



The Legal Aid Society - Pro Bono Practice

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Second Acts®

The Legal Aid Society has been awarded a three-year grant by the Pro Bono Institute in Washington, D.C.¹ to launch a Second Acts® pilot project to establish an innovative and replicable model to engage transitioning and retired attorneys in significant, volunteer public interest law opportunities. An unusually large percentage of lawyers throughout the United States—the so-called Baby Boomer generation—is now approaching retirement age. Many of these attorneys wish to continue to practice if offered satisfying public service law opportunities, creating the potential to increase greatly legal access for tens of thousands of individuals and families unable to afford counsel.

Our Second Acts® pilot benefits from the successful experiences of many veteran “Buttenwieser” attorneys who have volunteered with Legal Aid in various capacities over the years. The pilot builds on this pro bono model by creating an infrastructure to integrate substantial numbers of these lawyers into our practice and by enlarging the pro bono opportunities—as counsel, mentors and consultants in individual representation, law reform, transactional, and legislative policy work—and create new models designed specifically to make use of veteran lawyers’ talents and experience.

Second Acts® also requires a different level engagement with law firms:

- We are working with law firms to develop pro bono programs for their transitioning and retired attorneys that maximize specific pro bono opportunities. Legal Aid welcomes requests to visit law firms and speak with a firm’s leadership about Second Acts® or to meet with attorneys at the firm who are interested in learning more about possible participation.
- It is envisioned that the participating attorneys' law firms will make available to these attorneys office space and support services, as those are quite limited at the Society's facilities.

¹ Second Acts® is a registered trademark of the Pro Bono Institute.

- Legal Aid is seeking representatives from 6 to 10 major firms to join the Pro Bono Advisory Committee of the Society's Board of Directors as the leadership team in developing model programs and policies. The group will review Legal Aid's initiatives to implement its Second Acts® pilot, address potential barriers at law firms to participation, and consider existing and new signature projects at law firms to engage veteran lawyers.

Legal Aid welcomes the interest of individual transitioning and retired attorneys. We also invite them to come to the CLE training program/discussion on November 17 at Cravath, Swaine & Moore that is listed in the brochure. Individuals can contact Pro Bono Coordinator, Rosemary Hare-Bey, at rharebey@legal-aid.org, tel no. (212) 577-3358 for information.

Throughout its history as the nation's oldest and largest provider of legal services for poor individuals and families, The Legal Aid Society has been an innovative leader in establishing new means to expand legal services including affirmative litigation and other strategies to ameliorate systemic problems in our society. We are pleased to join with leading firms in New York City to help create a national pro bono model for Second Acts® attorneys.