

# Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

## Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Finland

### Introduction

Pro bono legal work provides a unique opportunity to support and promote social responsibility of lawyers in Finland. However, due to the fulsome, well developed and broad system of public welfare services in Finland, including state funded legal services, Ombudsman offices and other agencies, the need for pro bono legal services is limited. Hence, pro bono legal work is not widespread or a significant part of the legal culture in Finland and, for example, there is no mandatory pro bono requirement for lawyers in Finland. Nevertheless, the Finnish Bar Association (“FBA”) encourages lawyers to become involved in pro bono activities, and several law firms have different pro bono partners and programs.

### 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? |
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| No  | No                                  | Yes                                    | No  | No  | No  | No                                      | No   |

### The landscape

| Professional regulation   |  |
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| <p>1. 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> | <p>Lawyers in Finland can be divided into: (i) in-house lawyers and other persons who have received legal education; (ii) lawyers who are members of the FBA (attorney-at-law or <i>asianajaja</i> in Finnish); (iii) public legal aid attorneys who are not members of the FBA; and (iv) lawyers who are not members of the FBA and do not have the title of attorney-at-law, but have obtained a license to appear in court and represent clients from the Legal Counsel Board, pursuant to the Licensed Legal Counsel Act (715/2011).<sup>1</sup></p> <p>The FBA is regulated by the Advocates Act (496/1958)<sup>2</sup>, and only its members are entitled to use the professional title “advocate” (or <i>asianajaja</i>). Other titleholders like “jurists” and</p> |

<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.finlex.fi/en/legislation/translations/2011/eng/715> (last visited on Feb 22, 2026)

<sup>2</sup> See: [https://elixir.cal.bham.ac.uk/Country%20information/Finland/fact97.html?utm\\_source](https://elixir.cal.bham.ac.uk/Country%20information/Finland/fact97.html?utm_source) (last visited on Feb 23, 2026)

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|  | <p>"public legal aid attorneys" (or <i>varatuomari</i>) are not members of the FBA.</p> <p>Under Section 5 of the Advocates Act, an advocate shall fulfill the tasks entrusted to him/her honestly and conscientiously and observe the Rules of Proper Professional Conduct for Advocates (the "Rules"). The Rules set out the guidelines for practicing advocates. The requirements of proper professional conduct are defined in the Advocates Act, various statutes and, above all, by governing and executive bodies of the FBA.<sup>3</sup></p> <p>There are no specific laws or rules regulating the provision of legal services by in-house lawyers.</p>   |
| <b>Regulatory landscape for pro bono</b>   |   |
| <p>2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.</p>                               | <p>There are no rules that specifically regulate the provision of pro bono legal services in Finland. However, despite pro bono legal services not being regulated in the legislation regarding advocates or in the Rules, according to the general approach of advocates, pro bono legal assignments shall be treated like any other legal assignment.</p>   |
| <p>3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?</p> | <p>Lawyers in Finland do not require any license(s) to provide pro bono legal services, unless the services in question require representation in judicial proceedings.</p> <p>According to Chapter 15, Section 2 of the Finnish Code of Judicial Procedure (5/1734), a party may be represented in court proceedings by an advocate, a public legal aid attorney, or a licensed legal counsel under the Licensed Legal Counsel Act (715/2011).</p> <p>To obtain such a licence under the Act, an individual must (1) hold a Finnish master's degree in law, other than a Master of International and Comparative Law degree, or a law degree completed outside Finland that has been recognised in accordance with applicable regulations; (2) have acquired sufficient expertise to act as trial counsel; (3) be honest and not</p> |

<sup>3</sup> Rules of Proper Professional Conduct for Advocates (*Hyvää asianajajatapaa koskevat ohjeet/Vägledande regler om god advokatsed*), Introduction.

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|   | <p>evidently unfit for the role of trial counsel; and (4) not be bankrupt or subject to restrictions on legal capacity.</p> <p>Chapter 15, Section 2 of the Finnish Code of Judicial Procedure provides for certain exceptions to the licence requirement.</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 lawyers in Finland do not require any additional license(s) to provide pro bono legal services, unless the services in question require representation in judicial proceedings.</p> <p>Foreign-qualified lawyers are subject to the same licensing requirements as described above, provided their foreign law degree has been recognised in Finland.</p> |
| <p>5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?</p>   | <p>Lawyers in Finland are not required to work a minimum number of pro bono hours.</p>   |
| <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 lawyers in Finland are not required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services in order to become licensed lawyers</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 such aspirational pro bono hours targets for lawyers in Finland.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the Finnish Bar Association<sup>4</sup> (“FBA”) encourages lawyers to become involved in pro bono activities, and several law firms have different pro bono partners and programs.</p>   |
| <p>8. Do lawyers receive any “Continuing Legal Education” (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?</p>   | <p>Lawyers in Finland do not receive any “Continuing Legal Education” or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked.</p> <p>According to the Rules, every member of the Bar must spend at least 18 hours per year developing their professional skills.<sup>5</sup></p>   |

<sup>4</sup> <https://asianajajat.fi/en/>

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[https://www.ccbe.eu/fileadmin/speciality\\_distribution/public/documents/National\\_Regulations/TR\\_National\\_CTR/EN\\_CTR\\_Finland\\_Rules.pdf?utm\\_source](https://www.ccbe.eu/fileadmin/speciality_distribution/public/documents/National_Regulations/TR_National_CTR/EN_CTR_Finland_Rules.pdf?utm_source) (last visited on Feb 22, 2026)

| Insurance and advertising   |   |
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| <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>Lawyers in Finland do not require professional indemnity legal insurance cover to provide pro bono legal services, unless the services in question require representation in judicial proceedings. The same requirement applies to in-house lawyers.</p> <p>Members of the FBA are required to have professional indemnity legal insurance for at least 200,000 euros.</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 rules in Finland that prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients.</p>  |
| Pro bono practice and culture   |   |
| <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>In Finland, pro bono legal services may be provided in all types of legal matters, such as employment law related issues, contract law, financing, assistance to suspected offenders and to victims of crime, and various appeals (e.g., relating to welfare and social security payments). Legal aid covers above-mentioned matters for persons entitled to legal aid. The services covered by legal aid in any given case depend on the nature and importance of the matter.<sup>6</sup></p> <p>Also, due to the legal aid system in Finland, there is less need in Finland to provide pro bono legal services to people with fewer resources. In Finland, pro bono legal work is (at least on the business law side) emerging as a way for law firms to support third sector actors, such as non-governmental organisations, including human rights organisations (e.g. Finnish League for Human Rights) and environmental organisations (e.g. WWF Finland), as well as charitable foundations.</p> |
| <p>12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?</p>   | <p>The main providers of pro bono legal services in Finland are private attorneys, law firms, FBA (through their sponsored programs), governmental or other public services (such as</p>  |

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.probonoinst.org/wpps/wp-content/uploads/finland.pdf> (last visited on Jan 27, 2025)

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|   | public legal aid offices) and NGOs (such as the Finnish Refugee Advice Centre).  |
| 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>In Finland, there are currently no explicit examples of how artificial intelligence is being used in pro bono cases. However, there is a clear tendency among Finnish law firms to increasingly use AI as a tool. Thus, the effects will certainly be reflected in pro bono assignments as well.</p> <p>AI and technology tools have the potential to greatly enhance legal pro bono work across Europe by utilizing the framework set by the EU's Artificial Intelligence Act (Regulation (EU) 2024/1689). This regulation requires transparency, risk assessments, and human oversight for high-risk AI systems, while prohibiting certain "unacceptable risk" uses. AI and innovative legal technologies can make pro bono work more efficient by automating routine tasks like document drafting, intake, and legal research, allowing lawyers to concentrate on more complex client needs. Furthermore, these technologies could increase access to justice by providing scalable, low-cost tools such as multilingual chatbots and rights checkers, which could help empower vulnerable groups to understand and assert their legal rights.</p> |
| <b>Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts</b>   |  |
| 14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.   | <p>A number of law firms provide pro bono legal services to their pro bono partners and/or on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>The FBA runs a program, <i>Asianajajapäivystys/Advokatjouren</i><sup>7</sup>, in which advocates provide oral advice free of charge in relation to various legal questions.</p> <p>The FBA organises also various pro bono campaigns, including drop-in legal clinics.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Law students' associations in both Helsinki and Turku have established Committees for Legal</p>   |

<sup>7</sup> <https://asianajajat.fi/oikeudellinen-apu/maksuton-asianajajapaivystys/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://asianajajat.fi/en/legal-advice/free-legal-advice-clinics/>

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|   | Aid. <sup>9</sup> Members of the Committees, who are law students, offer legal advice free of charge for students in their respective universities.   |
| 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>Relevant organizations with which a local or foreign lawyer can register to be made aware of pro bono opportunities include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directory of public legal aid offices<sup>10</sup></li> <li>• Finnish Refugee Advice Centre, advising asylum seekers, refugees and other foreigners with regard to their legal rights<sup>11</sup></li> <li>• Finnish League for Human Rights, providing wide ranging advice in relation to human rights in general<sup>12</sup></li> <li>• Feminist Association Union, advising on issues related to women's rights<sup>13</sup></li> <li>• WWF Finland, which leads and is involved in numerous projects that protect nature in different ways.<sup>14</sup></li> </ul> <p>The Finnish Red Cross, helping people in time of accidents or crises in Finland and abroad.<sup>15</sup></p> |
| 16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?   | <p>In Finland, there is no direct pro bono award for lawyers, but for example in 2019, the FBA awarded individuals in the pro bono category as part of the 100 Legal Advocates campaign.<sup>16</sup></p> <p>The International Bar Association also recognises individual lawyers for their pro bono services.<sup>17</sup></p>   |

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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>9</sup> [https://pykala.fi/english/?utm\\_source](https://pykala.fi/english/?utm_source)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.oikeuspalveluvirasto.fi/en/contact-us/> (last visited on Jan 28, 2025)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.pakolaisneuvonta.fi/en/> (last visited on Jan 28, 2025)

<sup>12</sup> <https://ihmisoikeusliitto.fi/english/> (last visited on Jan 28, 2025)

<sup>13</sup> <https://naisunioni.fi/english/> (last visited on Jan 28, 2025)

<sup>14</sup> <https://wwf.fi/yhteistyoyritysten-kanssa/muut-tavat-tukea/> (last visited on Jan 28, 2025)

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.redcross.fi/cooperation/company-cooperation/> (last visited on Jan 28, 2025)

<sup>16</sup> <https://asianajajat.fi/en/>

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.ibanet.org/Annual-IBA-Pro-Bono-Award?utm\\_source](https://www.ibanet.org/Annual-IBA-Pro-Bono-Award?utm_source)