

Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Norway

Introduction

The tradition of pro bono work in Norway is not as institutionalized as in the United States or the United Kingdom but it has grown in popularity in recent years, with a number of large law firms increasingly engaging in pro bono initiatives.¹ The pro bono work relates to different types of cases, for example, NGO advisory work, refugee and asylum matters, and human rights litigation, often in partnership with NGOs.²

In Norway, there is also a public subsidy for necessary legal assistance for people who do not have the finances to cover such expenses themselves (*"Fri rettshjelp"*)³. In some types of cases, it is a condition that the person applying for free legal aid meets certain income and wealth thresholds. To receive legal aid, a person must have an income below the income thresholds set out in the Legal Aid Act. In some individual cases, the County Governor and courts can make exceptions to the rules concerning income and means thresholds.⁴ However, research shows that there is still unmet legal need and that the legal aid scheme has gaps in what it covers and whom it reaches, particularly disadvantaged groups.⁵

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	No	Yes	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 provision of legal services in Norway is regulated primarily by the following Acts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advokatloven (Lawyers Act), the main professional framework that regulates the legal profession and others who practice

¹ https://www.advokatbladet.no/files/2024/06/27/Advokatbladet_0324.pdf?utm_source (last viewed on the 9th of March 2026).

² https://www.advokatbladet.no/files/2024/06/27/Advokatbladet_0324.pdf?utm_source (last viewed on the 9th of March 2026).

³ More information regarding the legal aid scheme can be found here: [Fri rettshjelp | Statsforvalteren.no](https://www.statsforvalteren.no/fri-rettshjelp) (last visited 7th of April 2025)

⁴ https://www.statsforvalteren.no/en/more-og-romsdal/people-and-society/legal-aid/?utm_source (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

⁵ https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-46684-2_2?utm_source (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

law and deliver legal assistance in Norway.⁶ Under the Act, licensed advokater (lawyers admitted to the Norwegian Bar Association⁷) have a general right of audience before Norwegian courts. Non-lawyers cannot generally represent clients in court proceedings, with limited statutory exceptions. People with a law degree (jurister) who are not licensed as advokater may provide legal advice, draft documents, work in consultancy roles and represent parties in some administrative proceedings, however, they cannot call themselves “advokat” and are not subject to the same disciplinary regime. The Lawyers Act, which came into force on 1 January 2025, stipulates that “anyone can provide legal assistance outside of court proceedings”.⁸

- Domstolloven (Courts of Justice Act), governs the courts and judicial system. The new Lawyers Act consolidated regulation of the admission to practice as an advokat.
- Rettshjelploven (Legal Aid Act) which regulates public funding rules. It covers eligibility for free legal aid and income means testing.⁹

A distinction is made between in-house lawyers and organizational lawyers. In-house lawyers employed by private companies can also provide legal assistance to companies that are part of a group with the employer. In-house lawyers can only provide assistance to external clients to a limited extent.¹⁰ The ability of in-house lawyers to provide external assistance is intended to be revised in 2028.¹¹

⁶ https://snl.no/advokatloven?utm_source (Last viewed on 6 March 2026).

⁷ <https://www.advokatforeningen.no/en/about-advokatforeningen/about-the-membership/> (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

⁸ More information about section 66 of The Lawyers Act can be found here: [Lov om advokater og andre som yter rettslig bistand \(advokatloven\) - Lovdata](#) (last visited 7th of April 2025).

⁹ [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-46684-](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-46684-2_2#:~:text=A%20person%20must%20have%20less%20than%20246,000,order%20to%20be%20eligible%20for%20legal%20aid.)

[2_2#:~:text=A%20person%20must%20have%20less%20than%20246,000,order%20to%20be%20eligible%20for%20legal%20aid.](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-46684-2_2#:~:text=A%20person%20must%20have%20less%20than%20246,000,order%20to%20be%20eligible%20for%20legal%20aid.) (Last viewed on 6 March 2026).

¹⁰ See section 24 and 25 of the lawyer act in footnote 2 and the following guidelines from The Norwegian Bar Association: <https://www.advokatforeningen.no/advokatetikk/anbefalinger/anbefaling-for-internadvokater/> and

<https://tilsynet.no/advokatvirksomhet#:~:text=Internadvokater%20ansatt%20i%20private%20foretak,yte%20bistand%20til%20eksterne%20klienter> (last visited 8th of April 2025)

¹¹ See section 24 of the Lawyers Act, link in footnote 2

Regulatory landscape for pro bono

<p>2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.</p>	<p>There is no special regulation of pro bono legal services in Norway, other than the regulations that apply to other legal advice and litigation assignments.</p> <p>In accordance with section 3.3.2 of the Code of Conduct for Lawyers, it is not permissible to agree fees on a percentage or share basis. An agreement on a “no cure no pay” is permitted. The Norwegian Bar Association’s website offers guidance on a number of issues, including rules on fees.¹²</p>
<p>3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?</p>	<p>No, lawyers do not need a license to provide pro bono legal services.</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>No, foreign-qualified lawyers do not need any additional license to provide pro bono services in Norway.</p>
<p>5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?</p>	<p>No, lawyers 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>No, aspiring lawyers are not required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services 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>No, aside from the mandatory targets, there are no aspirational pro bono hours targets for lawyers, although some law firms have internal aspirational targets.</p>
<p>8. Do lawyers receive any “Continuing Legal Education” (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?</p>	<p>A pro bono case before the courts will qualify as procedural experience (the procedural requirement) for an associate.¹³</p>

¹² For more information see The Norwegian Bar Association fee guide: [Advokatforeningens salærveiledning | Advokatforeningen](#) (last visited 8th of April 2025)

¹³ For more information see in section 2 of the lawyer regulations: [Advokatforskriften - Lovdata Pro](#) (last visited 8th of April 2025)

Insurance and advertising

<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 must have indemnity insurance covering claims for compensation that may be directed against their professional practice with regard to the nature and scope of their activities. This requirement also applies to in-house lawyers if they are providing pro bono legal services as a lawyer.¹⁴</p> <p>Lawyers who provide legal assistance as part of business activities must provide security for any liability that may be incurred. There are no special requirements for others, see section 5 of the Lawyers Act.¹⁵</p> <p>For in-house lawyers, see in particular the issue of liability for damages in section 2.5 of the Norwegian Bar Association’s recommendation for in-house lawyers.¹⁶</p>
<p>10. Are there any rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?</p>	<p>No, there are no rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients.</p> <p>However, lawyers in Norway are subject to a professional Code of Conduct administered by the Norwegian Bar Association. These rules require advertising to be “relevant and factually correct and must not contain anything that is incorrect, misleading or deceiving”. Lawyers are allowed to emphasise one or several branches of their practice, provided they have special knowledge and experience in the field.¹⁷</p>
<h2>Pro bono practice and culture</h2>	
<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 typical areas of law that provide opportunities for pro bono involve private individuals with limited resources or nonprofit organizations. These may include family law,</p>

¹⁴ https://www.advokatforeningen.no/en/lawyer-ethics/code-of-conduct-for-norwegian-lawyers2/?utm_source (Last viewed on 6 March 2026).

¹⁵ See [Lov om advokater og andre som yter rettslig bistand \(advokatloven\) - Lovdata](https://www.advokatforeningen.no/en/working-in-norway/insurance-bond-and-professional-indemnity-insurance-in-norway/?utm_source) and https://www.advokatforeningen.no/en/working-in-norway/insurance-bond-and-professional-indemnity-insurance-in-norway/?utm_source (last visited 9 March 2026)

¹⁶ Note The Norwegian Bar Association recommendation for in-house lawyers in section 2.5: [Anbefaling for internadvokater | Advokatforeningen](#) (last visited 8th of April 2025)

¹⁷ https://www.advokatforeningen.no/en/lawyer-ethics/code-of-conduct-for-norwegian-lawyers2/?utm_source (last viewed on 8 March 2026).

	employment law, immigration law, landlord and tenant law and criminal law, social housing, and debt. ¹⁸
12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?	<p>Both pro bono and legal aid initiatives run by students and publicly funded services are the main providers, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers (NOAS)¹⁹ • Redd Barna²⁰, • Norwegian Refugee Council²¹, • Student-Run Legal Aid Clinics, such as JussBuss²² and JURK²²²³ and • Advokatforeningen (The Norwegian Bar Association).²⁴ The Association runs several free legal services: “Advokatenhjelperdeg”, an online information and referral platform that offers legal information and explanations of common legal issues; and Advokatvaktent²⁵, a short consultation service run by volunteer lawyers that offers general legal guidance. • Street Lawyer (Gatejuristen)²⁶ • Law firms also often assist in pro bono work.²⁷ • The Norwegian Human Rights Institution (NIM) works across a broad range of human rights—from freedom of expression and privacy to protections for vulnerable groups such as refugees. Their focus is on providing expert advice and guidance rather than individual cases, to help State authorities fulfill their obligations.²⁸

¹⁸ https://juristen.no/debatt/2025/09/rettshjelp-vi-kan-ikke-vente-pa-en-perfekt-reform-behovet-handling-er-akutt?utm_source (Last viewed on 6 March 2026).

¹⁹ <https://www.noas.no/> (Last viewed on 6 March 2026).

²⁰ <https://www.reddbarna.no/om-oss/organisasjon/english/> (last viewed on 7 March 2026).

²¹ <https://www.nrc.no/> (last viewed on 7 March 2026).

²² <https://foreninger.uio.no/jurk/> (Last viewed on 6 March 2026).

²³ <http://labgov.city/theurbanmedialab/oslo-and-the-legal-aid-clinic-how-can-a-bunch-of-students-improve-the-life-of-a-metropolis/#:~:text=Back%20in%201971%20a%20bunch,who%20are%20reading%20these%20lines>. (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

²⁴ See Redd Barna: [Bidra - Slik kan du gjøre en forskjell for barn - Redd Barna](#), NRC: [NRC](#), Jussbuss: [Forsiden - Jussbuss](#), The Norwegian Bar Association: [Forsiden - Jussbuss](#) (all last visited 7th of April 2025)

²⁵ <https://www.io.kommune.no/tjenester/vis-flere/individ-og-rett/advokatvaktent/> (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

²⁶ <https://kirkensbymisjon.no/tilbud-gatejuristen/> (Last viewed on 6 March 2026).

²⁷ https://www.google.com/search?q=translate&oq=translate&gs_lcrp=EgRIZGdIKgYIABBFGDsyBggAEEUYOzIHCAEQABiABDIKCAIQABixAxiABDIHCAMQABiABDIHCAQQABiABDINCAUQABiDARixAxiABDIHCAYQABiABDIHCACQABiABDIGCAGQBRhAMgqICRDpBxj8VdlBCDEINDZqMGoxqAIAAsAIA&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8 (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

²⁸ <https://www.nhri.no/en/about/> (Last viewed on 9 March 2026).

<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>Other than the general use of AI, there are no known noteworthy examples of how innovative technology is being used in connection with pro bono matters. Large commercial firms in Norway increasingly use document review tools, contract analysis software and legal research AI tools, all of which can also be used in pro bono matters.</p> <p>More broadly in the access to justice space, in December 2025, Norway's Labour Inspection Authority launched a multilingual AI chatbot that provides foreign workers with accurate rights information in 12 languages. It provides quality-assured information on labor regulations, workplace rights, and related policies.²⁹</p>
Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts	
<p>14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.</p>	<p>Pro bono cases can be obtained by individuals contacting firms or the abovementioned NGOs directly, by firms arranging case intake meetings in public places where those who wish to apply can do so, through cooperation between various actors, e.g. law firms and charitable organizations or through measures arranged by the Norwegian Bar Association.</p> <p>There are also global pro bono clearinghouses and legal services providers such as TrustLaw or PILnet.³⁰</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>Lawyers can contact the Norwegian Bar Association to learn more about the pro bono opportunities available to them.³¹</p> <p>Lawyers can also join the European Pro Bono Alliance, a collaborative network of European clearinghouses and pro bono initiatives with the goal of supporting and promoting the work of its members and strengthening, championing, and informing the European pro bono movement.³²</p>

²⁹ https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/nri/work/norway-launches-ai-chatbot-to-help-foreign-workers-know-their-rights/articleshow/127119596.cms?utm_source (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

³⁰ See <https://www.trust.org/trustlaw/> and <https://www.pilnet.org/> (Last viewed on 14 March 2026).

³¹ See the The Norwegian Bar Association: [Startsiden | Advokatforeningen](#) (last visited 8th of April 2025)

³² <https://www.pilnet.org/our-work/european-pro-bono-alliance/> (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

<p>16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?</p>	<p>No, there are no awards, lists or rankings specifically related to pro bono work in Norway.</p> <p>However, there is a Rule of Law Award presented by the Norwegian lawyers' Association which recognises individuals, institutions or organisations that have strengthened rule of law, legal equality, rights protection, or understanding of legal frameworks.³³</p> <p>There are also global pro bono awards offered by TrustLaw, PILnet and the International Bar Association.³⁴</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.

³³ https://www.juristforbundet.no/politikk/rettssikkerhetsprisen/?utm_source (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).

³⁴ <https://www.trust.org/trustlaw/awards/the-2025-awards/>, <https://www.pilnet.org/event/pilnet-global-forum/awards/> and <https://www.ibanet.org/Annual-IBA-Pro-Bono-Award>. (Last viewed on 7 March 2026).