

Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Kuwait

Introduction

Kuwait’s pro bono tradition is characterized by an informal and discretionary approach, rather than a systematic or institutionalized framework. While there is a recognized need to enhance access to justice—particularly in areas such as immigration and employment rights—pro bono legal services are primarily offered by private law firms, NGOs, and academic legal clinics on a case-by-case basis, without any mandatory targets or centralized clearinghouses.

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	Yes	No	No

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>All lawyers in Kuwait must hold a law degree from a recognized university. Degrees earned abroad require attestation by both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the country of origin and the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Lawyers must then register with the Kuwait Lawyers’ Association (otherwise known as the Kuwait Bar Association) and pay a monthly subscription fee as their license to practise.¹</p> <p>In-house counsel enjoy a slightly more flexible regime in that they are exempt from registration with the Kuwait Lawyers’ Association, provided they work for a recognized Kuwaiti company or law firm, although they still must hold properly attested credentials. However, if they wish to hold full status and use the professional title of “lawyer”, they must register with the Kuwait</p>

¹¹ Article 2, Law No. 42 of 1964 [Concerning the Regulation of the Legal Profession Before the Courts \(Kuwait\)](#). (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

	Lawyers' Association. ²
Regulatory landscape for pro bono	
2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.	<p>There are no special laws or regulations in Kuwait exclusively governing the provision of pro bono legal services. Pro bono work is conducted under the same regulatory framework as fee-based legal practice. For example, while courts are obliged to appoint counsel for indigent criminal defendants,³ this measure is part of the criminal procedure and does not establish a separate pro bono system. There is also no reciprocal regime for civil proceedings.</p> <p>No mandatory pro bono targets, minimum pro bono hours, or extra fees are imposed on free legal work as pro bono work is not widespread or institutionalized in Kuwait, and consequently there are no rules in place that limit or restrict the provision of pro bono legal services by lawyers.</p> <p>However, the general rules, including the prohibition on advertising of legal services laid out in the "Charter of Honor" adopted by the General Assembly of the Kuwaiti Lawyers' Association,⁴ apply equally to both fee-paying and pro bono services.</p>
3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?	<p>Lawyers do not need any additional or specific license to provide pro bono legal services beyond the general qualification to practice law. The same license that allows a lawyer to practice commercially also covers the provision of free legal services.</p>
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 not required to obtain extra licensing to provide pro bono services. If they serve in an in-house capacity or work in conjunction with a recognized Kuwaiti law firm, they are exempt from registering with the Kuwait Lawyers' Association. However, they must still have their credentials properly attested as required for general legal practice in Kuwait.</p>
5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?	<p>There is no rule or regulation in Kuwait mandating a minimum number of pro bono hours. Participation in pro bono work is entirely</p>

² ibid

³ Article 120 of Law No. 17 of 1960 Promulgating the Code of Criminal Procedure and Trials (17/1960) (Kuwait).

⁴ Kuwait Lawyers Association, "Charter of Honor", available at:

<https://kba.org.kw/%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%AB%D8%A7%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%81/> (last visited 13th of March 2026).

	voluntary and at the discretion of the individual lawyer or their firm.
6. Are aspiring lawyers required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services to become licensed lawyers?	Aspiring lawyers in Kuwait are not required to complete any minimum number of pro bono hours as a condition to become a licensed lawyer. Legal qualification depends solely on academic credentials and registration with the Kuwait Lawyers' Association ⁵ .
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?	In Kuwait there are no aspirational pro bono hour targets established by the Kuwait Lawyers' Association or any other regulatory body. Pro bono work is entirely voluntary, and while it is encouraged as a means to improve access to justice, neither mandatory nor aspirational benchmarks have been instituted. Consequently, lawyers are free to determine the extent of their pro bono engagement without any formal obligation or recognition system that awards additional continuing legal education credit or otherwise quantifies their pro bono contributions.
8. Do lawyers receive any "Continuing Legal Education" (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?	There is no provision in the current regulatory framework that awards Continuing Legal Education (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked. Pro bono service is encouraged as a means of enhancing access to justice, but it is not integrated into a formal CLE or equivalent system.
Insurance and advertising	
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 in Kuwait are not required to obtain a separate professional indemnity insurance policy for pro bono legal services; the standard professional indemnity insurance required to be held for general legal practice covers all legal services rendered, whether fee-based or provided on a pro bono basis. This requirement applies equally to in-house counsel. There is no provision that allows a lawyer engaged in pro bono services to "piggyback" on another provider's insurance, because no extra insurance is mandated specifically for pro bono work.
10. Are there any rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?	The general advertising restrictions set out in Article 12 of the Kuwait Lawyers' Association's "Charter of Honor" ⁶ prohibit local lawyers from

⁵ *supra* note 1.

⁶ *Supra* note 6.

	<p>advertising or marketing their legal services, including pro bono work. This means that soliciting new pro bono clients or publicizing pro bono successes is subject to the same limitations as fee-based services. However, in practice, some law firms in Kuwait are leveraging social media platforms to share anonymized case outcomes and success stories, regardless of whether the representation was provided pro bono or on a fee basis.</p>
<h3>Pro bono practice and culture</h3>	
<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>Key areas in which pro bono legal services are in demand in Kuwait (and as a result also reflect major areas with unmet legal needs) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration Advice: Owing to the large expatriate and migrant worker community, many individuals require assistance with visa, residency, and other immigration issues. • Employment Rights: Many workers face disputes related to employment contracts, unfair treatment, or exploitation. • Supporting people with disabilities.⁷ <p>These areas represent significant unmet legal needs since the current pro bono framework is informal and does not guarantee systematic coverage or sufficiently clear access to legal assistance for vulnerable groups.⁸</p>
<p>12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Law Firms: constitutes the bulk of pro bono legal service providers, and they take on cases at their discretion.⁹ For example, Al-Arbash International Law Centre has established a Pro Bono and Social Support Department.¹⁰ • Kuwait Bar Association: makes requests for lawyers to do pro bono work and also establishes projects that involve the

⁷ https://kuwaittimes.com/article/26110/kuwait/other-news/study-enforcement-gaps-leave-disabled-women-unsupported/?utm_source (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

⁸ https://kuwaittimes.com/article/10291/kuwait/other-news/absence-of-legal-awareness-remains-a-common-societal-problem-lawyers/?utm_source (last viewed on 7 March 2026).

⁹ https://rightsindex.org/legal-assistance-by-country/kuwait-legal-assistance/?utm_source (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

¹⁰ https://aldawlikw.com/en/services/pro-bono-social/?utm_source (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

	<p>provision of pro bono services.¹¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs and Human Rights Organizations: organisations such as the Kuwait Humanitarian Centre, The Kuwait Society for Human Rights “KSHR”, and Social Work Society, which help facilitate free or low-cost legal assistance.¹² • Governmental: limited support provided primarily through court-appointed counsel in criminal cases and the Ministry of Justice Services for Legal Aid.
<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 there is no widely publicized or dedicated use of innovative technology or artificial intelligence in the delivery of pro bono legal services in Kuwait at this time, Kuwait’s regulatory landscape suggests there may be several potential use cases, including for example, the use of AI-powered tools to provide instant legal advice/information, answer common legal questions, guide users through legal processes and assist with legal research.</p> <p>However, these have not been implemented on a notable level and pro bono initiatives still rely primarily on traditional referral networks and personal contacts.</p>
Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts	
<p>14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A. KSHR¹³: Pro Bono Involvement – Local lawyers volunteer through KSHR’s programs to provide legal consultations on a range, representation, and awareness workshops on a range of human rights topics. • B. Kuwait Bar Association¹⁴: Pro Bono Opportunities – The Kuwait Bar Association, which was established by the Statute of the Association of Lawyers Kuwait 1963, plays a role in ensuring fair access to legal representation in providing legal aid to citizens and residents in certain civil and criminal

¹¹ https://timeskuwait.com/partnership-between-unhcr-and-kuwait-bar-association-to-exchange-expertise-in-displacement-issues/?utm_source (last viewed on 7 March 2026).

¹² https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kuwait/kuwaiti-society-human-rights-awarded-2023-chailot-prize-promotion-human-rights_en (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

¹³ www.kuwaithr.org (Last viewed on 9 March 2026).

¹⁴ <https://kba.org.kw/> (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

	<p>matters.¹⁵ It operates a legal aid centre offering various pro bono services and has established an office for legal aid in each court.¹⁶ Some licensed attorneys voluntarily offer free consultations, particularly in family law, tenant disputes, and low-income defense cases.</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>There is currently no centralized public or private organization in Kuwait where lawyers can register specifically to receive notifications of pro bono opportunities. Instead, opportunities are typically shared via informal networks, referrals from NGOs, or internal pro bono initiatives within law firms.</p>
<p>16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?</p>	<p>At present, Kuwait does not have any centralized awards, lists, or rankings dedicated solely to pro bono legal work. While individual law firms may recognize outstanding pro bono contributions internally, there is no public or nationally recognized pro bono award system.</p>

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Name of Individual at Local Counsel: Othman Alsaeed

Learn more

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

¹⁵ 'Laws in Kuwait', <https://www.kuwaitembassy.org/about-kuwait/laws#:~:text=Kuwait%E2%80%99s%20Bar%20Association%2C%20established%20in%201963%2C%20plays%20a%20significant%20role%20in%20maintaining%20professional%20standards%20among%20lawyers%20and%20ensuring%20fair%20access%20to%20legal%20representation> (last visited 10th of March 2026).

¹⁶ 'Kuwait Bar Association', https://issuu.com/benham/docs/central_london_lawyer_february_2025/s/67070282#:~:text=They%20have%20a%20legal%20aid%20centre%20%28established%20by%20the%20Law%20of%20the%20profession%29%20since%201963 (last visited 10th of March 2026).