

**Nineteenth Judicial
Circuit
"Pro Bono" Program**

**Applicant information
brochure**

**Private Attorney
Involvement Project**

**FLORIDA RURAL
LEGAL SERVICES, INC.**

**(501 (c) (3) non-profit
Corporation)**

A cooperative effort
of the Bar Associations
of Martin St. Lucie Okeechobee and
Indian River Counties

*First step to applying for legal
services/pro bono program:*

*Contact our Client Screener, Ms.
Castro, who takes incoming
calls from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00
a.m., and does not accept
incoming calls in the afternoon
as that is when she is completing
her intake screening. Ms. Castro
is bi-lingual speaking English and
Spanish. FRLS has the capability
to screen in French Creole also.*

Have available your:

*Financial information
Legal information
Social Security Number
Date of Birth
Phone numbers*

*(for yourself & contact person where
we may reach you in an emergency.)*

*Our Client Screener is not an
attorney and may not answer
legal questions at the time of
screening.*

**WHAT IS EXPECTED IF YOU
ARE ASSIGNED A PRO BONO
ATTORNEY:**

*- That you keep any appointments
scheduled by PAI attorney.*

*- That after your first and last meeting
with that attorney you send a thank you
letter advising how your life was
effected as a result of their "free"
representation of your matter.*

*- Truthfulness, confidentiality,
professionalism and respect for the
attorney and staff at the Pro Bono
attorneys office.*

*- Financial situation update in writing
the moment it changes.*

*Florida Rural Legal Services, Inc.
Donna Anne Graf, Pro Bono
Coordinator
200 South Indian River Drive
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Post Office Box 4333
Fort Pierce, Florida 34948*

Toll Free: 1-888-582-3410

(561) 466-4766

(561) 489-3176 (Fax)

E-mail: donna@FRLS.org

*Pro Bono coordinator is available hours
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 2:00
p.m. Other hours are for meetings and
emergency situations. No walk-ins please,
appointment only.*

What is the Pro Bono Program?

FLORIDA RURAL LEGAL SERVICES, INC. and your local BAR ASSOCIATION have an agreement to help eligible clients with certain types of legal problems that FRLS does not handle directly. FRLS refers eligible clients with these types of cases to private attorneys who have volunteered their time to represent clients **free of charge**. This service is called "Pro Bono." FRLS reimburses the attorney for litigation expenses on the client behalf. However, the attorney is not PAID for his or her time given free.

How the program works

After you have been interviewed by our Client screener, information will be forwarded to you for completion. Once those documents are complete and back to the Pro Bono Coordinator your case will be taken to case acceptance. The case acceptance panel of attorneys and advocates will decide if your case fits the agreement with the local Bar Association.

Case placement with a Private Attorney

You will be notified by mail as to whether or not you meet the financial and merit guidelines for this program.

Once your case has been determined to fit the agreement with the Local Bar Association, it will be referred to one of the Volunteer Attorneys. The length of time it takes to find an attorney for you depends on:

1. The number of volunteer attorneys who practice law in the legal area of your problem, and
2. The availability of those attorneys.

Most cases are placed on a priority and then first come, first served bases. Exceptions may be made when emergency circumstances arise.

You will be notified, by letter, of the attorney's name, address, and telephone number. The attorney and you will select a meeting date and time. If you do not show up for your scheduled appointment with that attorney, your case will be closed and you will not be able to obtain another attorney thru the Pro Bono Program.

Call the Pro Bono Coordinator if:

1. After one month you do not hear if you qualify for the program.
2. You receive legal documents or are "served papers" before you have been referred to a Private Attorney. (MAKE COPIES OF WHAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED AND BRING THEM

TO THE PRO BONO COORDINATOR AT FRLS.)

3. Your address, phone number, employment status or FINANCIAL situation has changed.

4. You change your mind and do not wish to continue your case.

Types of Cases most frequently handled by Pro Bono Attorneys

- **FAMILY LAW** including custody (custodial parent only); some adoptions
- **CONSUMER** (type of problem will be considered when you are speaking with Client Screener)
- **FORECLOSURE** (Only after you have received official notice of Foreclosure and have a valid and bona fide defense.)
- **LANDLORDTENANT** (case will be considered on merit and if all avenues of relief were tried for example whether or not you could find a solution from another source such as Small Claims Court.
- **WILLS**
- **OTHER TYPES OF CASES MAY BE CONSIDERED DEPENDING UPON TYPE OF CASE AND AVAILABILITY OF PRIVATE ATTORNEYS.**