

# Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

## Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Armenia

### Introduction

Armenia has a growing pro bono tradition, where legal professionals offer free services to individuals and organizations in need, particularly those who cannot afford legal representation. Rooted in a commitment to social justice, the pro bono practice in Armenia is supported by both law firms and individual lawyers who contribute their expertise to help address various legal challenges faced by marginalized communities. While still evolving, this tradition plays a crucial role in promoting access to justice and strengthening the legal system in the country.

The 2021 - 2026 action plan of the Government of the Republic of Armenia aimed to expand and regulate the provision of free legal assistance as part of fulfilling the state's commitments. It also planned to introduce legal measures to promote and regulate pro bono legal services, including guarantees for those offering such services, which could significantly help ensure that people in need have access to legal aid.<sup>1</sup> However, with the passage of the law “On Amendments to the Tax Code of the Republic of Armenia” by the National Assembly on June 12, 2024, the motivation of lawyers to undertake, and possibility of receiving, free legal aid (pro bono) in Armenia could be significantly affected. The legislative change not only increased the tax burden for small and medium-sized law firms and sole practitioners due to the switch to a general tax system, but in fact also imposed taxes on free legal assistance.

### At a glance

Minimum pro bono hours requirement for lawyers?	Specific pro bono licence required?	May foreign lawyers practice pro bono?	Insurance required for law firm pro bono?	Insurance required for in-house pro bono?	Rules to limit advertising pro bono work?	Does pro bono work count to CLE credit?	Limitations for in-house lawyers to do pro bono?
No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

### The landscape

Professional regulation	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of legal services, including any licensing required to provide legal services. Please highlight any differences for lawyers working as in-house counsel.</li> </ol>	<p>The legal system of Armenia is considered part of the Romano-Germanic legal family, meaning that its core principles are codified into a referable system which serves as the primary source of law. A precise hierarchy of legal acts (laws, regulations, decisions, etc.) is established in which the Armenian Constitution (the</p>

<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.gov.am/am/Five-Year-Action-Program/> (last visited on October 14, 2025)

“Constitution”) has supreme legal force. International treaties signed and ratified by the state prevail over other legal acts (including national legal acts) except for the Constitution. Accordingly, international treaties can only be signed and ratified by Armenia to the extent they do not conflict with the Constitution.

The legal profession in Armenia is comprised of state-licensed attorneys (called “advocates”) and unlicensed lawyers (called “jurists” or “lawyers”). Except in limited cases prescribed by law, only advocates are allowed to represent clients in courts (judicial representation), including defending them in criminal matters. Advocates also have certain special privileges and rights, especially in respect of confidential information and concerning civil, administrative and penal proceedings (as to which see further below). Jurists/lawyers provide a broad range of legal services to the public. Advocates are subject to stricter regulation than jurists/lawyers. In addition to the requirements for a jurist/lawyer set out below, they must successfully complete the Academy of Advocates of the Republic of Armenia (the “Academy of Advocates”) and obtain a practice license from the Academy of Advocates. To obtain such a license, the advocate must study at the Academy of Advocates and pass qualification exams organized by the qualification commission of the Armenian Chamber of Advocates (the “Chamber”). After obtaining the status of an advocate, a person is also obliged to adhere to the ethical rules set out in the Code of Conduct for Advocates throughout their entire professional activity.

Advocates and lawyers may be employed as, and may provide legal assistance in their capacity as, in-house counsel in any Armenian company, bank or other legal entity and will continue to be subject to the requirements and oversight described above.

## Regulatory landscape for pro bono

<p>2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.</p>	<p>The basis for the provision of pro bono legal services (and legal aid) is the Law on Advocacy of the Republic of Armenia (thereafter also “the Law”) implicitly provides for legal bases for advocates to render pro bono legal assistance.</p> <p>Pursuant to paragraph 1 of Article 5 of the Law on Advocacy, “Advocate’s activity shall be deemed as a type of advocacy that aims at enforcing and protecting, through means and ways not prohibited by law, rights, freedoms, and legitimate interests of a person receiving legal assistance”. Furthermore, paragraph 1 of Article 6 of the Law stipulates that “Advocates are entitled to compensation for their services”. The Law goes even further stating in paragraph 3 of Article 6 that “Advocates may offer free of charge services”.</p> <p>Pro bono-friendly provisions are also set forth in the Advocate’s Code of Conduct. Rule 2.12.1 of the Code considers the provision of legal assistance to the client as the main purpose of advocate’s activity. Moreover, Rule 2.12.2 compels the Advocates’ Chamber (the Armenian Bar Association) to encourage advocates to provide free legal assistance to individuals.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Apart from the above, there are no specific rules or requirements relating to the provision of pro bono services.</p>
<p>3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?</p>	<p>Advocates and lawyers do not need a specific license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law).</p>
<p>4. Do foreign-qualified lawyers need any additional license to provide pro bono services (beyond their foreign qualification to practice law)?</p>	<p>Foreign-qualified lawyers do not need any additional license to provide pro bono services (beyond their foreign qualification to practice law).</p>
<p>5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?</p>	<p>Advocates and lawyers are not required by any rules in Armenia to work a minimum number of pro bono hours.</p>

<sup>2</sup> See <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/promoting-a-pro-bono-culture-in-armenia9s-legal-profession-the-need-for-strong-policies-and-high-minds/viewer> (last visited on October 14, 2025)

<p>6. Are aspiring lawyers required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become licensed lawyers?</p>	<p>Aspiring advocates and lawyers are not required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become licensed in Armenia.</p>
<p>7. Aside from mandatory targets (if any), are there aspirational pro bono hours targets for lawyers set by the local bar association, regulatory body or other body?</p>	<p>There are no aspirational pro bono hours targets for advocates and lawyers set by the local bar association, regulatory body or other body in Armenia.</p>
<p>8. Do lawyers receive any “Continuing Legal Education” (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?</p>	<p>While CLE is applicable to all advocates and lawyers in Armenia, they do not receive any CLE or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked in Armenia.</p>
<p><b>Insurance and advertising</b></p>	
<p>9. Do lawyers need professional indemnity legal insurance cover for pro bono legal services they provide? Does the requirement differ for in-house lawyers?</p> <p>If insurance is required, can lawyers meet the requirement by working under the cover of another pro bono provider, e.g. in partnership with a private law firm or organization working on the same pro bono project?</p>	<p>The provision of pro bono legal services is not subject to any separate requirement for professional indemnity insurance in addition to the requirement applicable for providing general legal services. The requirement does not differ for in-house advocates and lawyers.</p>
<p>10. Are there any rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?</p>	<p>There are no specific rules limiting or prohibiting advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients in Armenia.</p>
<p><b>Pro bono practice and culture</b></p>	
<p>11. What are the main areas of law which require or present opportunities for pro bono? What are the major unmet legal needs?</p>	<p>The main areas of law which require or present opportunities for pro bono, and the major unmet legal needs, are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Criminal law;</li> <li>2. Immigration and refugee law;</li> <li>3. Civil, administrative or constitutional law;</li> <li>4. Family law;</li> <li>5. Bankruptcy law;</li> <li>6. Any social security related issues; and</li> <li>7. Property law (e.g. landlord/tenant cases).</li> </ol>
<p>12. Who are the main providers of pro bono</p>	<p>The main providers of pro bono legal services are</p>

<p>legal services?</p>	<p>private attorneys/advocates; law firms, NGOs, and legal clinics held in law schools and universities.</p> <p>For example, the Chamber of Advocates of the Republic of Armenia initiates annual events involving numerous attorneys aimed at providing pro bono legal services, the Yerevan State University Law Clinic, Legal Expert law firm, etc.</p>
<p>13. Are there any noteworthy examples of how innovative technology or artificial intelligence is being used to enable access to pro bono or otherwise as part of pro bono cases or matters?</p>	<p>In a United Nations Development Programme project document entitled “Support to Armenia’s Justice and Rule of Law Reforms: Phase 2”, it was stated that an online platform be designed and developed to promote pro bono legal aid among the population by the second half of 2025.<sup>3</sup></p>

### Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts

<p>14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.</p>	<p>According to Chambers’ estimates, currently pro bono legal services in Armenia predominantly consist of legal consultations, with legal drafting, legal research and legal representation and advocacy in courts, arbitral tribunal and administrative bodies comprising the remainder of pro bono services provided.</p> <p>In addition, other notable sources of pro bono matters in Armenia include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Global pro bono clearinghouses and legal services providers such as TrustLaw or PILnet.<sup>4</sup></li> <li>2. The Armenian Bar Association develops pro bono programs and initiatives such as the “Five Lawyers” initiative, which holds a Summer School on the Protection of Law and Human Rights. Students pledge 50 hours of pro bono work in Armenia to put their lessons into practice.<sup>5</sup></li> <li>3. The Armenian Bar Association Pro Bono Clinic at Glendale, CA, is dedicated to providing high-quality legal services to those in need within their community. They</li> </ol>
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<sup>3</sup> See [https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/ARM/00128554\\_ProDoc\\_Support%20to%20Justice.pdf](https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/ARM/00128554_ProDoc_Support%20to%20Justice.pdf) (last visited on October 14, 2025)

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.trust.org/trustlaw/> and <https://www.pilnet.org/fighting-disability-discrimination-in-armenia/> (Last viewed on 14 October 2025).

<sup>5</sup> See: <https://armenianbar.org/> (Last visited on 14.10.2025).

offer pro bono legal assistance and advocate for justice while nurturing the professional growth of aspiring legal professionals.<sup>6</sup>

4. The Chamber of Advocates has previously organized pro bono events, including arranging weekly free legal consultations (including written consultations) provided by advocates and certain students.<sup>7</sup>
5. A limited number of NGOs operate and/or finance independent pro bono legal clinics from time to time and may provide pro bono legal assistance or trainings in collaboration with law firms on an ad hoc basis.<sup>8</sup>
6. Certain Higher Education Institutes run legal clinics staffed by law students, lecturers and/or professors which provide pro bono legal assistance upon request and in accordance with and subject to the internal regulations of the relevant institution(s). Such clinics are financed by the institutions themselves, universities and/or corporate grants and/or donations.<sup>9</sup> For example, the Armenian Bar Association, Yerevan State University and Artsakh State University partnered to open a pro bono legal clinic in Stepanakert in the Artsakh Republic.<sup>10</sup>
7. There may also be opportunities for advocates and lawyers to provide pro bono services by partnering with legal aid providers, such as the Public Defender's Office of the Chamber of Advo<sup>11,12</sup>

It is worth mentioning that the “Strategy on Judicial and Legal Reforms in the Republic of Armenia for 2022-2026” developed by the Ministry of Justice of Armenia specifically addresses issues of developing different types of pro bono legal assistance and states that it is

<sup>6</sup> See <https://armenianbar.org/students/internships/pro-bono-clinic-in-glendale/> (last visited on 14.10.2025)

<sup>7</sup> See <https://www.advocates.am/en/news/view/2313.html> (Last visited on 14.10.2025).

<sup>8</sup> See <https://www.otssolicitors.co.uk/help/responsibility-pro-bono-and-community/> (Last visited on 14.10.2025).

<sup>9</sup> See <https://armenianbar.org/programs/pro-bono-clinics/til-clinic-armenia/> (last visited on 14.10.2025)

<sup>10</sup> See <https://armenianbar.org/programs/pro-bono-clinics/artsakh-republic/> and The Legal Clinic of the YSU Faculty of Law at <https://www.y-su.am/en/sci/565> (last visited on 14.10.2025).

<sup>11</sup> See [https://fsmgatsby.cdn.prismic.io/fsmgatsby/ZrNtkaF0TcGlv3g\\_FSMLaw\\_07.08.24\\_eng.pdf](https://fsmgatsby.cdn.prismic.io/fsmgatsby/ZrNtkaF0TcGlv3g_FSMLaw_07.08.24_eng.pdf) (last visited on January 29, 2025)

<sup>12</sup> See [https://hpg.am/en\\_us](https://hpg.am/en_us) (Last viewed on 14.10.2025).

	<p>necessary to create mechanisms that will include advocates who are not public defenders, law school students, university students, as well as advocates and lawyers working in law firms and other organizations, who will provide pro bono legal assistance in various formats, while receiving certain benefits in return, such as exemption from training courses.<sup>13</sup></p> <p>Nevertheless, the recent changes made to the tax legislation have likely dramatically reduced the willingness of lawyers and advocates to engage in pro bono legal assistance,<sup>14</sup> thereby potentially depriving a significant portion of the public of their constitutionally guaranteed right to receive legal assistance due to (1) recent increase in tax burden mostly impacting boutique law firms and sole practitioners and (2) pro bono legal work not being exempt from VAT (and this is despite multiple concerns and protests raised by members of the Armenian legal community).<sup>15</sup></p>
<p>15. Is there any public or private organization with which a local or foreign lawyer can register to be made aware of pro bono opportunities?</p>	<p>The Chamber grants certificates and acknowledgements to advocates that deliver free legal assistance.</p>
<p>16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?</p>	<p>There are no awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work in Armenia. However, if the Chamber of Advocates organizes any event aimed at providing free legal assistance, it usually publishes a list of the law firms and advocates participating in the event.<sup>16</sup></p>

## Acknowledgements

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## Learn more

[Navigate the full Global Pro Bono Guide](#) to explore the global landscape and pro bono practices and opportunities across 100+ jurisdictions.

<sup>13</sup> See <https://www.arlis.am/hy/acts/166582> (last visited on 14.10.2025).

<sup>14</sup> See: <https://bm.ge/en/news/armenian-lawyers-protest-against-new-tax-burden-tax-obligations-increase-by-6-8-times?> (last visited on 14.10.2025)

<sup>15</sup> See <https://advocates.am/news/view/4168.html> (last visited on 14.10.2025)

<sup>16</sup> See for example <https://www.advocates.am/news/view/3423.html> (last visited on 30.01.2025)