

# Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

## Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Chile

### Introduction

*Fundación Pro Bono Chile*, established in 2000, is the oldest clearinghouse in Latin America. Other important entities in Chile's pro bono tradition include law firms, NGOs, and legal clinics. Whilst there is still a lot of work left to be done, this jurisdiction has demonstrated a growing commitment to pro bono in the past few years. Between 2022 and 2023, Chile led the region as the country with the greatest number of new signatories to the Pro Bono Declaration of the Americas (PBDA) — an increase of 24%.<sup>1</sup> All the Chilean firms that took part in the 2024 pro bono survey organised by Latin Lawyer and the Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice reported they had a pro bono coordinator, and almost three-quarters disclosed that pro bono work is taken into account in associates' compensation and career progression.

### 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?
Yes	No	Yes	No	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>There is limited regulatory oversight of the legal profession in Chile. Joining the Chile Bar Association is optional, but lawyers who are affiliated must observe the Bar's Professional Ethics Code.<sup>2</sup> Further, there are no continuing professional development requirements, and professional indemnity insurance is not required.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>The licence of <i>abogado</i> (lawyer) is granted by the <i>Corte Suprema</i> (Supreme Court). The requirements to obtain a licence to practice Chilean law include graduating with a Bachelor of Law from a university in Chile and completing the six-month professional placement in a</p>

<sup>1</sup> <https://latinlawyer.com/survey/pro-bono/2024/article/pro-bono-jurisdictional-overview-of-the-results> (last accessed 17 January 2025).

<sup>2</sup> <https://colegioabogados.cl/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/LibroCodigo1.pdf> (last accessed 6 January 2025).

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/international/doing-legal-business-in-chile> (last accessed 6 January 2025).

	Corporación de Asistencia Judicial (CAJ). <sup>4</sup>
2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.	<p>There are no overarching laws or rules that specifically regulate the provision of pro bono legal services in Chile.</p> <p>However, lawyers affiliated with the Chilean Bar Association must comply with the Professional Ethics Code.<sup>5</sup> Article 44 encourages lawyers to participate in pro bono activities, and Article 45 underlines that the same level of professional diligence expected in regular legal services also applies to pro bono work.</p>
3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?	Lawyers in Chile do not require any additional licences 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)?	Foreign lawyers must requalify as <i>abogados</i> in order to provide pro bono legal services; otherwise, they are not allowed to appear in court or provide advice on Chilean law. <sup>6</sup> Please refer to the requirements outlined above in section one.
5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?	Lawyers in Chile are not required to work a minimum number of pro bono hours.
6. Are aspiring lawyers required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become licensed lawyers?	As part of the requirements to become a licensed lawyer in Chile, aspiring lawyers must complete a continuous six-month postgraduate professional placement providing free legal advice with the CAJ. <sup>7</sup> Arguably, CAJ does not qualify as pro bono legal work, as it is a mandatory requirement to obtain a law degree and, therefore, lacks the voluntary element that typically characterises pro bono activity.
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?	Although there are no mandatory targets in Chile, signatories of the PBDA are expected to complete 20 hours of pro bono work annually per lawyer. Currently, 20 firms in Chile are signed up to this aspirational pro bono target. Further

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ibanet.org/document?id=ITLS-Latin-America-and-Caribbean-2019> (last accessed 6 January 2025).

<sup>5</sup> <https://colegioabogados.cl/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/LibroCodigo1.pdf> (last accessed 3 January 2025).

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/international/doing-legal-business-in-chile#qualifying-as-a-foreign-lawyer-in-chile> (last accessed 3 January 2025).

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.cajmetro.cl/el-mercurio-legal-la-practica-ante-la-caj-es-un-pilar-del-sistema-de-acceso-a-la-justicia-como-tambien-lo-es-para-la-formacion-de-los-futuros-abogados/> (last accessed 30 December 2024).

	information regarding the PBDA statement and signatories can be found online. <sup>8</sup>
8. Do lawyers receive any “Continuing Legal Education” (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?	There are no continuing professional development requirements in Chile. <sup>9</sup> As such, lawyers in Chile do not receive any CLE or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked.
9. Do lawyers need professional indemnity legal insurance cover for pro bono legal services they provide? Does the requirement differ for in-house lawyers?  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?	Lawyers (including in-house lawyers) in Chile do not require professional indemnity legal insurance coverage for any pro bono legal services that they provide.
10. Are there any rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?	Article 13 of the Chilean Bar Association’s Professional Ethics Code expressly prohibits soliciting new clients. However, there are several exceptions, including communications in the context of pro bono activities.
11. What are the main areas of law which require or present opportunities for pro bono? What are the major unmet legal needs?	The 2022 Thomas Reuters Foundation Index of Pro Bono identified access to justice, as well as data and digital rights, as the most selected areas of pro bono focus among the Chilean firms surveyed. <sup>10</sup>  Ahead of the various referendums on the new Chile constitution held between 2020 and 2023, there was an increase in pro bono activities designed to inform Chileans of the constitutional process and empowering social engagement. <sup>11</sup>
12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?	CAJ is a key provider of pro bono assistance in Chile. As a Public Judicial Assistance Corporation, CAJ is a decentralised not-for-profit

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.vancecenter.org/our-networks/pro-bono-network-of-the-americas/> (last accessed 30 December 2024).

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/international/doing-legal-business-in-chile> (last accessed 3 January 2025).

<sup>10</sup> [https://pbi.trust.org/documents/2022/TRF%20INDEX%20Pro%20Bono%202022%20full%20document.pdf?language\\_id=1](https://pbi.trust.org/documents/2022/TRF%20INDEX%20Pro%20Bono%202022%20full%20document.pdf?language_id=1) (last accessed 6 January 2025).

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ibanet.org/article/93966370-6e7e-4fc8-8335-39e876c00768> (last accessed 6 January 2025).

	<p>organisation in the public sector, with the aim of increasing access to free and professional legal advice. The CAJ website includes a list of its centres, along with their respective addresses and contact details.<sup>12</sup></p> <p>Several local and international firms based in Chile, as well as some in-house legal departments, collaborate in their own pro bono projects or with the <i>Fundación Pro Bono</i>.</p> <p>Law schools also often have legal clinics that provide pro bono assistance.</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>We are not aware of examples of technology or AI as mechanisms for accessing or developing pro bono cases.</p>
<p>14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.</p>	<p><i>Fundación Pro Bono</i> is the main resource for pro bono matters in Chile.<sup>13</sup> This leading clearinghouse for pro bono work has increased access to justice in Chile by connecting lawyers to pro bono programmes since 2000. <i>Fundación Pro Bono</i> also collaborates with other organisations, notably the Chilean Bar Association and the Pro Bono Network of the Americas. This pro bono clearinghouse regularly provides updates via its website, newsletter, and social media channels.</p> <p><i>Ayuda Legal Chile</i> offers free handbooks on a range of topics related to pro bono legal work, from the legal obligations that non-profit organisations must comply with to the rights of volunteers during natural disasters.<sup>14</sup> These resources can be accessed at <a href="https://ayudalegalchile.cl/rio-de-informacion/">https://ayudalegalchile.cl/rio-de-informacion/</a>.</p> <p>Additional organisations that are notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in Chile include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Observatorio Ciudadano (OC)</i><sup>15</sup></li> <li>• <i>Corporación Humanas — Centro Regional</i></li> </ul>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cajmetro.cl/servicios/BuscarCentro/> (last accessed 6 January 2025).

<sup>13</sup> <https://probono.cl/> (last accessed 14 February 2025).

<sup>14</sup> <https://ayudalegalchile.cl/> (last accessed 14 February 2025).

<sup>15</sup> <https://observatorio.cl/> (last accessed 14 February 2025).

	<p><i>de Derechos Humanos y Justicia de Género</i><sup>16</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Corporación de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos del Pueblo (CODEPU)</i><sup>17</sup></li> <li>• <i>Centro de Salud Mental y Derechos Humanos (CINTRAS)</i><sup>18</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><i>Fundación Pro Bono Chile</i> serves as a valuable resource for local and foreign lawyers to register and learn about pro bono opportunities. A prospective volunteer can register interest in becoming a member via a short form online.<sup>19</sup></p> <p>An individual or legal entity seeking pro bono legal advice can also request assistance online through the <i>Fundación Pro Bono Chile</i> website.<sup>20</sup></p> <p>Please also refer to the additional organisations listed above for further pro bono projects.</p>
<p>16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?</p>	<p><i>Latin Lawyer</i> holds an annual award ceremony to recognise the achievements of practitioners across Latin America, including an award for Pro Bono Law Firm of the Year and Pro Bono Project of the Year.<sup>21</sup></p> <p><i>Latin Lawyer</i>, in collaboration with the Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice, also compiles an annual list of Leading Lights to highlight law firms making a significant contribution to strengthening a culture of pro bono in Latin America. This list, which recognised several firms from Chile, considers a firm's recognition of their lawyer's pro bono work, the firm's pro bono infrastructure, the pro bono work carried out, and support of the country's pro bono clearinghouse.<sup>22</sup></p> <p>Recognition for pro bono work is also awarded and celebrated internally within firms.</p>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.humanas.cl/> (last accessed 14 February 2025).

<sup>17</sup> <https://codepu.cl/wp/> (last accessed 14 February 2025).

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.cintras.org/> (last accessed 14 February 2025).

<sup>19</sup> <https://probono.cl/miembros/> (last accessed 3 January 2025).

<sup>20</sup> <https://intranet2.probono.cl/nuevo-caso> (last accessed 3 January 2025).

<sup>21</sup> <https://latinlawyer.com/news-and-features/latin-lawyer-awards/2024?page=2> (last accessed 30 December 2024).

<sup>22</sup> [https://latinlawyer.com/survey/pro-bono/2024/article/pro-bono-leading-lights?utm\\_source=Pro%2Bbono%253A%2BLeading%2BLights&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Latin%2BLawyer%2BAlets](https://latinlawyer.com/survey/pro-bono/2024/article/pro-bono-leading-lights?utm_source=Pro%2Bbono%253A%2BLeading%2BLights&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latin%2BLawyer%2BAlets) (last accessed 30 December 2024).

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## Learn more

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