



**AUSTRALIAN
PRO BONO CENTRE**



Media Release

4 October 2023

FIRMS UNDERTAKING SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT LEGAL WORK REQUIRED TO SIGN UP TO THE NATIONAL PRO BONO TARGET

The Australian Pro Bono Centre and JusticeNet SA welcome new pro bono requirements for private firms accepting South Australian Government legal work pursuant to Treasurer's Instruction 10 (TI10).

The following changes will apply to the standard Terms of Engagement – Private Legal Practitioner (Solicitor) applicable for TI10 engagements:

- From 1 October 2023, for all new TI10 engagements, firms will be required to use their best endeavours to sign up to the Australian Pro Bono Centre's National Pro Bono Target.
- From 1 April 2024, for all new TI10 engagements, firms must be a signatory to the Target.

The Target requires signatories to use their best endeavours to undertake a minimum of 35 hours of pro bono legal services per lawyer per year. The Target was launched in 2007 with the aim of raising the profile of the professional responsibility of lawyers to enhance access to justice for people who would not otherwise have access to legal assistance, to work for the public good, and to highlight the shared nature of that responsibility across the legal profession.

The pro bono requirements for TI10 engagements do not currently require reporting of pro bono hours to the South Australian Government, however, all signatories are required to report to the Australian Pro Bono Centre on their performance against the Target each financial year.

South Australian Attorney-General, the Honourable Kyam Maher MLC said:

“Pro bono work is a vital part of a healthy justice system. Many South Australian lawyers already dedicate much of their time and skills to providing pro bono legal services to those who need it most. I hope that this reporting target will see an increase in lawyers volunteering their time to support vulnerable South Australians and aid the public good.”

Australian Pro Bono Centre CEO, Gabriela Christian-Hare, welcomed the new pro bono requirements: “South Australia now joins the Commonwealth, New South Wales, Victorian, Queensland and Western Australian Governments in requiring their private legal service providers to engage in pro bono legal work. The most recent pro bono data collected by the Centre indicates that while South Australia had 4% of Australia’s practising solicitors in FY2023, the proportion of total pro bono hours attributable to lawyers in South Australia was only 2.09%. There is therefore considerable room for growth and the Centre welcomes this move which makes signing up to the Target part of the South Australian Government’s engagement process.”

South Australian practitioners and firms who undertake T110 work and want to understand more about this new requirement, as well as how to work towards the Target, are encouraged to become members of JusticeNet SA, South Australia’s pro bono public interest clearinghouse.

“These changes put South Australia in step with the rest of the country and we are looking forward to seeing the benefits of pro bono flow into these firms and the wider community... JusticeNet provides a structured environment for law firms to fulfil their pro bono targets and to equip lawyers of all experience levels with the skills they need to tackle the complexity of this work. By collaborating with the legal profession, government, and courts, we aim to elevate the pro bono sector and strengthen public faith in justice systems,” said Rebecca Plummer, CEO and Principal Solicitor at JusticeNet.

For further information, please contact Gabriela Christian-Hare at gabriela@probonocentre.org.au or Rebecca Plummer at rplummer@justicenet.org.au.