

**IN THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA**

**ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER S-2025-048
(Supersedes Administrative Order S-2023-038)**

PRO BONO SERVICE

In 1990, the Florida Supreme Court held that “every lawyer of this state who is a member of The Florida Bar has an obligation to represent the poor when called upon by the courts and that each lawyer has agreed to that commitment when admitted to practice law in this state.” *In Re: Amendments to Rules Regulating The Florida Bar – 1-3.1(a)* and *Rules of Judicial Administration – 2.065 (Legal Aid)*, 573 So. 2d 800, 806 (Fla. 1990). Three years later, the Florida Supreme Court promulgated Rule 4-6.5(c) of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar providing for the establishment of a pro bono committee in each judicial circuit. *In Re: Amendments to Rules Regulating The Florida Bar – 1-3.1(a)* and *Rules of Judicial Administration – 2.065 (Legal Aid)*, 630 So. 2d 501 (Fla. 1993). Since 1993, the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee has adopted and implemented its comprehensive pro bono plan with the assistance of the many bar committees, divisions, and sections and independent legal organizations.

It is necessary for the efficient and proper administration of justice within this circuit to update the leadership and composition of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee. By the power vested in the chief judge under article V, section 2(d), Florida Constitution; section 43.26, Florida Statutes; and Florida Rule of Judicial Administration 2.215(b)(2), it is ORDERED:

1. Pro Bono Committee

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee (“Committee”) will continue to provide oversight and direction of *pro bono* legal services for the indigent in Hillsborough County.

2. Committee Leadership

The Honorable Wendy J. DePaul, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court Judge, is appointed Chair of the Committee. The Honorable Kelly A. Ayers, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court Judge, is appointed

Vice-Chair of the Committee. The Chair of the Committee may appoint an Executive Director who shall perform any such duties as are delegated to the Executive Director by the Chair of the Committee.

3. Composition of Pro Bono Committee

The Committee comprises the following members:

- A. The Immediate Past Chair of the Committee
- B. The Chief Judge of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit or the chief judge's designee;
- C. Two representatives of the Hillsborough County Bar Association, one of whom should be a member of the board of directors and the other should be directly involved with the administration or organization of a Hillsborough County Bar Association pro bono event;
- D. One representative from each pro bono and legal assistance provider in the circuit whose organization is not otherwise represented on the Committee, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Bay Area Legal Services
 - ii. Crossroads for Florida Kids, Inc.
 - iii. Guardian Ad Litem Program
 - iv. HCBA Ask a Lawyer Program
 - v. H.E.L.P. (Homeless Experience Legal Project)
 - vi. Justice Restoration Center
 - vii. Legal Assistance Program of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida
 - viii. Office of Public Guardian
 - ix. St. Michael's Legal Center
 - x. St. Paul Catholic Church Clinic
 - xi. Tampa Office of CAIR Florida
 - xii. Teen Court
 - xiii. Wills for Heroes Foundation
- E. One representative from each of the voluntary bar associations within the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Tampa Bay
 - ii. North Tampa Bar Association

- iii. Federal Bar Association
 - iv. Florida Association of LGBT Lawyers & Allies, Inc.
 - v. George Edgecomb Bar Association
 - vi. Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers
 - vii. East Hillsborough Bar Association
 - viii. South Asian Bar Association
 - ix. Tampa Bay Bankruptcy Bar Association
 - x. Tampa Bay Catholic Lawyers Guild
 - xi. Tampa Bay Hispanic Bar Association
 - xii. Tampa Bay Paralegal Association
 - xiii. Temple Terrace Bar Association
- F. One representative from each of the following Committees, Divisions, and Sections of the Hillsborough County Bar Association, including, but not limited to:
- i. Appellate Practice Law Section
 - ii. Community Services Committee
 - iii. Construction Law Section
 - iv. Criminal Law Section
 - v. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
 - vi. Environmental, Land-use, & Eminent Domain Law Section
 - vii. Government Lawyers
 - viii. Health Care Law Section
 - ix. Immigration & Nationality Section
 - x. Intellectual Property Law Section
 - xi. Labor & Employment Law Section
 - xii. Marital and Family Law Section
 - xiii. Mediation & Arbitration Law Section
 - xiv. Military & Veterans Affairs Committee
 - xv. Professionalism and Ethics Section
 - xvi. Real Property, Probate & Trust Law Section
 - xvii. Senior Counsel Section
 - xviii. Solo/Small Firm Practitioners Section
 - xix. Tax Law Section
 - xx. Technology Law
 - xxi. Trial & Litigation Section
 - xxii. Workers' Compensation Section
 - xxiii. Young Lawyers Division

- xxiv. 5K Pro Bono River Run
- G. One representative from each of the following local law schools:
 - i. Stetson University College of Law
 - ii. Western Michigan University Cooley Law School
- H. At least one public member; and
- I. At least one client-eligible member.

4. Ex Officio Members

The following persons will serve as ex officio and advisory members of the Committee: (a) any person currently appointed to The Florida Bar Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Service who practices in or resides in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit; and (b) any past chair of the Committee who practices in or resides in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit other than the Immediate Past Committee Chair. Ex officio members will be notified of and may attend each scheduled meeting or event of the Committee.

5. Administrator

The Committee will appoint or create a legally qualified entity (the "Administrator") to administer the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Plan. The Committee has the authority to maintain or replace the Administrator. The Committee is responsible for assisting the Administrator in providing legal representation or assistance to the indigent in accordance with the rules adopted by the Florida Supreme Court. Since 1993, the Administrator has been and continues to be Bay Area Legal Services.

6. Annual Report

The Administrator will submit an annual report to the Committee which includes an assessment of attorney participation in the *pro bono* program during the preceding year and a plan for carrying out the *pro bono* program in the coming year.

7. Committee Responsibilities

In meeting its responsibilities under Rule 4-6.5(c)(2) of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar, the Committee will meet quarterly during the year to consider and review the Administrator's work, to oversee and allocate any funding, and to make recommendations on the community's needs, the possible resources available to meet those

needs, and its long-term plan to fulfill the legal profession's obligation to its community. The Committee will submit an annual report to The Florida Bar Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services.

8. Previous Administrative Order Superseded

This administrative order supersedes Administrative Order S-2023-038 (*Pro Bono Service*).

9. Effective Date

This administrative order is effective October 1, 2025.

ENTERED on September 30th, 2025.



Christopher C. Sabella, Chief Judge

Original: Victor Crist, Clerk of the Circuit Court

Copy: The Honorable Darren D. Farfante, Immediate Past
Chair

The Honorable Wendy J. DePaul, Chair

The Honorable Kelly A. Ayers, Vice-Chair

Hillsborough County Bar Association

All Pro Bono and Legal Assistance Providers

All Voluntary Bar Associations

All Local Law Schools