

STATE BAR *of* TEXAS

2023

PRO BONO REPORT



2023 PRO BONO SURVEY

SUMMARY

The 2023 Pro Bono Survey was administered as part of the Texas Attorney Survey that was emailed on June 6, 2024, to all active State Bar of Texas attorneys who had not opted out of taking surveys (N = 83,259). A total of 6,848 attorneys completed the Attorney Survey, with 2,672 attorneys providing information about their pro bono activities in 2023. The main findings from the 2023 Pro Bono Survey are:

HOURS

Overall 39% of respondents provided some form of pro bono services in 2023, either legal services without expectation of payment or at a substantially reduced fee. Additionally, 33% of respondents provided free pro bono legal services; these attorneys provided an average of 98 hours of free legal services that benefited the poor in 2023. Extrapolating these results to the 98,345 active in-state membership results in an estimate that 3.18 million hours of free legal services to the poor were performed in 2023. Additionally, 15% of attorney respondents provided reduced fee legal services to the poor, and the average was 59 hours. Extrapolating to the active in-state membership suggests that members provided 1.30 million hours of substantially reduced fee legal services to the poor in 2023.

FINANCE

The Pro Bono Survey indicates that State Bar members made significant financial contributions to support pro bono services—13% of survey respondents paid an average of \$1,262 out of pocket expenses related to pro bono or legal services to the poor in 2023.

Across the 98,345 active in-state attorneys, this equates to approximately \$21 million in out-of-pocket expenditures in 2023. Additionally, 8% of survey respondents made direct contributions related to legal services to the poor, with the average amount at \$1,048. Therefore, it is estimated that State Bar members contributed \$11 million to support pro bono or legal services to the poor in 2023.

METHOD

DATA COLLECTION

Pro bono information for the 2023 Pro Bono Survey was collected in conjunction with the 2023 Texas Attorney Survey. The Texas Attorney Survey is conducted biyearly to provide up-to-date and accurate economic information on the practice of law in Texas.

The survey was conducted electronically and emailed on June 6, 2024, to all active Texas attorneys with a valid email address on record with the State Bar of Texas and who had not opted out of receiving survey mailings (N = 83,259). Attorneys had from June 6, 2024, to July 11, 2024, to complete the survey.

For the purposes of this report, responses were analyzed from 2,672 active in-state Texas attorneys who responded to the Pro Bono Survey and met certain criteria. A total of 6,848 in-state attorneys responded, but the analysis criteria had to exclude respondents who left the pro bono question blank. Consequently, a total of 2,672 responses became the basis for the analyses. Additionally, if a respondent failed to provide an answer to a particular question (e.g., the county of his or her practice), the respondent was excluded from the analysis relevant to that question but not from other analyses.

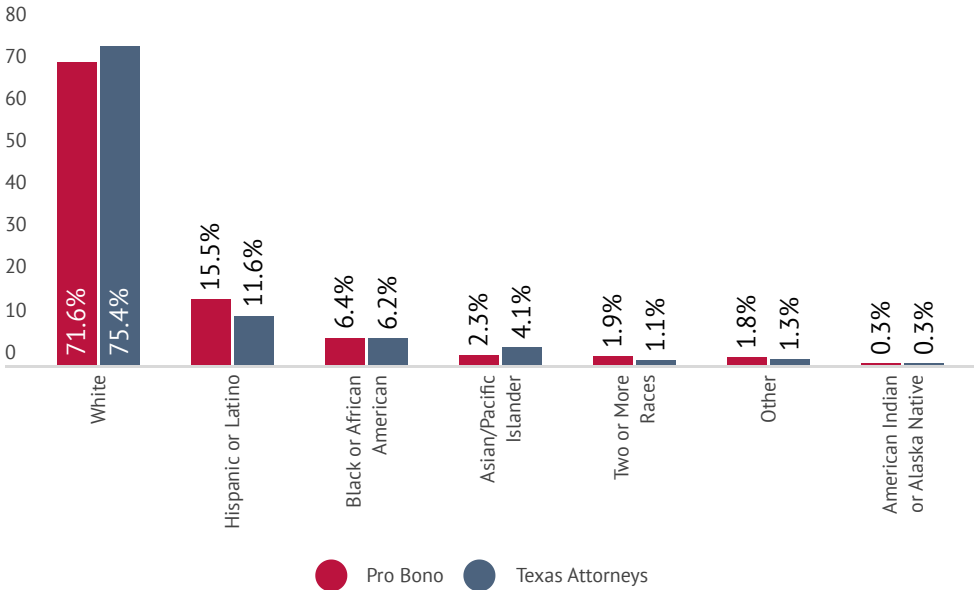
PRO BONO SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The Pro Bono Survey instrument used in this study was based on the pro bono questions used by the State Bar of Texas in previous years' surveys. The instrument asks several yes/no questions to see if respondents provided pro bono hours or reduced-cost hours. For respondents who did provide pro bono or reduced-fee hours, several follow-up questions were asked regarding specific types of work such as hours on criminal or civil cases.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

RACE/ETHNICITY

The race/ethnicity of attorneys providing pro bono is comparable to the general Texas attorney population. The minority population is slightly higher among those that report doing pro bono, 28% compared to 25% for the general Texas attorney population.



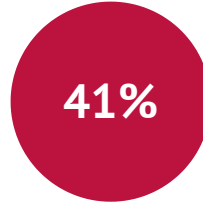
SEX

59% of men and 41% of women reported providing pro bono in 2023. The Texas attorney population is comprised of 61% men and 39% women.

Male



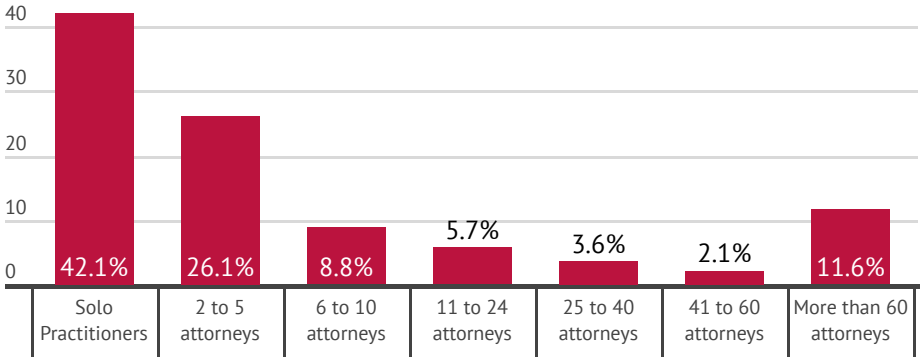
Female



SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

FIRM SIZE

Of the attorneys reporting pro bono in 2023, 77% were in firms with 10 or fewer attorneys.



AGE AND YEARS LICENSED

The median age of attorneys who reported pro bono in 2023 was 55 and the median years licensed was 24. For all active Texas attorneys, the median age was 49 and the median years licensed was 20.

Median Years Licensed



Median Age



SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

GEOGRAPHY

Like the overall Texas attorney population, respondents to the pro bono survey questions are concentrated in just a handful of Texas Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA). A majority of Texas attorneys can be found in the four largest MSAs, Houston (32%), Dallas (31%), Austin (14%), and San Antonio (8%).

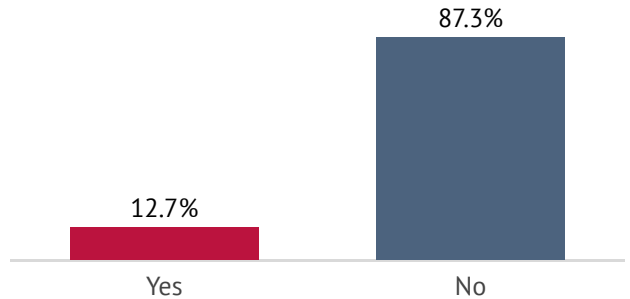
Similarly, 76% of pro bono survey respondents were located in the four largest MSAs.

	Texas Attorneys	Pro Bono
Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land MSA	31.9%	26.2%
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington MSA	31.2%	25.4%
Austin-Round Rock MSA	14.1%	14.6%
San Antonio-New Braunfels MSA	7.8%	9.4%
El Paso MSA	1.3%	1.7%
Corpus Christi MSA	1.0%	1.7%
Beaumont-Port Arthur MSA	0.7%	1.0%
Central Texas MSAs	1.2%	1.6%
East & NE Texas MSAs	2.4%	3.4%
South Texas MSAs	2.1%	3.6%
West Texas MSAs	2.6%	4.3%
Non-Metropolitan Counties	3.6%	7.1%

PRO BONO TRENDS

COURT APPOINTMENTS

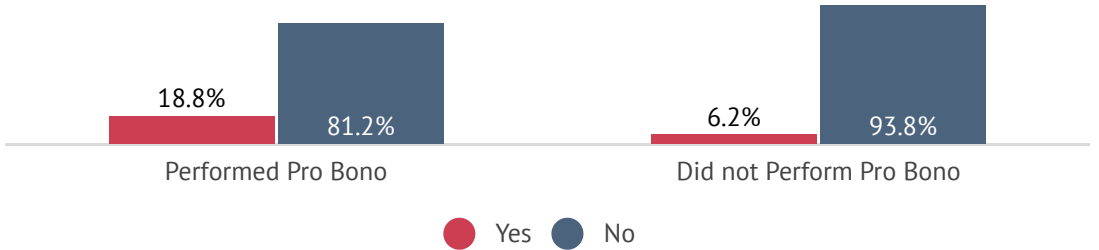
Respondents were asked if they accepted any court-appointed work for indigent criminal defense cases (adult/juvenile) and/or representation of children and indigent parents or adults in DFPS cases in 2023.



Below is a comparison between those that performed pro bono and those who did not in 2023, in relation to accepting court appointments. Those that performed pro bono were slightly more likely to accept court appointments than those that did not provide pro bono (19% compared to 6%).

Court appointments by those who performed pro bono in 2023

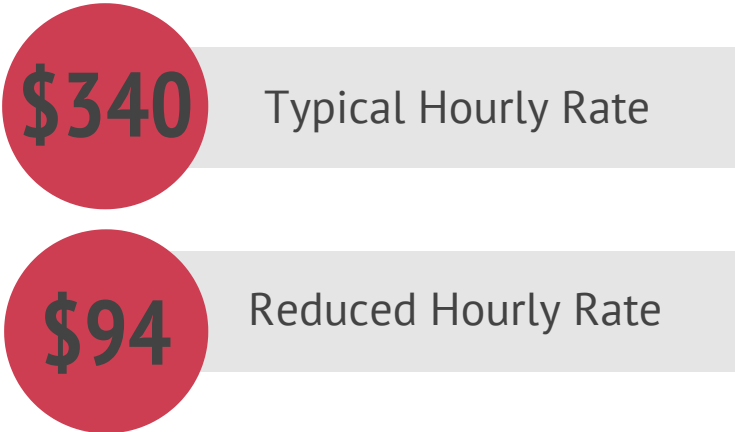
Court appointments by those who did not perform pro bono in 2023



PRO BONO TRENDS

HOURLY RATES AND INCOME

The median typical hourly rate reported by attorneys who performed pro bono in 2023 was \$340. The reduced hourly rate reported was \$94.



The median income reported by all full-time attorneys in 2023 was \$142,856. Those that reported providing pro bono services had a median income of \$146,626.

All Full-time Attorneys

\$142,856

Pro Bono Attorneys

\$146,626

PRO BONO TRENDS

HOURS AND FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

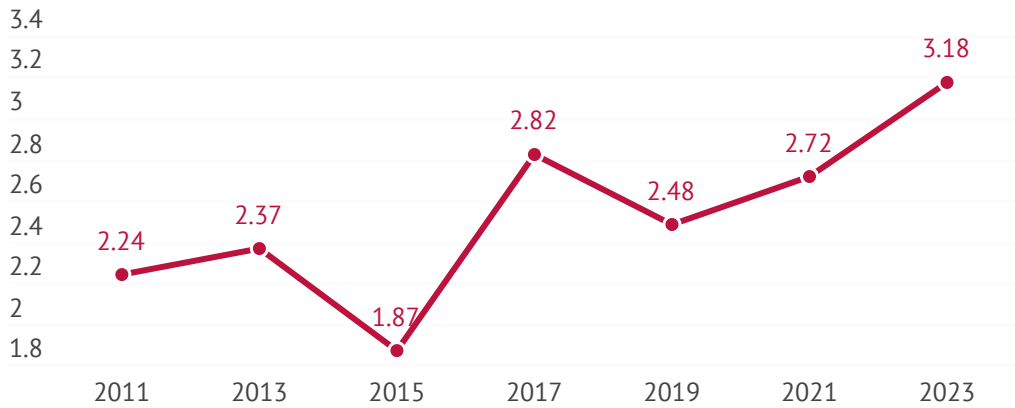
Note: All values in millions

The table below represents the pro bono trends from 2011 to 2023.

	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Total Free Services	2.42	2.37	1.87	2.82	2.48	2.72	3.18
Reduced Fee Hours	2.11	1.87	1.34	2.13	1.74	0.91	1.30
Financial Contributions	\$11.46	\$8.01	\$5.14	\$13.20	\$9.74	\$8.50	\$11.44
Expenses	--	\$14.83	\$11.72	\$12.60	\$14.21	\$16.53	\$21.41

TOTAL FREE SERVICES TREND

Note: All values in millions



PRO BONO TRENDS

2023 TOTALS

Note: All values in millions

The following figures are the total hours of pro bono and the related financial contributions and expenses for 2023.

Hours of Free Services

Reduced Fee Hours

Financial Contributions

Expenses

3.18
Million

1.30
Million

\$11.44
Million

\$21.41
Million