

TENNESSEE APPELLATE PRO BONO PILOT PROGRAM

A joint project of the TBA, TBA Appellate Practice Section, TBA Access to Justice Committee, and the Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services

In 2011, the Tennessee Bar Association (TBA) and Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services (TALS) will launch the **Tennessee Appellate Pro Bono Pilot Program**, a pilot initiative that will provide pro bono representation to litigants appearing in the Tennessee appellate courts who otherwise could not afford counsel.

The Tennessee Appellate Pro Bono Pilot Program has three primary goals:

- To improve access to justice for low-income litigants in Tennessee's appellate courts by establishing a qualified panel of appellate attorneys to provide pro bono representation on appeal;
- To provide increased opportunities for attorneys with appellate practice expertise to use their skills to serve clients who could not otherwise afford representation; and
- To provide an opportunity for senior appellate attorneys to mentor and supervise young lawyers seeking appellate practice experience through pro bono representation.

Case Referral: In its pilot phase, the Appellate Pro Bono Program will accept cases referred by legal services attorneys or attorneys who have represented clients pro bono in the lower courts but cannot continue on appeal. Judges and justices may refer cases to the program that they believe to be appropriate for pro bono representation. The Program will also consider cases from attorneys seeking appellate co-counsel or consultation on appellate issues. TALS will provide organizational and administrative support to the Program. Cases should be referred to TALS Policy and Training Director Lisa Primm at lprimm@tals.org. Ms. Primm will conduct the initial screening to establish that the potential client cannot afford private counsel on appeal.

Case Screening: Referred cases will be screened by TALS staff in consultation with a committee of attorneys from the TBA Appellate Practice Section. Cases will be selected for representation based upon criteria including the presence of issues of first impression or complex legal issues, matters involving vindication of substantial constitutional or statutory rights, questions of unsettled authority, potentially meritorious claims, and issues that are common but may evade review.

Attorney Appointment: The Program will maintain a network of volunteer attorneys to whom cases may be referred. If a case is selected for pro bono representation, the screening committee will immediately send notice to the designated panel of appellate attorneys with a request for response within a short time period. When an attorney responds that she is able to accept the case, the client and the trial attorney will be notified and representation will begin.

HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE: Do you have experience litigating in the Tennessee Supreme Court or Courts of Appeals? Do you want to enhance or develop your appellate litigation skills with the mentorship of experienced appellate attorneys? Join us in kicking off the Tennessee Appellate Pro Bono Pilot Program. A volunteer participation form is attached.

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VOLUNTEER FORM

Name: _____
Firm/Organization: _____
Address: _____

Email: _____
Phone: _____

- I have appellate practice experience and would like to volunteer to provide pro-bono representation to low-income clients in the Tennessee appellate courts.**

- I would like to work with an appellate practice mentor to provide pro-bono representation to low-income clients in the Tennessee appellate courts.**

I have represented clients in:

- Tennessee Court of Appeals**
- Tennessee Court of Criminal Appeals**
- Tennessee Supreme Court**
- Other appellate courts:**

My areas of practice expertise include:

I am particularly interested in taking cases in the following areas:

- Family Law**
- Juvenile Law**
- Civil Rights**
- Housing Law**
- Consumer Protection Law**
- Civil or Appellate Procedure**
- Immigration Law**
- Constitutional Law**

Return this form at the Pro Bono Summit Registration Desk
or fax it to the TBA at (615) 297-8058.