



JUSTICE IN ACTION: TEXAS PRO BONO CHALLENGE

RULES & SCORING

The following rules, terms and conditions apply to the Justice in Action: Texas Family Law Pro Bono Challenge (the “Competition”) and all participants agree to be bound by the same:

1) General Rules

- a) **Competition Period:** The Competition starts on August 3, 2025 and ends on April 1, 2026.
- b) **Definition of “Pro Bono Case”:** For purposes of this competition, a “pro bono case” means a qualifying family law case in which the attorney accepts the engagement and, from the outset of the engagement, agrees that the attorney will not receive any compensation for their representation of the party in the case. A case in which a party agrees to pay some or all of the case related expenses—but not for services of the attorney or firm—is still considered pro bono. However, a case in which a party pays, or has previously paid, for services (even at a reduced rate) is not considered a pro bono case for purposes of this competition.
- c) **Qualifying Family Law Cases:** Only the following types of cases qualify for the purposes of this competition:
 - i) Divorce (contested or uncontested)
 - ii) Original Suits Affecting the Parent-Child Relationship
 - iii) Suits to Modify the Parent-Child Relationship
 - iv) Enforcements (child support, visitation, or property division)
 - v) Adjudication of parentage
 - vi) Termination of Parent-Child Relationship cases
 - vii) Adoption cases
- d) **Joining Competition at Any Time:** Anyone can enter or join the competition—either individually or as part of a team—at any time but only pro bono cases accepted after registration count toward the individual or team total for purposes of the competition.
- e) **Only Family Law Pro Bono Cases Count:** For purposes of this competition, only pro bono family law cases count. While pro bono work in other areas of law is great, and encouraged, they do not count toward the point total in this competition.
- f) **Only Reported Cases Count:** Only cases which are reported by submitting the reporting form online (or the PDF form submitted to the competition email address

(justiceinactioninfo@gmail.com) and received on or before April 1, 2026, will be counted for scoring in this competition.

- g) **One Case is One Case:** One case only counts as one case no matter if one team member works on the case or ten team members work on the case. That case counts as one case for the team, not one case for each team member that worked on the case. However, while it only counts as one case for the team in this competition, it does not mean that each team member cannot claim pro bono hours for that case with the State Bar of Texas for any hours they individually contributed to that case.
- h) **Combined Cases/Same Cause Number:** When separate but related cases are filed simultaneously, and the cases have the same cause number such as a modification/enforcement or a protective order/modification, each separate case type will count as one case for purposes of this competition if the attorney is handling both matters pro bono. However, the combined cases must be reported for purposes of this competition separately (e.g., one reporting form must be submitted enforcement and an additional reporting form must be submitted for the modification).

2) **Team Divisions**

- a) **Team Competition Divisions:** Teams will compete against each other in different divisions based on the size of the team. The team competition divisions are:
 - i) **Small Team Division:** Teams of 2 – 5 members
 - ii) **Medium Team Division:** Teams of 6 – 15 members
 - iii) **Large Team Division:** Teams of 16 – 50 members
 - iv) **Mega Team Division:** Teams of 50+ members
- b) **Team Size Automatically Calculated:** Teams will automatically be placed in their respective divisions based on the actual number of team members that register. For example, if you intended to only have 5 members but 7 actually register, you will be competing in the Medium Team Division as opposed to the Small Team Division.
- c) **Team Divisions Calculated at End of Competition:** The Team Divisions will be determined at the end of the competition and how many members are on each team at that time. For example, if a team initially has 3 team members in August 2025 but, by April 1, 2026, the team has grown to 7 members, then that team will be in the Medium Division, not the Small Division.

3) **Scoring for Competition**

- a) **Base Points:** Base points are awarded for each pro bono case, as follows:
 - i) **Completed Pro Bono Cases:** Each pro bono case completed prior to April 1, 2026 is worth one (1) point.
 - ii) **Started but Incomplete Pro Bono Cases:** Each pro bono case that has been accepted but is not completed by April 1, 2026 is worth a half (0.5) point.

- b) **Bonus Points:** For each pro bono case—whether complete or incomplete—additional bonus points are awarded under certain scenarios that require more time and effort, as follows:
 - i) **Contested Hearing:** If a contested hearing is held in a pro bono case, one (1) bonus point is awarded.
 - ii) **Mediation:** If the attorney attends mediation in a pro bono case, one (1) bonus point is awarded.
 - iii) **Trial Before the Court:** If the attorney handles a trial before the court in the pro bono case, three (3) bonus points are awarded.
 - iv) **Jury Trial:** If an attorney handles a jury trial in a pro bono case, five (5) bonus points are awarded.
 - v) **Mandamus/Appellate Brief:** If an attorney files a Petition for Writ of Mandamus or files an appellate brief, three (3) bonus points are awarded.
- c) **Winner – Individual Competition:** In the individual competition, the individual with the most points is the winner.
- d) **Winner – Team Competitions:** In the team competition, the teams with the most points in their division are the winners of their respective divisions.

4) **Miscellaneous**

- a) **State Bar Pro Bono Hour Reporting:** Each participant is responsible for reporting any pro bono hours to the State Bar of Texas.
- b) **Winners Announced:** Winners will be publicly announced on or before The Marriage Dissolution Institute in April 2026.