

How UNM School of Law Students Can Gain Experience through Clinic and Pro Bono Work



When many hear the term "pro bono," they often associate it with established attorneys representing individuals of very modest means. However, there are ways for law students to gain experience related to pro bono work prior to becoming licensees of the State Bar of New Mexico. Here are a few ways University of New Mexico School of Law ("UNM School of Law") students can engage in pro bono work or school-related opportunities that illustrate the spirit of pro bono representation.

1. Mandatory Clinic Program

The UNM School of Law's Mandatory Clinic Program, one of the first mandatory clinic programs in the nation, is a requirement for all law students. Students may choose from one of five clinical sections, including the Southwest Indian Law Clinic, Natural Resources and Environmental Law Clinic, Economic Justice Clinic, Child and Family Justice Clinic, and the Community Lawyering Clinic. During the clinic, law students will represent a client as they are supervised by an attorney member of faculty.

For more information regarding the Mandatory Clinic Program, visit <https://lawschool.unm.edu/clinic/index.html>.

2. Externships

The UNM School of Law's externship program enables law students to gain law schools credit-hours and real-world experience under the supervision of an active attorney at a non-profit, government agency, or judicial setting. Externships are an optional and an excellent way for law students to prepare for their careers by engaging in real-world legal practice under the supervision of an experienced legal professional.

For more information regarding externships, visit <https://lawschool.unm.edu/careers/students/externships.html>.

3. Volunteer Opportunities

To gain additional legal experience as a law student, UNM School of Law students are encouraged to undertake volunteer opportunities that would provide them further legal skills development via pro bono work under the supervision of pro bono licensed attorneys. One example is the State Bar of New Mexico Young Lawyers Division's **Wills for Heroes Programs**, where law students often volunteer alongside pro bono attorneys.

For an overview of attorney pro bono and volunteer opportunities and information, visit <https://www.sbnm.org/Pro-Bono-Quarterly-Newsletter>, which includes each of our Pro Bono Quarterly Newsletters.