



# news

Colorado Judicial Branch  
Michael L. Bender, Chief Justice  
Gerald Marroney, State Court Administrator

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 5, 2011

Contact: Robert McCallum or Jon Sarché  
303-837-3633 or 303-837-3644

## **Colorado Supreme Court recognizes achievements in Pro Bono Commitment Program** *Thousands of hours of pro bono legal services provided*

DENVER – Attorneys across Colorado provided thousands of hours of pro bono legal services in 2010, helping make it the most productive year yet in the Colorado Supreme Court’s Pro Bono Commitment Program.

Since 2006, the court has encouraged Colorado law firms, solo practitioners and in-house counsel groups to commit to providing an average of 50 hours of pro bono legal services per attorney. That goal is also included in the Colorado Rules of Professional Conduct for the legal profession.

Recognition ceremonies for those who committed to the program, and those who reached the goal, are scheduled throughout Colorado. For a list of locations and dates of the ceremonies, please see <http://www.cobar.org/index.cfm/ID/21843/DPCOM/2011-Pro-Bono-Award-Ceremonies/>.

In calendar 2010, 151 law firms, solo practitioners and in-house counsel groups committed to trying to achieve the goal, and 115, or 76 percent, reached the 50-hours-per-attorney mark. In 2009, 120 firms, solo practitioners and in-house counsel groups made the commitment and 94, or 78 percent, reached the goal. The program has grown steadily since it began five years ago.

“No matter the condition of our state’s economy, there always is an unmet need for access to justice for people who otherwise can’t afford legal representation. That need, though, becomes especially apparent in a deep recession like the one we’re recovering from now,” said Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Michael L. Bender. “The continued growth in this program is a very positive reflection on the fact that so many of us who chose the law as a profession did so in the interest of helping people.”

The Pro Bono Commitment Program was created to secure an enduring commitment from Colorado’s legal community to provide free legal services to indigent people in civil matters and to annually recognize law firms, solo practitioners and in-house counsel groups who give generously of their time. Participants have until Feb. 15 each calendar year to advise the Supreme Court whether they met the goal for the prior year. The program is detailed in Rule 6.1 of the Colorado Rules of Professional Conduct, encouraging every lawyer to aspire to provide at least 50 hours of pro bono public legal services per year.

“There still is a great deal of work to do to improve access to justice for Colorado’s most vulnerable citizens,” said Justice Gregory Hobbs. “We are encouraged that the Pro Bono Commitment Program’s numbers continue to increase each year, and are hopeful that every year, we’ll be able to honor pro bono efforts by even more law firms and lawyers across our state.”

More information, including a list of participants, is available on the Colorado Judicial Branch Web site at [http://www.courts.state.co.us/Courts/Supreme\\_Court/Pro\\_Bono.cfm](http://www.courts.state.co.us/Courts/Supreme_Court/Pro_Bono.cfm).

**Editor's Note:** Rule 6.1 (Voluntary Pro Bono Public Service) is reproduced below.

*This information is provided as an e-mail service of the Colorado State Judicial Branch, Office of State Court Administrator, 1301 Pennsylvania Street, Suite 300, Denver, Colo. 80203. To discontinue this service or update your e-mail address, please respond to this message with your name, contact information and any comments.*

**COLORADO COURT RULES: [APPENDIX TO CHAPTERS 18 TO 20, COLORADO RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT: \[PUBLIC SERVICE\]\(#\): Rule 6.1. Voluntary Pro Bono Public Service](#)**

A lawyer should aspire to render at least fifty (50) hours of pro bono public legal services per year. In fulfilling this responsibility, the lawyer should:

(a) provide a substantial majority of the fifty (50) hours of legal services without fee or expectation of fee to:

(1) persons of limited means or

(2) charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental and educational organizations in matters which are designed primarily to address the needs of persons of limited means; and

(b) provide any additional legal or public service through:

(1) delivery of legal services at no fee or a substantially reduced fee to individuals, groups or organizations seeking to secure or protect civil rights, civil liberties or public rights, or charitable, religious, civic, community, governmental and educational organizations in matters in furtherance of their organizational purposes, where the payment of standard legal fees would significantly deplete the organization's economic resources or would be otherwise inappropriate;

(2) delivery of legal services at a substantially reduced fee to persons of limited means; or

(3) participation in activities for improving the law, the legal system or the legal profession.  
In addition, a lawyer should voluntarily contribute financial support to organizations that provide legal services to persons of limited means.

Where constitutional, statutory or regulatory restrictions prohibit government and public sector lawyers or judges from performing the pro bono services outlined in paragraphs (a)(1) and (2), those individuals should fulfill their pro bono responsibility by performing services or participating in activities outlined in paragraph (b).