

# Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

## Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Bermuda

### Introduction

Bermuda has a long-standing tradition of providing pro bono legal services to assist members of the public. The Bermuda Bar Association, in partnership with the government of Bermuda's Ministry of Social Development and Sports and the Department of Youth Sport and Recreation, has been instrumental in offering free legal advice clinics. These clinics have been operational for many years, providing residents with access to licensed legal professionals. Legal clinics have also been established by organisations in Bermuda to assist individuals with unmet legal needs in the community, such as employment or family and matrimonial matters. Local firms demonstrate a strong commitment to the provision of legal services free of charge, and the Bermuda Bar Association actively maintains a list of lawyers willing to offer pro bono services to the public.

### 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	No	Yes	No	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>Bermuda is a common law jurisdiction. In order to practice law and be eligible for admission to the Bermuda Bar, barristers and attorneys are required to hold a Commonwealth Law Degree and be able to practice in His Majesty's dominion. Applications for admission to the Bermuda Bar must include a Fit &amp; Proper Certificate, which will be issued by the Bermuda Bar Council.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>All members of the Bar are also bound by the Bermuda Bar Act 1974 and the Barristers' Code of Professional Conduct (1981), which requires that members carry out their duties to their clients, the Court, members of the public, and their colleagues with integrity and in accordance with the Code of professional conduct. Furthermore,</p>

<sup>1</sup> See <https://bermudabar.org/qualifications-procedure-for-admission-to-the-bermuda-bar.html> (last visited on 6 December 2024).

members of the legal profession are required to conduct themselves within or outside the professional sphere in a manner that is not likely to impair a client's trust in them as a legal advisor. In addition to the aforementioned points, the Bar Council is also able to enforce stringent professional and regulatory standards via the provisions of the Bermuda Bar Act 1974 and its other supporting statutes; Bar Organisational Rules 1975, Barristers (Accounts & Records Rules) 1976, Barristers Code of Professional Conduct 1981, Bar (Practicing Certificate) Rules 1984, Bar Disciplinary Tribunal Rules 1997, Bar Professional Conduct Committee Rules 1997, Bermuda Bar (Insurance) Rules 2009, Bermuda Bar (professional Companies) Rules 2009 and the Bermuda Bar (Barristers and Accountants AML/ATF Board) Rules 2018.<sup>2</sup>

All in-house counsel whose day-to-day responsibilities require the practice of Bermuda law are required to maintain a current and valid practicing certificate. However, they are entitled to claim certain exemptions if they satisfy certain mandatory requirements:

1. As long as the attorney only acts as in-house counsel, he is exempt from obtaining professional indemnity insurance under section 13A of the Bermuda Bar Act 1974.
2. The Barristers (Accounts & Records) Rules 1976 section 8(1) exempts individuals from the requirement to submit an accountant's report to Bar Council for review and approval each year, if "he satisfies the Council that owing to the circumstances of this case it is unnecessary for him to do so". In-House Counsel may claim this exemption in the Application for a Practicing Certificate contained in the Bermuda Bar (Practicing Certificate) Rules.
3. In-house counsel are exempt from paying the annual AML/ATF fees.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.applebyglobal.com/publications/bermudas-legal-system/> (last visited on 6 December 2024).

<sup>3</sup> See <https://bermudabar.org/images/Web%20Guidance%20note%20re%20In-House%20Counsel%20Status%20requirements%20Aug%202019.pdf> (last visited on 6 December 2024).

Regulatory landscape for pro bono	
2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.	<p>There are no specific laws or rules regulating the provision of pro bono legal services in Bermuda.</p> <p>However, by virtue of being licensed as barristers and attorneys under the Bermuda Bar Act 1974, lawyers are subject to the Barristers' Code of Professional Conduct (1981), which requires that members carry out their duties to their clients, the Court, members of the public, and their colleagues with integrity and in accordance with the Code of professional conduct.</p>
3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?	Lawyers do not need a licence to provide pro bono legal services (beyond the usual local qualification to practice law).
4. Do foreign-qualified lawyers need any additional license to provide pro bono services (beyond their foreign qualification to practice law)?	<p>Foreign-qualified lawyers are prohibited from providing advice as to the laws of Bermuda and must inform potential recipients of legal advice where they are qualified to practice law.</p> <p>Foreign lawyers may apply for admission to the Bermuda bar if they meet, among others, the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. have passed the final examination required for qualification as a barrister in England and have served a pupillage of at least 12 months in a barrister's chambers in England or Bermuda, or partly in one and partly the other; or</li><li>2. have passed the final examination required for qualification as a solicitor in England and have served articles of at least one year in England or Bermuda or partly in one and partly in the other; or</li><li>3. be entitled to practise in any court in any of His Majesty's dominions and possess a qualification as to standard, law, practice, procedure, and practical experience comparable to those of barristers and solicitors admitted to practice in England.<sup>4</sup></li></ol>
5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If	Lawyers are not required by any applicable rules in Bermuda to work a minimum number of pro

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<sup>4</sup> See

[https://bermudabar.org/images/QUALIFICATIONS%20&%20PROCEDURE%20FOR%20CALL%20TO%20THE%20BERMUDA%20BAR%20\(Supreme%20Court%20Act%20S.%2051%20&%2052%20apply\).pdf](https://bermudabar.org/images/QUALIFICATIONS%20&%20PROCEDURE%20FOR%20CALL%20TO%20THE%20BERMUDA%20BAR%20(Supreme%20Court%20Act%20S.%2051%20&%2052%20apply).pdf) (last visited on 6 December 2024).

so, how many?	bono hours.
6. Are aspiring lawyers required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become licensed lawyers?	Aspiring lawyers are not required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become licensed lawyers.
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?	There are no aspirational pro bono hours targets for lawyers set by the local bar association, regulatory body, or other body in Bermuda.
8. Do lawyers receive any “Continuing Legal Education” (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?	<p>No, lawyers do not receive any CLE or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked. The Bermuda Bar Association does, however, mandate that all practicing members complete eight hours of CLE annually, within the period from 1 November to 31 October . Various activities can be recognised for CLE credit, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Writing law books/legal articles.</li> <li>2. Conducting legal research, which leads to a precedent or practice note.</li> </ol> <p>Preparation and/or delivery of courses.</p>
<b>Insurance and advertising</b>	
<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>Yes, every individual who practises as a barrister in Bermuda needs to obtain and maintain in effect insurance against professional liability under a policy of professional liability insurance issued by an insurance company that is registered as an insurer under the Insurance Act 1978 or is authorised to provide insurance under equivalent legislation in another jurisdiction, which would extend to any pro bono legal services he or she provide. The requirement differs for in-house lawyers, as this does not apply to a barrister who is an employee of a person (other than a firm of barristers or a professional company) and practises as a barrister exclusively for that person.<sup>5</sup></p> <p>Barristers must ensure that either their personal insurance or the insurance of the body through which they provide services covers them for any pro bono legal services being provided.</p>

<sup>5</sup> See Section 13A of the Bermuda Bar Act 1974 at [https://bermudabar.org/images/TAB%201%20Bermuda%20Bar%20Act%201974%20\(Aug%202020\).pdf](https://bermudabar.org/images/TAB%201%20Bermuda%20Bar%20Act%201974%20(Aug%202020).pdf) (last visited on 6 December 2024).

<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. However, barristers in Bermuda need to abide by the Barristers' Code of Professional Conduct (1981), as well as the Barristers &amp; Attorney's Practice Promotion Code (Law Firm Advertising Guidelines). In particular, he or she needs to ensure that the marketing must be decent, legal, honest, demonstrably truthful, not misleading, and sufficiently informative so as to provide the public with detail sufficient for any person to reasonably determine appropriate counsel.<sup>6</sup> Identifying any client or any item of their business in marketing materials requires prior written consent from the client. Also, marketing may not take the form of advertising or solicited promotion on television or radio, in the cinema, or on any hoarding or display in or readily visible or audible from a place to which the general public habitually has access (whether with or without payment).<sup>7</sup></p>
<b>Pro bono practice and culture</b>	
<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 that may present opportunities for pro bono work in Bermuda address the major unmet legal needs within the community, such as family law, immigration law, housing and landlord-tenant disputes, property law, family and matrimonial law, employment law, wills and estate, and personal injury.</p>
<p>12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?</p>	<p>The main providers of pro bono legal services in Bermuda are NGOs, legal advice centres, private law firms, and free legal advice clinics.</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>Presently, there are no specific examples of how innovative technology or AI is being applied in pro bono cases. However, legal professionals are increasingly recognising the potential of AI to enhance aspects of legal work, and private firms have published articles evaluating the technology's various use cases.</p>

<sup>6</sup> See Section 2.1 of the Barristers & Attorney's Practice Promotion Code (Law Firm Advertising Guidelines) at [https://bermudabar.org/images/BBA\\_Practice\\_Promotion\\_Code\\_Firms\\_Advertising\\_Guidelines\\_4\\_March\\_2016.pdf](https://bermudabar.org/images/BBA_Practice_Promotion_Code_Firms_Advertising_Guidelines_4_March_2016.pdf) (last visited on 6 December, 2024).

<sup>7</sup> See Section 5.1 of the Barristers & Attorney's Practice Promotion Code (Law Firm Advertising Guidelines) at [https://bermudabar.org/images/BBA\\_Practice\\_Promotion\\_Code\\_Firms\\_Advertising\\_Guidelines\\_4\\_March\\_2016.pdf](https://bermudabar.org/images/BBA_Practice_Promotion_Code_Firms_Advertising_Guidelines_4_March_2016.pdf) (last visited on 6 December, 2024).

**Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts**

14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.

In Bermuda, seniors may be provided free general legal advice over the phone from members of the legal fraternity.

In addition, there are legal clinics held at the Central Zone community and the Western Zone community.

The legal clinic held at the Central Zone community is conducted at the Sammy Wilson Community Centre (SWCC), #3 Angle Street, Pembroke HM 17. This clinic runs on most Thursdays from 5:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. with doors opening at 5 p.m. This service is offered on a first-come, first-served basis with 15 minutes allotted per person. The clinic traditionally runs from March through November of each year.

The legal clinic held at the Western Zone community is conducted at the Western Zone Community Centre, #15 Kitchener Road, Sandys MA01. This clinic runs every Wednesday of every month until the end of the year. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. to meet with barristers & attorneys starting at 6 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. This service will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis with 15 minutes allotted per person.<sup>8</sup>

Lastly, there are ad hoc legal clinics. For example, Bermuda is Love hosted a free legal advice clinic on 25 January 2025 from 9:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. at the Western Zone Community Centre, 15 Kitchener Road, Sandys, providing assistance in the following areas:

- Landlord/Tenant
- Employment law
- Property
- Wills & Estates
- Family and Matrimonial
- Personal Injury
- Litigation support
- Mediation and ADR

Law firms have also provided pro bono legal advice to certain Bermuda organisations, including:

- Bermuda Women's Resource Centre (Jennifer A. Haworth, JP)

<sup>8</sup> See <https://bermudabar.org/index.php/free-legal-advice-clinic.html> (last visited on 7 December 2024).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bermuda Legal Advice Centre (Fozeia Rana-Fahy, Jennifer A. Haworth, JP)</li> <li>• Bermuda Centre for Abuse</li> <li>• Age Concern (Hil de Frias, Denis de Frias)</li> <li>• Bermuda Ministry of Health, Seniors and Environment – Seniors Advisory Council</li> <li>• Bermuda Cancer &amp; Health Centre (Jennifer A. Haworth, JP)</li> <li>• Bermuda Hospital Board Charitable Trust</li> <li>• Bermuda National Trust</li> <li>• Centre for Justice</li> <li>• Bermuda Sloop Foundation</li> <li>• The Bermuda Festival</li> <li>• The Bermuda Feline Assistance Bureau</li> <li>• Project 100 (Denis de Frias)</li> <li>• The Bermuda Foundation for Insurance Studies (Quorum Limited)<sup>9</sup></li> </ul>
<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>There is no official public or private organisation with which a local or foreign lawyer can register to be made aware of pro bono opportunities. The primary record of pro bono opportunities is available on the Bermuda Bar Associations website, which outlines the current initiatives.</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 Bermuda at present.</p>

## Acknowledgements

Name of Law Firm: Walkers

Name of lawyer: Natalie Neto

## Learn more

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

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<sup>9</sup> See <https://mjm.bm/community/pro-bono-work/> (last visited on 7 December, 2024).