



What You Need to Know When Working with PBSC: A Reference Guide for Organizations

Our Mandate

Pro Bono Students Canada (PBSC) is a national pro bono student organization with a mandate to provide legal services without charge to organizations and individuals in need across Canada. In furtherance of its mandate, PBSC matches law student volunteers with community organizations, firms, courts and tribunals under the supervision of qualified lawyers.

What Students Can Do

PBSC deliverables vary depending on the needs of your organization and/or the project you require assistance with. Our students can:

- research pending legislation, legal issues or current policy questions;
- pro-actively monitor pending legislation, legal issues or current policy questions;
- draft policies or manuals for organizations;
- develop and deliver public legal education workshops and seminars to low and middle-income individuals; and
- help provide legal information to the clients of partner organizations.

What Students Cannot Do

The law student volunteers are not qualified as lawyers, do not have professional liability insurance and are restricted from providing legal advice or otherwise holding themselves out as lawyers or legal professionals. While we require that your organization's project be legal in nature, students cannot give legal advice, and may only provide legal information to your organization or to those your organization assists. (Legal advice is a legal opinion or interpretation about specific facts or problems, while legal information merely provides a general sense of the state of the law.) PBSC volunteers are not expected to incur any expenses in relation to materials created or distributed as part of their placement.

What PBSC Expects of our Partner Organizations

1. Organizations are expected to complete all necessary forms given to the organization by PBSC, and to return them to PBSC in a timely fashion.
2. Organizations must ensure that their expectations surrounding the project are clearly set out and understood by PBSC prior to the commencement of the placement.



3. Organizations must ensure that each project has an insured Lawyer Supervisor available to the student(s) over the course of the project. The role of the insured Lawyer Supervisor is to answer questions of a legal nature, as well as to review the student(s) work product periodically over the course of the project, and at least once upon final completion. If you do not have a lawyer working for your organization, we can help you find a qualified lawyer supervisor.
4. If the insured Lawyer Supervisor is not a staff person of the organization, the organization must ensure that there will also be a designated Project Supervisor available to the student(s) over the course of the project.
5. The designated Project Supervisor must check on the student(s) progress throughout the placement so that potential issues will be discovered before they turn into problems. If a problem does arise, the organization must ensure that the Project Supervisor contacts the PBSC Coordinator(s).
6. The organization must make efforts to integrate the student(s) into the organization, and provide an appropriate work space, resources and other applicable materials where necessary.
7. Organizations must complete and return all program evaluations provided by PBSC in a timely fashion.

What You Can Expect of PBSC

1. That we will provide you with a qualified law student who will provide you with approximately 3 – 5 hours per week of legal services without charge.
2. That we will assist you if necessary in finding a qualified lawyer supervisor to supervise your student's work.
3. That we will monitor your students progress and address any problems or concerns in a timely fashion.
4. That your student will complete the project as set out in the timeline or notify PBSC promptly of any concerns or delays they encounter.