

2014 Law Firm Pro Bono Survey



Across the country lawyers find the time to participate in interesting and important *pro bono* projects that give back to their communities and aid in providing access to justice for those who might not otherwise be able to afford legal counsel.

This year, we asked law firms across the country – large, regional, boutique, small, and local firms – to participate in *Canadian Lawyer's* first-ever national *pro bono* survey.

A good handful sent us their *pro bono* success stories and answered questions about their *pro bono* policies, hours logged, and about the partner organizations they work with. We were impressed by the stories we heard about from the firms who were willing to take the plunge and provide their information for the survey.

It's clear whether a solo practitioner, mid-size, regional, or large national firm, *pro bono* is considered an important aspect of providing advocacy to the broader community.

Firm # of lawyers	Locations	Full service/main practice areas	Does your firm have a written <i>pro bono</i> policy?	Are lawyers in your firm aware of your <i>pro bono</i> policy?	Does <i>pro bono</i> count towards associates' billable targets?	Do <i>pro bono</i> hours count towards billable targets for partners?	Does your firm have a <i>pro bono</i> co-ordinator (non-partner)?	Do you have a partner dedicated to <i>pro bono</i> co-ordination?	Is <i>pro bono</i> considered in performance evaluations?	Average annual <i>pro bono</i> hours per associate	Average number of annual <i>pro bono</i> hours per partner	Through which organizations does your firm connect with <i>pro bono</i> recipients?	Does your firm provide resources and training for <i>pro bono</i> services?	Does your firm cover disbursements on <i>pro bono</i> files?
Blake Cassels & Graydon LLP 574	QC, ON, AB, BC	FS	Yes	Yes	Yes	N.A	Yes	Two of our partners are co-chairs of the committee	Yes	2013: 31	We don't track partner hours on <i>pro bono</i> work	Numerous: at least 10	Yes	Our policy is not to.
Cassels Brock & Blackwell 200	ON, BC	FS	Yes	Yes	No	No	<i>Pro Bono</i> Committee comprised of associates and partners	Two co-chairs of committee are partners	Yes	Not Calculated	Not Calculated	Law Help Ontario, <i>Pro Bono</i> Law Ontario	Yes	Sometimes
Davis LLP 251	BC, AB, ON, QC, NWT, YK	FS	Yes	Yes	Yes	It depends on the matter and approvals provided in advance.	No	Each office's managing partner is responsible for these activities in his/her jurisdiction.	Yes	Avg. 2013: 58.93 hours. Highest was 516 hours for Sheila Tucker on <i>Carter v. Canada</i> .	Avg. 2013: 16.48 hours. Highest was 55.90 hours for Heather Treacy.	National and regional associations including the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Civil Liberties Association, Access <i>Pro Bono</i> , INTA, United Way, among others.	Yes, by way of mentorship.	It depends on the nature of the matter.
Dentons Canada LLP 500	AB, BC, ON, QC	FS	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes, in each province	Yes	Average for associates who do <i>pro bono</i> is 20 - 30 hours, sometimes significantly more.	We do not track this information for partners.	<i>Pro Bono</i> Students Canada, PBLQ, PBLA, Access <i>Pro Bono</i> (BC), <i>Pro Bono</i> Quebec, Canadian Civil Liberties Association, Unitera Leave for Change program, Reach Canada, Cangrands Kinship Support Group, various law school and community legal aid clinics.	Yes. Legal resources and student training to law student participants in the Tax Court of Canada Advocacy Project, legal and physical resources to high school participants in the LAWS program, full firm resources to firm lawyers who take on <i>pro bono</i> work.	No
Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP 707	BC, AB, ON, QC (+ London, Moscow, Beijing)	FS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Annual average recorded per professional (partners and associates): 8.5 hours *Note: Tracking process has only recently been formalized.		<i>Pro Bono</i> Law Ontario, <i>Pro Bono</i> Quebec, <i>Pro Bono</i> Law Alberta, Access <i>Pro Bono</i> (B.C.), Canadian Civil Liberties Association, Social Venture Partners, as well as a number of community-based organizations	Yes	In certain cases
Koch Thornton LLP 3	ON	Litigation	No - given our size, we discuss all matters individually	All members of our firm are familiar with our philosophy concerning access to justice and service to the community.	We do not have an hours target. All work counts.	Our partnership does not have a billable hours target. We share equally in the financial implications of our <i>pro bono</i> commitments.	Not necessary in a firm of 3 lawyers.	Not necessary in a firm of 3 lawyers.	We evaluate the quality of our associates' work, not its profitability when assessing performance.	150	We have likely put in over 400 hours per partner for each of the past 2-3 years.	Canadian Civil Liberties Association. We have also taken on individual cases on the basis of a direct approach.	Yes	Often
Lapointe Rosenstein Marchand Melançon 707	QC	FS	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	7	7	<i>ProBono</i> Québec	No	No
McCarthy Tétrault LLP 550	National	FS	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Dedicated - no Responsible - yes	Yes	6-yr average: 16.42 2013 average: 18.7	6-yr average: 5.69 2013 average: 4.5	<i>Pro Bono</i> Law Ontario, <i>Pro Bono</i> Law Alberta, <i>Pro Bono</i> Quebec, Access/ <i>Pro Bono</i> BC, <i>Pro Bono</i> Students Canada, Pivot Legal Society, Downtown Legal Services, Canadian Civil Liberties Association, BC Civil Liberties Association, Lawyers Without Borders Canada, Connect Legal, Osgoode Hall SCC Legal Clinics, Immigration and Refugee Board/Peel Children's Aid Society/Red Cross	Yes	Only if the client is unable to pay.
McInnes Cooper 219	NB, NS, PEI, NFLD	FS	Yes. Adopted in January 2012.	Yes - online learning modules, part of every lawyer's annual business planning.	Yes	Yes	Yes. The co-ordinator of our Collective Social Responsibility Program is also the co-ordinator of the <i>pro bono</i> program.	Yes. Special adviser Danny Graham is a member of the firm's <i>pro bono</i> committee, which is lawyers and the managing director of professional resources and chaired by partner Hugh Wright.	Yes. We use a balanced score-card to evaluate both partners and associates.	2013: 12 hours per associate with active, approved <i>pro bono</i> file(s) in 2013.	2013: 10 hours per partner with active, approved <i>pro bono</i> file(s).	Canadian Civil Liberties Association. To support that work, the firm created a client service team, led by partner Peter Rogers. Also reachAbility and the Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia.	Online learning modules, a component of orientation, library of <i>pro bono</i> practice resources, internal CLE.	No. Exceptions are considered if the clients can cover costs.
Miller Thomson LLP 459	BC, AB, SK, ON, QC	FS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	24 hours for each of 78 participants	22 hours for each of 29 participants	Access <i>Pro Bono</i> Law of BC, <i>Pro Bono</i> Law Alberta, <i>Pro Bono</i> Law Ontario, <i>Pro Bono</i> Law Saskatchewan, <i>Pro Bono</i> Quebec	Yes	No
Norton Rose Fulbright Canada 699	QC, AB, ON	FS	Yes, we have had a <i>pro bono</i> policy for several years.	Yes, policy posted internally and externally. Regular presentations to practice groups on the policy and to students during recruiting.	Yes	Yes	We have a <i>pro bono</i> committee that is composed of partners and non-partners.	A senior partner is chairperson of the <i>pro bono</i> committee.	Yes	There is no distinction between the hours for partners and associates; we budget 30 hours per lawyer.	There is no distinction between the hours for partners and associates; we budget 30 hours per lawyer.	<i>Pro Bono</i> Quebec (founding member), <i>Pro Bono</i> Law Ontario, <i>Pro Bono</i> Law Alberta, <i>Pro Bono</i> Students of Canada, Advocates for International Development (only Canadian firm), others including Redress Trust and the David Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights.	Yes, every <i>pro bono</i> file has a partner in charge who oversees the training of the lawyers on the file. We provide same resources as on a paying file, including mock runs of arguments and cross-examinations.	Yes, except where we represent an NGO which has the ability to cover some costs. Also fundraise internally to raise money and awareness of <i>pro bono</i> programs.
Thornton Grout Finnigan 19	ON	Restructuring, Insolvency, Commercial Litigation	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Not tracked	Not tracked	Not tracked	No	Sometimes