

## ABOUT THE MILITARY PRO BONO PROJECT

When military personnel are distracted by unresolved personal legal matters, it directly impacts military readiness. Civil legal issues can be uniquely challenging for military members who cannot afford to hire attorneys, and they often face barriers with accessing the civil justice system due to frequent relocations that take them far from the jurisdictions of their legal problems.

The **ABA Military Pro Bono Project** helps servicemembers by accepting civil case referrals directly from military legal assistance attorneys worldwide, and then connecting the referred servicemember clients with pro bono civilian attorneys where the representation is needed in the U.S. Military attorneys use the Project's web-based referral system to submit pro bono case referrals, and volunteer attorneys register with the website to stay updated about pro bono case opportunities.

In addition to legal representation, the Project also includes an online resource called **Operation Stand-By**, through which experienced civilian attorneys have volunteered to be on "standby" to receive calls or emails from military attorneys and other pro bono attorneys needing lawyer-to-lawyer guidance to better help their servicemember and veteran clients.

Military and civilian attorneys can become involved with the ABA Military Pro Bono Project so that, working together, we can ensure access to justice for military personnel and their families who have sacrificed so much for all of us.

THE ABA MILITARY PRO BONO PROJECT  
IS A PROGRAM OF:



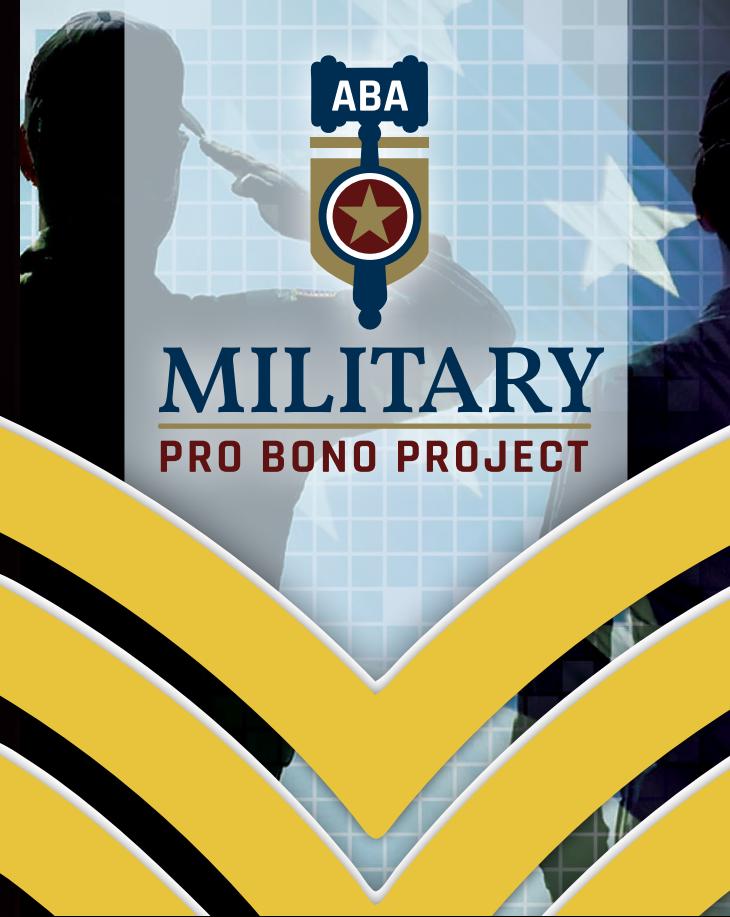
Standing Committee on  
Legal Assistance for  
Military Personnel



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GET INVOLVED! TO JOIN OUR EFFORTS  
IN MEETING THE PRO BONO NEEDS OF  
SERVICEMEMBERS, VISIT AND REGISTER AT  
[WWW.MILITARYPROBONO.ORG](http://WWW.MILITARYPROBONO.ORG)

American Bar Association membership is  
FREE for many military attorneys.  
Visit [ambar.org/freeJAGs](http://ambar.org/freeJAGs)



CONNECTING ACTIVE-DUTY  
SERVICEMEMBERS WITH PRO BONO  
LEGAL REPRESENTATION  
FOR CIVIL LEGAL MATTERS



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**THE ABA MILITARY PRO BONO PROJECT IS A RESOURCE THAT MILITARY LEGAL ASSISTANCE ATTORNEYS MAY USE TO OBTAIN PRO BONO LEGAL REPRESENTATION FOR THEIR CLIENTS. THE PROJECT ALSO PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CIVILIAN ATTORNEYS TO VOLUNTEER THEIR TIME TO HANDLE CASES FOR ACTIVE-DUTY SERVICEMEMBERS ON A PRO BONO BASIS.**

### **WHERE PROJECT CASES COME FROM:**

All cases originate with a referring attorney in a military legal assistance office. The military attorney interviews the client, collects substantive case information, and screens for income eligibility, as most referred clients will typically have a paygrade of E6 or lower. The attorney will also determine whether the case is legally meritorious and has adequate cause for referral based on an analysis of a number of qualitative factors. Once submitted through the Project's web-based referral form, the case will be reviewed by a designated military supervising attorney for merit and completeness. Thus, volunteer attorneys can be assured that only those cases that have been fully worked up and are factually and legally meritorious will be offered as pro bono opportunities.

### **SUBSTANTIVE LEGAL CASE TYPES:**

Specific case-type guidelines are found on the Project's website, [www.militaryprobono.org](http://www.militaryprobono.org). Cases that will typically be accepted for pro bono placement through the Project include:

**CONSUMER LAW:** Representation for a wide variety of consumer law issues, with particular focus on lending issues. Also includes bankruptcy cases.

**FAMILY LAW:** Representation for servicemembers in limited types of disputed family law proceedings where important interests of the servicemember, such as custody, are affected.

**GUARDIANSHIP:** Generally (i) when servicemember needs to establish guardianship over a relative, or (ii) spouse or parent needs to secure guardianship of a disabled servicemember.

**TRUST AND ESTATES:** Referrals generally for: (i) creation of special needs trusts, or (ii) estate planning assistance otherwise beyond normal scope of work of the military legal services office.

**LANDLORD/TENANT:** Representation for tenants only, in all manners of landlord/tenant disputes, including wrongful termination of tenancy.

**EMPLOYMENT:** Including cases under USERRA or EEOC complaints.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION:** Representation for servicemembers with special needs children in special education cases.

**TAX LAW:** Assistance with tax issues, ranging from complex tax return preparation to resolution of federal tax debts and liens.

**PROBATE:** Representation for servicemembers' next-of-kin experiencing difficulty securing military benefits or significant probate issues.

### **HOW TO GET INVOLVED:**

Military and pro bono attorneys may **register with the Project on [www.militaryprobono.org](http://www.militaryprobono.org)** by clicking the "Attorney Registration" link. Once registration is approved, **military attorneys** may submit case referrals on behalf of their servicemember clients by using the Project's online form, and they will also have access to the Operation Stand-By list of attorneys who are willing to provide attorney-to-attorney consultations. **Civilian attorneys** may register to stay informed about pro bono case opportunities in their geographic and substantive legal areas of expertise, or may register to join Operation Stand-By to volunteer to receive calls or emails from military attorneys or other pro bono attorneys in need of attorney-to-attorney guidance.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT  
[WWW.MILITARYPROBONO.ORG](http://WWW.MILITARYPROBONO.ORG)  
OR EMAIL  
[MILITARYPROBONO@AMERICANBAR.ORG](mailto:MILITARYPROBONO@AMERICANBAR.ORG)**

