clemency or expungement requires an extensive client interview and the filing of a single, well-written document outlining the details of the new circumstances of the applicant's life. No court appearance is necessary.

(9) Estate Planning Documentation for Elderly or Disabled in Hospice Care

Law firm attorneys and corporate counsel conduct interviews of disabled or elderly clients who have been screened for income and eligibility by a public interest agency. Lawyers convert information and client wishes to formal estate documents and wills to designate the distribution of the clients' belongings should they become entirely physically incapacitated. Living wills and medical directions can be provided.

(10) Insolvency Advice

Firm attorneys and in-house counsel jointly provide insolvency advice to elderly individuals who are most likely judgment proof. Attorney teams prepare form letters for the elderly person's creditors and provide general advice to the client regarding how to handle debt collectors and to avoid further harassment.

(11) Property Tax Adjustment Appeals

Teams of Firm lawyers and in-house counsel assist homeowners who cannot afford an increased property tax assessments and who need assistance drafting written appeals. Appeals can be filed *pro se* or with filing by counsel.

(12) School Suspension and Expulsion Advice and Representation

Corporate and Firm lawyers conduct intake interviews of children facing suspension or expulsion. Attorney involvement after the interview may be limited to providing advice to the client's family about how to appeal *pro se* or could be expanded to include representation at informal school hearings.

A unique advantage of partnering work in this area is that very few jurisdictions have other sources of representation for children facing school suspension and expulsion. In some cases, this is because legal services agencies are unable to meet the high volume demand by families facing this problem. In other jurisdictions, families are not informed that they have an option to bring counsel, are discouraged from bringing counsel, or are not given enough time to secure counsel because of short deadlines for hearings being imposed by school boards. Baker & McKenzie has particular expertise in this area.

(13) Social Security Disability Benefits

Teams of in-house counsel and Firm attorneys interview child applicants for social security disability benefits. Many disabled children and their guardians have difficulty conveying a persuasive argument about the limitations caused by their disabilities to the Social Security Administration. Lawyers help fill out an initial application or an appeal form with clients. A tremendous asset to representation of families seeking benefits at these early stages is that well-drafted applications can prevent unnecessary appeals that would only delay the receipt of deserved benefits by families, and burden the Social Security Administration with unnecessary proceedings.

(14) Special Education Advocacy

Teams of Firm and in-house counsel attorneys interview and counsel parents of disabled children who are seeking diagnosis and identification of their special education needs. Attorney teams draft the letters requesting evaluations of children on behalf of their child clients and, with client review, forward them to the school district. Representation can be expanded to include representation at an informal administrative hearing to enforce special education services, if the attorney teams choose to continue involvement to this level.

(15) Uncontested Guardianships and Adoptions

Firm and in-house counsel prepare applications and court documents on behalf of indigent caretakers who are seeking the legal assignment of custody of a child they are for where no other relative or potential caretaker is. Uncontested guardianships and adoptions require one or two minimal proceedings where the court reviews a written application and issues the guardianship or adoption order. The remainder of the work in the case would allow a team of attorneys to interview the potential guardian, prepare the court papers and advise the client throughout the proceeding.