

From: The Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Louisiana Supreme Court  
To: LSBA Members

United States Supreme Court Justice Lewis Powell, Jr. once said, *“Equal justice under the law is not merely a caption on the façade of the Supreme Court building. It is perhaps the most inspiring ideal of our society...it is fundamental that justice should be the same, in substance and availability, without regard to economic status.”*

While we may disagree on what *“Justice”* is in any individual legal case, the concept of providing justice for all is essential to the rule of law and is at the heart of our daily work as attorneys. Yet each year hundreds of Louisiana citizens do not have the opportunity to experience justice because they simply do not have access to our courts. As the year advances, we ask that each of us pledge to ensure justice for all.

One way attorneys can do this is by supporting pro bono activities. Rule 6.1 of the Louisiana Rules of Professional Conduct suggests that every attorney in Louisiana should aspire to “render at least (50) hours of pro bono publico legal services per year.” Last year 747 attorneys reported providing 49,000 pro bono hours to the Louisiana State Bar Association. This is a laudable number, but admittedly reflects that only 3% of the attorneys eligible to practice in Louisiana reported their pro bono service.

Pro bono organizations throughout the state are asking attorneys to join them this year in offering the opportunity of justice by committing to volunteer at least “20 hours in 2022.” If only 10% of Louisiana attorneys meet this challenge it would produce an additional 40,000 hours of pro bono legal work and help bridge the rapidly growing gap between the legal needs of those who cannot afford civil legal services and the resources available to meet those needs.

The transformative power of the legal profession separates our profession from many others. The Louisiana Supreme Court Justices believe every attorney can make a difference and we ask that you join the “20 hours in 2022” statewide campaign. Your [local pro bono organization](#) can support your efforts and we recommend you contact them. Pro bono organizations can customize opportunities that match your availability and commitment, whether you wish to volunteer one hour or ten hours per week.

Should you need more information on how you can become involved, please contact your [local pro bono organization](#) or Rachael Mills, ([rachael.mills@lsba.org](mailto:rachael.mills@lsba.org)) 800 421-5722 or (504) 619-0104 at the Louisiana State Bar Association’s Access to Justice Department.

The lack of legal representation impedes justice. You can have a significant impact on the lives of many who cannot afford civil legal representation by volunteering and providing pro bono services of at least “20 hours in 2022”.