

**“Pro Bono Legal Services’ Initiative**  
**Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice**

The Department of Justice has launched a web based platform for “Pro Bono Legal Services’, available at its website <http://doj.gov.in/>

This initiative, launched on 20 April 2017, by the Hon’ble Minister of Law & Justice, Shri. Ravi Shankar Prasad, is aimed at institutionalizing pro bono legal services in India. Through this online portal, practicing advocates can volunteer themselves for pro bono legal services for the underprivileged litigants who are unable to afford it (as defined under Section 12 of the Legal Services Act, 1987). Registrations can be done at <http://doj.gov.in/>

Shri Narendra Modi, Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, highlighted the importance of legal aid to the poor in a recent tweet and appealed to the legal fraternity, to do more ‘pro bono’ work for poor, majority of whom still can’t avail ‘legal aid’.

Bearing in mind the social and economic condition of the marginalized in India, the Pro Bono service is an important element in the access to justice, as it provided people with the legal help they otherwise do not get.

Since its launch, the service has seen encouraging response from lawyers nationwide and so far 164 lawyers have already registered with the Pro bono service and several lawyers have already been assigned cases as well.

Presently, the Department of Justice is in the process of developing a mobile app for the Pro Bono Service to further facilitate and broad base communication between the registered pro bono lawyers and interested litigants.

Please note, Pro bono services are by definition voluntary and no honorarium or financial assistance shall be provided to the lawyers.

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