

ANNUAL PRO BONO SERVICE GOAL

Attorneys in the United States have an ethical obligation to do pro bono. The [American Bar Association \(ABA\) Model Rule of Professional Conduct 6.1](#) sets an annual aspirational goal for pro bono hours: “Every lawyer has a professional responsibility to provide legal services to those unable to pay. A lawyer should aspire to render **at least (50) hours** of pro bono publico legal services per year.” The rule goes on to describe what types of pro bono legal services a lawyer should do to fulfill this responsibility.

All U.S. jurisdictions acknowledge, through their Rules of Professional Conduct, the important purpose pro bono work serves both lawyers, who gain valuable experience by serving as advocates, and disadvantaged communities, who greatly benefit from competent legal representation that they could otherwise not afford. Most jurisdictions have adopted a version of ABA Model Rule 6.1 and embraced the general principle that lawyers “should render public interest legal service.” A majority have adopted an annual pro bono service goal, setting a standard to encourage their attorneys to maintain this necessary professional obligation. A few jurisdictions have not adopted ABA Model Rule 6.1 and instead incorporate the ethical duty to do pro bono into a different rule or comment. All are committed to pro bono.

As of August 2026, the annual pro bono service goal in U.S. jurisdictions is as follows:

- **25 jurisdictions follow ABA Model Rule 6.1 in setting an annual aspirational goal of 50 pro bono hours:** Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.
- **6 states set an annual aspirational goal of fewer than 50 pro bono hours:** Florida (20 hours), Massachusetts (25 hours), Mississippi (20 hours), Nevada (20 hours), New Hampshire (30 hours) and Washington (30 hours).
- **Oregon is the only state that sets an annual aspirational goal of more than 50 pro bono hours** (80 hours).
- **Virginia is the only state that sets an annual aspirational pro bono goal as a percentage proportionate to a lawyer’s professional time** (two percent).
- **18 states do not set an annual aspirational goal for pro bono hours:** Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, and West Virginia.

The chart below summarizes the rules governing annual pro bono service goals in all fifty states and the District of Columbia, including any deviations from ABA Model Rule 6.1.

Summary of Rules on Annual Pro Bono Hours¹

State	Annual Goal	State Rule	Rule Highlights
Alabama	No annual goal	Ala. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
Alaska	50 hours	Alaska R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Arizona	50 hours	Ariz. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Arkansas	50 hours	Ark. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
California	50 hours	Cal. R. Prof'l Conduct 1.0 cmt. 5	Cmt. 5 includes the 50-hour annual goal set forth by ABA Model Rule 6.1. <i>Cal. R. Prof'l Conduct Rule 6.1 is reserved.</i>
Colorado	50 hours	Colo. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Connecticut	No annual goal	Conn. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
Delaware	No annual goal	Del. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
District of Columbia	50 hours	D.C. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1, cmt. 5	Cmt. 5 includes the 50-hour annual goal set forth by ABA Model Rule 6.1.
Florida	20 hours	Fla. R. Prof'l Conduct 4-6.1(b)(1)	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1, except lowers annual goal from 50 to 20 hours
Georgia	50 hours	Ga. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Hawai‘i	50 hours	Haw. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Idaho	50 hours	Idaho R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Illinois	No annual goal	Ill. R. Prof'l Conduct Preamble cmts. 6A & 6B	Cmt. 6A maintains that a lawyer “should provide services in the public interest.” Cmt. 6B explains: “The absence from the Illinois Rules of a counterpart to ABA Model Rule 6.1 regarding pro bono and public service should not be interpreted as limiting the responsibility of lawyers to render uncompensated service in the public interest. Rather, the rationale is that this responsibility is not appropriate for disciplinary rules because it is not possible to articulate an appropriate disciplinary standard regarding pro bono and public service.” <i>Ill. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1 is reserved.</i>
Indiana	50 hours	Ind. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1, cmt. 1	Cmt. 1 includes the 50-hour annual goal set forth by ABA Model Rule 6.1.

¹ Some rules include additional restrictions. See the text of the rules for complete information.

State	Annual Goal	State Rule	Rule Highlights
Iowa	50 hours	Iowa R. Prof'l Conduct 32:6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Kansas	No annual goal	Kan. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
Kentucky	50 hours	Ky. R. Prof'l Conduct 3.130(6.1)	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Louisiana	50 hours	La. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Maine	No annual goal	Me. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Rule 6.1, cmt. 11 of the Maine Rules of Professional Conduct explicitly states “this rule does not express a minimum of pro bono legal hours . . .”
Maryland	50 hours	Md. R. Prof'l Conduct 19-306.1(b)	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Massachusetts	25 hours	Mass. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1, except lowers annual goal from 50 to 25 hours
Michigan	No annual goal	Mich. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
Minnesota	50 hours	Minn. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Mississippi	20 hours	Miss. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1(b)(1)	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1, except lowers annual goal from 50 to 20 hours
Missouri	No annual goal	Mo. R. Prof'l Conduct 4-6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
Montana	50 hours	Mont. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Nebraska	50 hours	Neb. Sup. Ct. R. § 3-506.1, cmt. 1	Cmt. 1 includes the 50-hour annual goal set forth by ABA Model Rule 6.1.
Nevada	20 hours (or 60 at reduced fee)	Nev. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1, except lowers annual goal from 50 to 20 hours or 60 hours at a reduced fee
New Hampshire	30 hours	N.H. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1, except lowers annual goal from 50 to 30 hours
New Jersey	No annual goal	N.J. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer has a professional responsibility to render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
New Mexico	No annual goal	N.M. R. Prof'l Conduct 16-601	Maintains that the “legal profession has a responsibility to provide legal services to those unable to pay” without stating an annual hours goal.
New York	50 hours	NYSBA N.Y.R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1(a)(1)	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1

State	Annual Goal	State Rule	Rule Highlights
North Carolina	50 hours	N.C. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
North Dakota	No annual goal	N.D. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
Ohio	No annual goal	Ohio R. Prof'l Conduct 6.2 cmt. 1	Cmt. 1 maintains that “All lawyers have a responsibility to assist in providing pro bono publico service.” Ohio R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1 states “The Supreme Court of Ohio has deferred consideration of Model Rule 6.1 in light of recommendations contained in the final report of the Supreme Court Task Force on Pro Se and Indigent Representation and recommendations from the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation.”
Oklahoma	No annual goal	Okla. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
Oregon	80 hours	OSB Policy 12.100 Pro Bono Service Aspirational Standard	Of the 80 pro bono service hours, 20-40 hours, or two cases, should involve the “direct provision of legal services to the poor.” <i>Or. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1 is reserved.</i>
Pennsylvania	No annual goal	Pa. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
Rhode Island	50 hours	R.I. Disciplinary R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
South Carolina	No annual goal	S.C. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
South Dakota	No annual goal	S.D. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that a “lawyer should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
Tennessee	50 hours	Tenn. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Texas	No annual goal	Tex. Disciplinary R. Prof'l Conduct 6.01 cmt.3	Maintains that “each lawyer engaged in the practice of law should render public interest legal service” without stating an annual hours goal.
Utah	50 hours	Utah R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Vermont	50 hours	Vt. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Virginia	At least 2% of lawyer's professional time	Va. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1, except the annual goal is “two percent per year of the lawyer's professional time.”

State	Annual Goal	State Rule	Rule Highlights
Washington	30 hours	Wash. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1, except lowers annual goal from 50 to 30 hours.
West Virginia	No annual goal	W. Va. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Maintains that “every lawyer has a professional responsibility to provide legal services to those unable to pay” without stating an annual hours goal.
Wisconsin	50 hours	Wis. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1
Wyoming	50 hours	Wyo. R. Prof'l Conduct 6.1	Similar to ABA Model Rule 6.1

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