

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE THIRD JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2026-10

PRO BONO SERVICE

WHEREAS, in 1990, the Florida Supreme Court held that “every lawyer of this state who is a member of The Florida Bar has an obligation to represent the poor when called upon by the courts and that each lawyer has agreed to that commitment when admitted to practice law in this state.” *In Re: Amendments to the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar — 1-3.1(a) and Rules of Judicial Administration — 2.065 (Legal Aid)*, 573 So.2d 800, 806 (Fla. 1990). Three years later, the Florida Supreme Court promulgated Rule 4-6.5(c) of the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar providing for the establishment of a pro bono committee in each judicial circuit. *In Re: Amendments to Rules Regulating the Florida Bar — 1-3.1(a) and Rules of Judicial Administration — 2.065 (Legal Aid)*, 630 So.2d 501 (Fla. 1993). Since 1993, the Third Judicial Circuit has established an ad hoc pro bono committee each year to nominate attorneys for The Florida Bar President’s Pro Bono Service Award. In 2015, a Third Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee was established in compliance with the Rules Regulating the Florida Bar.

By the power vested in the chief judge under article V, section 2(d), Florida Constitution; section 43.26, Florida Statutes; and Florida Rules of Judicial Administration 2.215(b)(2), it is therefore **ORDERED**:

1. Pro Bono Committee

The Third Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Committee (“Committee”) will provide oversight and direction of pro bono legal services for the indigent in the counties of Columbia, Dixie, Hamilton, Lafayette, Madison, Suwannee and Taylor.

2. Committee Leadership

The Pro Bono Director of Three Rivers Legal Services, Inc. or the director's designee, with their consent, is appointed Chair of the Committee. The Chief Judge of the Third Judicial Circuit or the chief judge’s designee is appointed Vice Chair of the Committee. The Committee shall hold elections of officers as provided in the Third Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Plan.

3. Composition of Pro Bono Committee

The Committee comprises the following members:

- A. The Chief Judge of the Third Judicial Circuit or the chief judge's designee;
- B. Three representatives of the Third Judicial Circuit Bar Association ("TJCBA"), one of whom should be a member of the executive board, one should be directly involved with the administration or organization of a TJCBA pro bono event and the other should be from each of the following Committees, Divisions, and Sections of the TJCBA, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Young Lawyers Division
- C. One representative from each pro bono and legal assistance provider in the circuit whose organization is not otherwise represented on the Committee, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Three Rivers Legal Services, Inc.
 - ii. Guardian ad Litem Office
- D. At least one public member; and
- E. At least one client-eligible member.

4. Administrator

The Committee will appoint or create a legally qualified entity (the "Administrator") to administer the Third Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Plan. The Committee has the authority to maintain or replace the Administrator. The Committee is responsible for assisting the Administrator in providing legal representation or assistance to the indigent in accordance with the rules adopted by the Florida Supreme Court. Since 1993, the Administrator has been and continues to be the Pro Bono Director of Three Rivers Legal Services, Inc., or the director's designee.

5. Annual Report

The Administrator will submit an annual report to the Committee which includes an assessment of attorney participation in the pro bono program during the preceding year and a plan for carrying out the pro bono program in the coming year.

6. Committee Responsibilities

In meeting its responsibilities under Rule 4-6.5(c)(2) of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar, the Committee will meet periodically during the year to consider and review the Administrator's work, to oversee and allocate any funding, and to make recommendations on the community's needs, the possible resources available to meet those needs, and its long-term plan to fulfill the legal profession's obligation to its community. The Committee will submit an annual report to The Florida Bar Standing Committee on Pro Bono Legal Services.

7. Effective Date

This administrative order is effective immediately.

DONE AND ORDERED IN Lake City, Columbia County, Florida on this 29th day of September, 2026.



Melissa Gates Olin
Chief Judge

Copies to:

Circuit Judges

County Judges

State Attorney

Public Defender

Office of Regional Conflict Counsel

Court Administration

Third Judicial Circuit Bar Association

Guardian ad Litem Office

Three Rivers Legal Services, Inc.