

When a Pro Bono Liaison Contacts You, It's Because The Court Needs Your Help!

By: Judge Caryl E. Delano

In this issue's *Pro Bono 2026: Pro Bono Update and Goals*, Judge Robson explains the importance of pro bono attorneys and the role of “pro bono liaisons,” who coordinate the assignment of volunteer attorneys to assist pro se parties who qualify for the Court’s Legal Assistance Program or for whom the presiding judge has requested a volunteer attorney.

Thank you to the following attorneys who have volunteered to serve as pro bono liaisons!

Jacksonville	Orlando	Tampa	Ft. Myers
Katheryn Hancock	Jennifer Morando Lauren Stricker Melissa Sydow Jonathan Sykes	Kathleen DiSanto	Christian Haman Shannon Puopolo

You may ask, why do we need pro bono liaisons?

Answer: The Operations Supervisor in each of the Court’s Divisions maintains a list of attorneys who have signed up to volunteer to provide pro bono services. Prior to the Court’s transitioning to the liaison process, when a judge approved a pro se party’s application for a pro bono attorney through the Court’s Legal Assistance Program, or a judge *sua sponte* requested a pro bono attorney for a pro se party, the Operations Supervisor emailed the attorneys on that list to request a volunteer. But many times, there was no response to the email, meaning that no attorney stepped up to handle the case or to speak with the pro party.

Now, the pro bono liaisons, all experienced bankruptcy practitioners who know their local bankruptcy communities, reach out directly to a specific attorney to ask the attorney to assist the pro se party. The pro bono liaisons are able to match pro se parties with attorneys who are likely to be able to help the party and are also able to avoid burdening a small group of attorneys with a large number of requests.

What can you do? If you receive a telephone call or an email from one of the pro bono liaisons, **PLEASE** answer the call. By that, I mean: *first*, please answer the call or reply to the email as the liaison is reaching out to you to because the Court has requested pro bono assistance for an unrepresented party; and *second*, please

Court Connection
Volume No. 15 – Issue No. 2
Summer 2026

consider assisting the pro se party, whether that assistance means taking on the party's representation or giving the party much needed legal advice.

Practice Pointer: If you represent a party pro bono at a hearing (whether in person or by Zoom), please tell the judge's courtroom deputy, as the judge may advance your case on the calendar.