



محاكم  
DIFC  
COURTS

# DIFC Courts Pro Bono Programme



@difccourts



difccourts



@difccourts



difccourts

[www.difccourts.ae](http://www.difccourts.ae)

## What is the Pro Bono Programme?

Pro Bono is short for the Latin phrase which means “for the public good”.

The Pro Bono Programme allows individuals who cannot afford a lawyer the ability to seek free advice and representation from legally qualified volunteer lawyers. The Programme offers services from basic one-time legal advice to full case management and representation in court proceedings.

## Who can use this Programme?

Pro Bono legal assistance is provided only to individuals who:

- need legal assistance with a civil or commercial dispute that falls within the jurisdiction of the DIFC Courts; and
- do not have the financial means to pay for legal advice

Eligible individuals must certify that they do not have the financial means to pay for legal advice.

## How to register as a volunteer?

All applications are to be submitted online via the DIFC Courts' website via the following link:  
<https://eregistry.difccourts.ae/#registrationforms>

### Pro Bono Committee:

Acts as a liaison between the DIFC Courts and all users of the Pro Bono Programme to provide an efficient, accessible and transparent service to its users. The Committee comprises the Pro Bono Programme Leader and six volunteer lawyers.

### The Pro Bono Fund and community projects:

The Pro Bono fund has helped to support various local community projects, such as:

- Law school tuition scholarships for Emirati and expatriate law students studying in the UAE. The Scholarship Programme has helped recognise students who demonstrate academic prowess, financial need, and a commitment to global legal system development.
- The hosting of employment law seminars to help individuals better understand their rights within the DIFC freezone, which may differ significantly from their home jurisdictions.

### Example case:

**Name:** Samir Bhati  
**Job:** Waiter  
**Age:** 28  
**Nationality:** Indian  
**Languages:** Hindi and basic English

*“I worked at a restaurant for 3 years and 6 months. I handed in my resignation today. How much is my end of service gratuity?”*

## Testimonials

“I would like to thank the DIFC Courts Pro Bono Clinic, for your invaluable support, advice and guidance, which has definitely contributed to the outcome I find myself in now”

“I would like to commend the service that the Clinic and the lawyers have provided to me. I truly appreciate the sincerity, generosity, and professionalism you have shown towards me”

“I have been extremely fortunate to have benefitted from this service provided by you to the community.”



Legal Clinics

Individuals are provided with the opportunity to receive free legal advice from a volunteer lawyer either 'face to face' or 'online' about their current or potential claims.



Face to Face

The clinics are held on a regular basis throughout the year and operate on a walk-in, first-come, first-served basis, with no prior appointments necessary. The clinics are held in Office 301, Building 5, DIFC. Dates of the clinics are displayed on the DIFC Courts' website ([difccourts.ae](http://difccourts.ae))



Online

For individuals based outside of Dubai, the online clinics provide an alternative platform for receiving free legal advice. Applications are to be submitted by email to [pro.bono@difccourts.ae](mailto:pro.bono@difccourts.ae)



Legal representation

If an individual is a party to a claim filed with the DIFC Courts and the assistance of a law firm is required to progress the claim, the Programme will seek to assign a volunteer law firm to such cases. The volunteer law firm and the individual are required to sign a letter of engagement which outlines the scope of services exchanged between the parties. Pro Bono engagements can range from basic advice to full case management and trial, as well as representation in proceedings. Applications are to be submitted online via the DIFC Courts' website. Please refer to the following link - <https://www.difccourts.ae/difc-courts/pro-bono-programme/pro-bono-forms>



Cost Free Trials

A costs-free trial allows potential litigants the opportunity to pursue a claim before the DIFC Courts without the fear or risk of paying the other side's legal fees. The scheme requires that a litigant demonstrate to a Pro Bono Committee that there is a reasonable prospect that their case will succeed, and in the instance, they win the said claim, costs are paid by the opposing party into the Pro Bono Fund. For further information please refer to Rules 38.98 - 38.106 of the DIFC Courts. Applications are to be submitted by way of email to [pro.bono@difccourts.ae](mailto:pro.bono@difccourts.ae) by a volunteer law firm on behalf of its Pro Bono client.



Fee suspensions

A Pro Bono litigant can at any time apply to the Programme Leader to have the court fees suspended until the end of the case. The Programme Leader has absolute discretion in determining whether court fees are to be suspended and to what extent. Applications are to be submitted by email to [pro.bono@difccourts.ae](mailto:pro.bono@difccourts.ae)

## Statistics

To date, the legal clinics have helped support over:



individuals

3,260



volunteer lawyers

39



volunteer law firms

58