

Global Pro Bono Guide 2026

Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Zambia

Introduction

Zambia has a growing tradition of pro bono legal services, primarily driven by the need to improve access to justice for indigent and vulnerable individuals. The provision of free legal services is encouraged by the Law Association of Zambia (LAZ), which requires lawyers to offer pro bono assistance as part of their professional responsibility. Private practice lawyers often fulfil this obligation through LAZ's Legal Aid Committee and partnerships with civil society organisations, while in-house lawyers may contribute through corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives or voluntary legal aid programmes. Despite these efforts, challenges such as limited funding and low participation rates persist, necessitating ongoing reforms and advocacy to strengthen the pro bono culture in Zambia.

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	No	No	No	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>Legal services in Zambia are primarily regulated by the Law Association of Zambia Act (the LAZ Act), the Legal Practitioners Act, and the Legal Practitioners Practice Rules. The Law Association of Zambia (LAZ) regulates the profession in Zambia. To practise law, lawyers must be admitted to the Zambian Bar and hold a valid annual practising certificate issued by LAZ. All lawyers, both private practice lawyers and lawyers practising as in-house counsel, must be members of LAZ and must have valid practising certificates.</p>

Regulatory landscape for pro bono

<p>2. Describe the laws or rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services.</p>	<p>Under the Legal Practitioners Practice Rules,¹ legal practitioners in Zambia are not allowed to offer free services, except where such services are offered towards a charitable cause. However, LAZ has not been enforcing this rule and, on the contrary, now encourages legal practitioners and firms to provide pro bono services. At its annual general meeting, held on 11 July 2020, LAZ passed a resolution to the effect that each of its members called to the Bar be required to take up at least one pro bono case each calendar year. This was followed by the passing of the LAZ framework for the provision of pro bono legal services, which serves as a policy document guiding the implementation of the LAZ pro bono legal service initiative.</p> <p>There are no mandatory fees imposed on pro bono work.²</p>
<p>3. Do lawyers need a license to provide pro bono legal services (beyond usual local qualification to practice law)?</p>	<p>No additional licence is required beyond the usual qualification to practise law in Zambia, which is a valid practising certificate.</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>To practise law in Zambia and provide pro bono services, foreign qualified practitioners will need to qualify to practise law in Zambia and obtain a Zambian practising certificate.</p>
<p>5. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?</p>	<p>While there is no mandatory minimum requirement for pro bono hours, the LAZ has passed a resolution that lawyers who have been admitted to the Zambian Bar are required to take at least one pro bono case in each calendar year.</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 are not required to complete pro bono hours for licensing.</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>LAZ encourages pro bono work but does not set formal aspirational pro bono hours targets for lawyers.</p>

¹ Rule 17(3) of the Legal Practitioners Practice Rules under Statutory Instrument No.51 of 2002 at https://zambialii.org/?utm_source.

² The relevant LAZ rules can be found at the following link: <https://www.laz.org.zm/> (last accessed 1 April 2025).

<p>8. Do lawyers receive any “Continuing Legal Education” (CLE) or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?</p>	<p>There is currently no CLE credit system for pro bono hours.</p>
<p>Insurance and advertising</p>	
<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>While private practice lawyers typically have professional indemnity insurance, the same is not mandatory under the Legal Practitioners Act or Rules. In-house lawyers and lawyers working with registered pro bono organisations may be covered under their organisation’s insurance.</p>
<p>10. Are there any rules that limit or prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?</p>	<p>The Legal Practitioners (Publicity) Rules³ prohibits advertising legal services in a way that solicits clients, including pro bono legal services. However, LAZ does not strictly enforce these regulations.</p>
<p>Pro bono practice and culture</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>Key areas include criminal defence, family law, human rights, refugee/asylum cases, employment law, and land disputes. Major unmet needs include access to legal aid for indigent individuals and marginalised groups.</p>
<p>12. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAZ Legal Aid Committee; • Legal Aid Board (governmental legal aid); • National Legal Aid Clinic for Women; • NGOs, such as Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), Zambia Law Development Commission (ZLDC), and Justice for Widows and Orphans Project; and <p>Law firms.</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</p>	<p>Some NGOs use mobile legal aid clinics, online legal resources, and case management software to improve access to justice. AI-based legal chatbots remain limited but are a growing area of</p>

³ Section 4 of Statutory Instrument No.23 of 2017.

https://media.zambialii.org/media/legislation/42101/source_file/70d20ae7f8d1f5ce/zm-act-si-2017-23-publication-document.pdf (last accessed 1 April 2025).

pro bono cases or matters?	interest.
Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts	
14. Describe notable sources of pro bono matters or resources in your jurisdiction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAZ Legal Aid Committee;⁴ • Legal Aid Board;⁵ • National Legal Aid Clinic for Women;⁶ • Zambia Law Development Commission;⁷ and <p>NGO Legal Clinics (e.g., WLSA, Caritas Zambia, Justice for Widows, and Orphans Project).</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?	A local or foreign lawyer can be made aware of pro bono services through the LAZ. As stated above, the Association has established the LAZ Pro Bono Service Scheme and lawyers seeking to be allocated pro bono cases under this Scheme can do so either at the office of the LAZ Secretariat or at the Legal Aid Board. ⁸
16. Are there any awards, lists or rankings related to pro bono work?	Currently, there are no national awards for pro bono work.

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Learn more

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⁴ <https://www.laz.org.zm/> (last accessed 1 April 2025).

⁵ <https://www.legalaidboard.org.zm/> (last accessed 11 February 2025).

⁶ <https://laz.org.zm/> (last accessed 1 April 2025).

⁷ <https://www.zlhc.org> (last accessed 1 April 2025).

⁸ Framework for the Provision of Pro Bono Legal Services. <https://www.moj.gov.zm/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/FREAMEWORK-FOR-THE-PROVISION-OF-PRO-BONO-LEGAL-SERVICES-1.pdf> (last accessed 1 April 2025).