



National Litigation Academy Frequently Asked Questions

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1. **How do I report my pro bono hours?**

On our secure [attorney web site](#).

As of July 2004 ADF began accepting pro bono reports online. The specific format of the report is not critical; however, we do need specific information reported. If you are able to include the needed information in your normal billing program, we will gladly accept time records maintained in normal firm billing records. To assist in identifying the specific information needed and help you provide information in a simplified manner ADF has developed a reporting form that can be provided upon request. We suggest that you update your records at least monthly as you fulfill your faith commitment to the Body of Christ. You can be assured that ADF will not reveal the details of your specific service without your permission, so client identities and attorney-client matters we become aware of through this reporting will be kept confidential. Only general statistical information and anecdotal case information and results will be released.

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2. **If I make a commitment to attend an NLA and provide 450 hours of legal services, do I have to provide that service exclusively to ADF or on an ADF case?**

Absolutely not. Your faith commitment is not even to ADF - it is to the Body of Christ - and it is up to you how you keep that faith promise. You may serve individual clients, other faith based legal organizations, your (or another) church, etc. in areas related to ADF's mission.

ADF has targeted certain goals for service provided directly to ADF allied projects, cases, and other matters but every lawyer graduate is expected to be "entrepreneurial" and to determine how they individually can meet or exceed their faith commitment.

As ADF resources expand, our ability to assist you will also expand.

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3. Whose responsibility is it to fulfill and report pro bono hours of committed service to the Body of Christ?

Yours. ADF seeks like-minded individuals who are "entrepreneurial" and pro-active in their outlook and desire to serve the Body of Christ. After several years of experience, we have learned that those who truly desire to serve effectively can find an abundance of opportunities to do so. Some have easily fulfilled their commitment in less than one year. As more funding has become available, ADF has added a vice president for the Office of Allied Attorney Support to serve you and our allies and has a number of cases, projects, and other opportunities always available for you to serve the Body of Christ effectively. That office's motto of service: "It's all about you."

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4. I work more than full-time (50-60 hours weekly) for a Christian ministry as an attorney. May I attend an NLA?

You may attend an NLA if you otherwise qualify and are accepted. Depending on the type of legal service you provide for the Body of Christ, you may or may not have to commit to reporting 450 hours of additional pro bono service. Full time litigation attorneys, directors of allied legal services, and those involved in Christian legal aid to the poor may be eligible for up to 450 hours of attributed services if they remain (or enter and remain) in such full-time service.

Not sure if this applies to you? Contact [Joe Infranco](#) for additional information.

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5. I have a great idea for a pro bono project for myself and other NLA attorneys to help protect and reclaim religious liberty. How can I connect with other NLA graduates?

We are delighted to review your ideas and to help implement projects that further our mission. Please contact [Joe Infranco](#). We are always open to implementing exciting new ideas and suggestions as resources permit.

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6. I have a relationship with a state association of churches that gives me access to many church pulpits. May I use this opportunity to teach the Body of Christ about their legal rights and duties as citizens as part of my dedicated pro bono hour commitment?

Absolutely. Education relating to ADF's areas of mission and concern are critical to a changed legal culture. Many good opportunities for litigation and non-litigative resolutions of religious discrimination have resulted from educated laypersons awareness and action. In addition to ADF's [Faith and Freedom Sunday](#)[™] materials, we may be able to assist you with brochures and other resources to help your listeners know and protect their rights, as well as the rights of their families and churches.

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7. My partners and I work for a large law firm with a formal pro bono program. Firm rules will not permit us to commit to 450 hours each. Any ideas on how we can work together with ADF and get NLA training?

We currently have two NLA options for you. If you are otherwise qualified and accepted to an NLA, you may pay ADF the costs for the training and cover your own travel and housing expenses, thus incurring no pro bono commitment. Or you and your partners might, with prior approval, make an agreement for one of you to attend the NLA at ADF expense and all of you may collectively fulfill the 450 hour pro bono commitment to the Body of Christ. Please contact [Joe Infranco](#) to discuss details.

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8. My firm's pro bono policy requires each of our attorneys to work on cases submitted by organizations allied with the ACLU's philosophy, etc. What can I do?

ADF cannot condone anyone knowingly violating their firm's policy. However, we suggest you discuss opportunities available to serve in accordance with your faith and general constitutional principles of religious liberty and other matters. Some firms have changed their policy.

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9. I made a pro bono commitment of 450 hours of service in good faith, but health and career changes have made it difficult to complete my faith commitment. What can I do?

Consult to see what alternatives can be offered. For example, one person offered to repay the outstanding percentage of their costs to ADF to help enable another lawyer to attend an NLA. Another person entered public employment and "parked" their commitment until they re-enter private practice.

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10. What if I'm a government attorney who is precluded from doing any non-governmental litigation as pro bono?

Pro bono need not involve litigation or even the representation of a client. In acknowledgement of the special circumstances facing government attorneys, the pro bono commitment is only 150 hours.

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11. I am committed to providing Christian legal aid to the poor. Does ADF support my commitment?

Absolutely. ADF has allied with attorneys providing service to, and has provided critical funding for, a limited number of efforts to attempt to dramatically increase Christian legal aid to the poor. This includes model programs with [The Dream Center](#) and the [Christian Legal Society](#). Such efforts should be directed in a manner to help advance religious liberty, the sanctity of life, and protect the family, contrary to some alternative secular programs that do not always support, and in fact may be contrary to biblical principles. For details, contact [Joe Infranco](#) .

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12. Can I simply pay to attend ADF's outstanding NLA training or the CLE segment?

Yes, in some cases. See [question #7](#).

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13. How many hours of Continuing Legal Education (CLE) does the NLA qualify for?

Each Academy session may vary in subject matter and in hours of general and ethics instruction, and each state bar / continuing legal education association may calculate credit differently. ADF generally applies for CLE approval in advance where possible and most NLA sessions' approved hours have exceeded the mandatory minimum CLE requirements for at least one year in almost every state.

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14. Is there a way I can obtain some Continuing Legal Education (CLE) in the areas of law related to ADF's mission, other than through a several day NLA and the pro bono service commitment?

Yes. ADF has begun a series of one day "introductory" CLE opportunities to be offered in various parts of the country. There is minimal cost for this day of introduction to one or more legal subjects relating to ADF's mission and it is an opportunity to meet like-minded attorneys who practice in your region and nationally. Contact [Jeff Ventrella](#) .

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15. I am a highly qualified specialist / law professor in an area of law related to ADF's mission. How can I offer my services as an NLA instructor?

Contact [Jeff Ventrella](#) .

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16. The NLA application asks me to commit to share what I have learned with other lawyers in my community. How have other lawyers accomplished this?

In a number of ways. Some attorneys have gone home and recruited their entire firm to attend and serve. Another arranged to teach a subject for a state bar association's mandatory continuing legal education program. Yet another coordinated a regional, daylong training seminar to recruit local volunteers. Others have gone to area churches teaching Sunday School, adult education, or promoting [Faith and Freedom Sunday](#) to not only educate pastors and lay people about their legal rights as Christians under the Constitution, but also to educate and recruit attorneys in the congregation or parish.

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17. My teenage son or daughter is interested in becoming a Christian lawyer. Do you have any educational opportunities?

Not yet. ADF has the [Blackstone Fellowship](#) for outstanding law students and some written materials, reading lists, and books, but other program development depends upon additional resources.

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