

Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Egypt

Introduction

Egypt's legal system, rooted in the 19th century, has long been a model for legal reform in the Arab world, with its judiciary and legal profession playing a pivotal role in advancing justice and freedom. While the Advocates Law mandates legal aid for those in need, the practice of pro bono legal services remains limited and underdeveloped. Beyond efforts by NGOs and a few private practitioners, pro bono work in Egypt lacks formalisation, underscoring the need for a more structured approach to ensure access to justice for vulnerable groups.

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	No	No	Yes	No	Yes

The landscape

Professional regulation	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<p>The legal profession in Egypt is governed by the Advocates Law No. 17 of 1983 (Advocates Law), the Egyptian Bar Association (EBA), and the general principles of the Egyptian Constitution. The Advocates Law mandates that legal practice requires a licence and registration with the EBA, along with fulfilling several licensing and registration requirements, such as holding Egyptian nationality, possessing full civil capacity, and having the necessary educational and character qualifications.¹ The Egyptian Constitution, as the supreme legal authority, guarantees the right to legal assistance, ensures the right to defence, and upholds the independence of lawyers as a fundamental aspect of providing legal services.²</p>

¹ Licensing requirements additionally include permanent residence and compliance with ethical and criminal background checks. See Articles 2 and 13 of the Egyptian Advocates Law, as amended.

² See Articles 54, 98, and 198 of the Egyptian Constitution of 2014, as amended.

	<p>For in-house counsel, the practice of law includes examining complaints, conducting administrative investigations, drafting internal regulations and decisions, providing internal legal advice, and drafting agreements. While the registration requirements with the EBA apply similarly to in-house counsel, in practice, they may choose not to register. However, without a valid practicing licence, they cannot represent clients in court or act as external counsel. Additionally, in-house counsel within public authorities, public sector companies, and press institutions are prohibited from practicing law for any entity other than their employer, and any such actions are considered null and void.³</p>
<p>2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.</p>	<p>There is still no standalone piece of legislation governing the principle of pro bono legal services in Egypt.</p> <p>The Advocates Law explicitly requires lawyers to provide pro bono legal assistance to indigent citizens and others in need, as a distinct obligation separate from state-funded legal aid, and with the same level of care as for paying clients. However, the law does not regulate how such services should be provided, nor does it specify quotas, hours, targeted groups, or the implications of failing to provide these services. These services include filing lawsuits, attending hearings, participating in public prosecution investigations, attending before courts, providing legal advice, and drafting contracts.⁴ Lawyers are required to observe the same duty of care and diligence, avoid conflict of interest, and adhere to requirements of ethics and integrity.</p> <p>However, it is worth noting that, although the right to counsel and legal assistance (either in the form of legal aid or pro bono) is guaranteed and enshrined in the Egyptian Constitution⁵ and affirmed by the Advocates Law, in practice, the concept of pro bono legal services is not recognised by the vast majority of lawyers in</p>

³ Article 8 of the Advocates Law.

⁴ See Articles 64 and 93 of the Egyptian Advocates Law, as amended.

⁵ Articles 54, 96, and 98 of the Egyptian Constitution of 2014, as amended.

	Egypt. ⁶
3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?	Apart from the licence to practise law in Egypt, lawyers do not require any additional licence to provide pro bono legal services. ⁷
4. Do foreign-qualified lawyers need any additional license to provide pro bono services (beyond their foreign qualification to practice law)?	A foreign legal consultant regime is not established in Egypt; however, the Minister of Justice, in coordination with the EBA, could license ⁸ a foreign lawyer to work in relation to a particular case or a particular topic in Egypt, provided that a reciprocal arrangement exists in the foreign lawyer's home jurisdiction. The EBA has established special roles for foreign lawyers and those practicing outside Egypt, along with the applicable rules governing their registration hierarchy, fees, annual subscriptions, and the services provided. ⁹
5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?	Lawyers in Egypt 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?	Aspiring lawyers in Egypt are not required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become a licensed lawyer.
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 hour targets set by the EBA or any other Egyptian regulatory body.
8. Do lawyers receive any "Continuing Legal Education" (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?	Lawyers in Egypt 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	Lawyers performing legal services in Egypt, whether private practitioners or in-house counsel, are not required to have professional indemnity insurance for either paid or pro bono legal services.

⁶ IBA, the Legal Profession and the Rule of Law in the New Egypt, Para 82, 106.

⁷ See the response to (a)1.

⁸ Article 13 of the Egyptian Advocates Law, as amended.

⁹ Article 13 of the Egyptian Advocates Law, as amended.

<p>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>10. Are there any rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?</p>	<p>In addition to the general rules in Egyptian law governing confidentiality and attorney-client privilege, lawyers are prohibited under the Advocates Law from using any means of advertising, enticement, using intermediaries, or implying any real or alleged influence or connections in practicing their profession.¹⁰</p> <p>While the Advocates Law does not specifically prohibit advertising of pro bono legal services, these prohibitions may include pro bono successes or the solicitation of new pro bono clients, given the broad language of the prohibition under the Advocates Law.¹¹</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 that require the provision of pro bono legal services in Egypt are family law, violence against women, human trafficking, refugee assistance (to refugees or asylum seekers who are claiming asylum in Egypt or seeking relocation to third countries), training, and capacity building to lawyers, entrepreneurs, and small businesses with a particular focus on vulnerable groups such as women, children, and persons with disabilities. These areas are critical due to the increasing demand for accessible legal support in these sectors.¹² Given that Egypt is one of the fastest growing startup hubs in the region, it is worth noting that the need for startup-tailored pro bono legal services is of the utmost importance due to the inaccessibility of affordable legal assistance, particularly for indigent citizens.</p>
<p>12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?</p>	<p>Despite the lack of a standalone mandate for pro bono legal services, the main providers of pro bono legal services include legal professionals and associations providing legal assistance. The EBA plays a key role, as the Advocates Law requires each regional branch to form a legal</p>

¹⁰An EBA official has verbally noted that instances of violations are very rare, in practice.

¹¹ See Article 71 of the Egyptian Advocates Law, as amended.

¹² See <https://egypt.unwomen.org/en> (last viewed on 27 January 2026).

	<p>assistance committee to coordinate the efforts of the membership to provide pro bono legal services to those who are unable to afford representation, including filing lawsuits, attending public prosecution investigations, offering legal advice, and drafting contracts.¹³ Where lawyers do offer their services to people who cannot afford legal services, it is normally derived from a moral obligation more than a professional obligation.</p> <p>Other main providers of pro bono legal services in Egypt include NGOs, universities and law schools, private law firms, governmental and public services, corporate social responsibility initiatives, and other legal aid organisations, as detailed under Section Error! Reference source not found. However, these providers are relatively few in number, highlighting the need for expanded pro bono efforts, including the enactment of a specific law to regulate and promote such services.¹⁴</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>While the integration of technology and artificial intelligence into pro bono legal services in Egypt is still evolving, some promising initiatives are emerging, even if they are not yet widely recognised. For instance, platforms like <i>Ensan</i> match volunteers with opportunities based on their skills, including legal services.¹⁵ Also, the EBA's website provides resources such as lectures, legal courses, videos, and legal information, which help support pro bono legal services by offering free educational content for both legal professionals and the public.¹⁶</p>
<p>14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.</p>	<p>In practice, pro bono services in Egypt take many forms, as follows:</p> <p>1. <u>Non-Governmental Sources:</u></p> <p>Private Law Firms and Pro Bono Services: Although private legal services are rarely given for free in Egypt, a growing numbers of law firms</p>

¹³ See Articles 93-97 of the Egyptian Advocates Law, as amended.

¹⁴ See the response to (e)1 for further details regarding the main providers of pro bono services in Egypt.

¹⁵ https://ensanaid.org/?page_id=7334&lang=en (Last reviewed on 27 January 2026).

¹⁶ See <https://egyils.com/>.

have started to establish pro bono programmes — mainly in the form of consultative advice to entrepreneurs and NGOs and legal training for young lawyers. Some of the law firms that are involved in these efforts are:

- Youssef & Partners;¹⁷
- Andersen in Egypt;¹⁸
- Shalakany Law Office;¹⁹
- Matouk Bassiouny & Hennawy;²⁰
- Sharkawy Sarhan Law firm;²¹
- Sarie Eldin & Partners Law Firm;²²
- ALC — Alieldean Weshai & Partners;²³
- Sharma & Sharma Advocates;²⁴ and
- Gammal Law Office.²⁵

Law Students' Legal Clinics: Law students at academic institutions, such as Cairo University,²⁶ British University in Egypt,²⁷ and Beni-Suef University,²⁸ are increasingly participating in legal clinics to provide free legal advice to those in need.

2. Human Rights and Refugee Rights Organisations:

Several organisations in Egypt provide pro bono legal services and support in various areas, including refugee rights and human and women's rights:

For refugee rights:

- Arab Council Supporting Fair Trial and Human Rights (ACSFT)²⁹;
- Egyptian Foundation for Refugee Rights³⁰; and
- The Refugee Legal Aid Project, St. Andrew's Refugee Services³¹.

¹⁷ See <https://youssef.law/practices/pro-bono/>.

¹⁸ See <https://eg.andersen.com/pro-bono/>.

¹⁹ See <https://shalakany.com/community/>.

²⁰ See www.matoukbassiouny.com.

²¹ See <https://sharkawylaw.com/csr/>.

²² See <http://www.sarieldin.com/>.

²³ See <https://www.alc.law/pro-bono/>.

²⁴ See <https://www.legalservicesdelhi.com/egypt/pro-bono-work.htm>.

²⁵ See <https://www.gammallawoffice.com/index.php/pro-bono/index.html>.

²⁶ See <https://idai.pantheonsorbonne.fr/vie-universitaire/clinique-juridique-sorbonne-en-egypte>.

²⁷ See <https://old.bue.edu.eg/news/the-legal-clinic/>.

²⁸ See https://www.bsu.edu.eg/Content.aspx?section_id=3047&cat_id=17&lang=en.

²⁹ <https://data.unhcr.org/en/partners/view/14>

³⁰

[https://help.unhcr.org/egypt/en/partners/efrr/#:~:text=The%20Egyptian%20Foundation%20for%20Refugee%20Rights%20\(EFR\),rights%20violations%20*%20Engages%20with%20refugee%20communities](https://help.unhcr.org/egypt/en/partners/efrr/#:~:text=The%20Egyptian%20Foundation%20for%20Refugee%20Rights%20(EFR),rights%20violations%20*%20Engages%20with%20refugee%20communities)

³¹ <https://stars-egypt.org/rlap>

	<p>For human and women’s rights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Center for Egyptian Women’s Legal Assistance³²; • The Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights³³; • The Legal Aid Unit at Cairo Institute of Human Rights Studies³⁴; • The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights³⁵; • The Association for Freedom of Thought and Expression³⁶; • The Arab Network for Human Rights Information³⁷.
<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>Currently, such a centralised organization does not exist, given the status of the pro bono practice in Egypt. However, attorneys looking for pro bono opportunities in Egypt can always communicate with the EBA to inquire about individuals or communities in need of free legal assistance. Additionally, attorneys can follow refugee legal assistance clinics, which aim to help uniquely vulnerable refugees in Egypt. Examples include the Refugee Legal Aid Project at St Andrew’s Refugee Services.³⁸ Pro bono legal services at the centers can vary from legal rights counselling to protection assistance and human care services.</p>
<p>16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?</p>	<p>There are no specific, widely recognised awards, lists, or rankings solely dedicated to pro bono work in Egypt. However, some private law firms operating in Egypt may receive international recognition through prestigious awards (such as Chambers, Legal500, and The Lawyer) that highlight their overall work, client service, and legal innovation, which can include their pro bono contributions.³⁹</p>

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³² <https://cewla.org/en/aboutus/about.html>

³³ <https://ecesr.org/en/>

³⁴ <https://cihrs.org/?lang=en>

³⁵ <https://eijsr.org/en>

³⁶ <https://afteegypt.org/en>

³⁷ <https://www.anhri.info/?lang=en>

³⁸ See <https://stars-egypt.org/rlap>.

³⁹ See <https://www.thelawyer.com/>, <https://chambers.com/> and <https://www.legal500.com/>.

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