



**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

230 West Wells Street, Room 800, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203  
www.legalaction.org | tel 414-278-7777 | fax 414-278-7156

March 4, 2016

Wisconsin Supreme Court  
Attn: Clerk of the Supreme Court  
110 East Main Street, Suite 215  
PO Box 1688  
Madison, WI 53701-1688

Re: Rules Petition 15-05 Comments

Honorable Justices of the Supreme Court:

Legal Action of Wisconsin provides representation to indigent individuals in civil cases in thirty-nine Wisconsin counties from Green Bay to La Crosse and south to the Illinois border. Legal Action also operates the largest pro bono project in the state for extended representation of clients. We welcome the changes and believe this effort to expand pro bono representation in Wisconsin will increase access to justice for indigent people.

We agree with the State Bar's memorandum in support of this rule change. Providing CLE credit for pro bono representation will promote and encourage greater pro bono participation from members of the bar. In states that grant CLE for pro bono service, pro bono programs view it as an important tool to actively recruit, encourage and reward pro bono service. This rule change will not only help our program recruit more pro bono attorneys but it will encourage our current dedicated volunteers to continue and expand their pro bono commitment.

Every year Legal Action turns away many indigent clients because we are unable to place their case with a pro bono attorney. When the client needs representation beyond advice, it has become increasingly difficult to find pro bono representation because of the time commitment involved. Offering the proposed CLE credit for pro bono, provides a significant incentive for attorneys to take cases requiring full representation. For example, an attorney will be more willing to commit to the 10 hours of pro bono necessary to represent a low income tenant in Small Claims Court if they will receive two CLE credits. It may also foster more limited scope representation.

Granting CLE is appropriate for pro bono representation because it provides attorneys an opportunity to learn and sharpen professional skills. Legal Action currently has the infrastructure to provide extensive training, technical support, mentoring, malpractice insurance and litigation costs for its pro bono attorneys. We also monitor our cases and keep records of the pro bono hours spent on each case. This support is imperative to the quality representation pro bono attorneys provide because often they accept cases outside of their regular practice areas.

We support any change that increases in-house attorney's capacity to provide pro bono service. These attorneys are important members of our legal community and many of our clients could benefit from their expertise and assistance.

Sincerely,

David A. Pifer  
Executive Director

Maggie Niebler-Brown  
Coordinator, Volunteer Lawyers Project

**Green Bay Office** Brown, Calumet, Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc and Outagamie Counties  
**La Crosse Office** Buffalo, Crawford, Grant, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Richland, Trempealeau and Vernon Counties  
**Madison Office** Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Rock and Sauk Counties  
**Migrant Project** Statewide  
**Milwaukee Office** Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties  
**Oshkosh Office** Adams, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Marquette, Ozaukee, Sheboygan, Washington, Waushara and Winnebago Counties  
**Racine Office** Kenosha, Racine and Walworth Counties

telephone	toll-free
920-432-4645	800-236-1127
608-785-2809	800-873-0927
608-256-3304	800-362-3904
608-256-3304	800-362-3904
414-278-7722	888-278-0633
920-233-6521	800-236-1128
262-635-8836	800-242-5840

