

For Students Applying to the New York State Bar:

New York Court of Appeals Rule 520.16 requires that persons admitted to the New York State bar after January 1, 2015 must file an affidavit showing that they have performed 50 hours of pro bono service. Persons who have successfully passed the NY bar exam must demonstrate they have performed 50 hours of qualifying pro bono service before applying for admission to practice.

Qualifying Pro Bono Work

Pro bono work must be law-related and aligned with the purpose of the requirement: “to enhance the provision of legal resources available to persons who would otherwise not be able to access or afford legal assistance.”¹

Work must be supervised by: “(1) a member of a law school faculty . . . (2) an attorney admitted to practice . . . in the jurisdiction where the work is performed; (3) or in the case of a clerkship or externship in a court system, by a judge or attorney employed by the court system.”²

Eligible Projects

In addition to all of the pro bono projects sponsored by the UNC Pro Bono Program, students may receive credit for clinics, as well as externships with a nonprofit provider of legal services, judge or court system, legal aid office, legal services organization serving low-income clients, Public Defender, U.S. Attorney, District Attorney, or State Attorney General. Note that this does not include externships with for-profit companies.

The Affidavit

As proof of completion, applicants will need to file an Affidavit of Compliance for **each** pro bono activity used to satisfy the 50-hour requirement. Each completed Affidavit must be certified and signed by the appropriate supervising attorney. It is recommended that Affidavits be completed immediately after the pro bono work is finished.

The affidavit is available here:

http://www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/probono/AppForAdmission_Pro-BonoReq_Fillable.pdf

For more information

For answers to frequently asked questions, visit the New York Courts website:

<http://www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/probono/baradmissionreqs.shtml>

Note: This October 2015 memorandum has been prepared by the UNC Office of Public Service Programs to assist students in learning about the change in the New York State rules for admission to the bar, but it is *not* the official statement of those Rules. We urge students to read the rules carefully and consider for themselves how the rules will apply to their individual situations.

¹ NEW YORK STATE BAR ADMISSION: PRO BONO REQUIREMENT FAQs 11 (March 11, 2015 rev.), <http://www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/probono/FAQsBarAdmission.pdf>. See also N.Y. COMP. CODES R. & REGS. tit. 22, § 520.16(b) (2013) (defining “pro bono service” for the purposes of the rule).

² N.Y. COMP. CODES R. & REGS. tit. 22, § 520.16(c) (2013).