

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Baker Donelson Announces Firm-Wide Pro Bono Efforts in Response to Coronavirus Outbreak

April 16, 2020

**Baker Donelson has announced firm-wide pro bono efforts focused on addressing legal needs created by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.**

The Firm's Pro Bono Shareholder [Samuel T. Bowman](#) said, "We are calling on our attorneys to give back during this unprecedented situation by performing pro bono work to address the many legal issues brought about as this pandemic continues to touch virtually every aspect of life in our communities. Just as we are continuing to provide uninterrupted legal services to our clients throughout this crisis, we are encouraging our attorneys to perform pro bono work for those most in need within the communities we serve."

As part of the Firm's related pro bono efforts, it is implementing an approach focused on multiple opportunities where its attorneys can serve.

- Firm attorneys will be assisting state bar associations and local legal aid organizations with creating, managing and serving on COVID-19 task forces to provide remote counsel to address various legal concerns brought about by the coronavirus pandemic. As an example, Baker Donelson's Nashville office has been working with the Nashville and Tennessee Bar Associations on these types of efforts. The Firm has also been working with the Tennessee Administrative Office of the Courts to provide remote legal representation.
- Baker Donelson attorneys will be volunteering to address questions posed online on [ABAFreeLegalAnswers.org](https://www.abafreelegalanswers.org). This online platform allows any eligible user with an Internet connection to access civil legal advice and resources at any time by posing questions to attorneys who provide pro bono legal counsel remotely. Modeled after a legal advice portal created in Tennessee, [ABAFreeLegalAnswers.org](https://www.abafreelegalanswers.org) has become a national resource, offering a free service for low-income clients in 42 jurisdictions and access to more than 7,000 pro bono attorneys.
- The Firm's attorneys will also be providing pro bono services to assist non-profits, as they face many of the same operational, legal, regulatory and governmental issues as for-profit businesses as a result of COVID-19.
- Baker Donelson is also working with other law firms nationwide on additional pro bono opportunities arising as a result of the pandemic.

As part of Baker Donelson's existing pro bono efforts, each of the Firm's attorneys can receive billable hour credit for up to 100 hours per year of pro bono work.

"Just as we established a [Coronavirus Task Force](#) focused on addressing the many legal issues our clients are facing, we are encouraging our attorneys to commit time to serve the people most in need who will be severely impacted by this crisis," Baker Donelson President and Chief Operating Officer [Jennifer P. Keller](#) said. "We're very proud of Baker Donelson's longstanding reputation as a leader in pro bono service. This is a time of tremendous need when we can once again lead the way."

## About Baker Donelson's Pro Bono Commitment

Through its commitment to [pro bono representation](#), Baker Donelson provides legal services to groups and individuals whose resources are limited. For decades, the Firm's attorneys have provided a variety of counsel to many underserved populations that have had no options for legal representation. Baker Donelson's efforts include work on a wide range of matters, such as advocating for the homeless and organizations that serve the homeless, providing corporate legal services to non-profit organizations, collaborating with our clients to address particular community needs, and much more. The Firm has been instrumental in efforts such as expanding the Homeless Experience Legal Protection (H.E.L.P.) program across the Southeast; creating courts dedicated to handling minor legal matters common among the homeless; assisting persons of limited means with obtaining driver's licenses, an essential need in helping these individuals reintegrate into society; and spearheading and organizing volunteer lawyer programs across Baker Donelson's footprint.

Baker Donelson has led the way in the legal industry by being one of the first law firms in the Southeast to create a Pro Bono Committee and designate a Pro Bono Shareholder. To further its commitment to pro bono, Baker Donelson also designates Pro Bono Committee Office Chairs in most of its 21 offices. These chairs are best suited to address local needs while coordinating with the Firm's Pro Bono Shareholder for global pro bono initiatives. This structure ensures Baker Donelson is well-suited to further its goal of addressing broad spectrum needs across the Firm's footprint and beyond.