

Public-Service Graduation Requirement
(For J.D. students who enter in or after Fall 2015)

- A. **Required Hours:** Any individual who enters Texas Tech University School of Law as new J.D. student in or after Fall 2015 is required to complete at least 30 hours of public service. At least 15 hours must be completed in law-related activities; the 15 remaining hours may be completed in either law- or non-law-related activities.
- B. **Goals:** The public-service graduation requirement will enhance the legal profession and the law-school curriculum by exposing students to their professional and ethical obligation to engage in pro bono legal services, and the importance of and need for a life-long commitment to public service. The program will allow students to learn and develop valuable skills in hands-on settings, interact with practicing attorneys and members of the community, and give back to the community.
- C. **Completing the Hours:**
1. **Annual hours requirement:** Each first- and second-year student must complete at least 10 of the required hours each academic year, unless the Director of Pro Bono Projects grants a written exception for extraordinary circumstances. For purposes of this paragraph, “academic year” includes through August 15. (Thus, a new student matriculating in August 2015 has through August 15, 2016 to complete his or her first 10 hours.) “Completing” hours means performing and properly reporting the hours. A student may complete more than 10 hours in any given year; once a student has completed all 30 hours, the student is not required to complete additional hours to meet this annual minimum. A student who has not met the annual requirement will have grades and transcripts held until the student has satisfied that requirement.
 2. **Deadline to complete all hours:** Each student must complete all required hours within 30 days of the student’s intended graduation date. Because this is a graduation requirement, a student will not be permitted to walk at graduation or receive a diploma until the hours have been completed.

D. Law-Related Activities: Law-related activities include, but are not limited to:

1. Law-related services provided on a pro bono basis to a charitable public-interest organization on matters designed primarily to address the needs of low-income individuals;
2. Law-related services provided on a pro bono basis to a public agency, including a court;
3. Hours completed in a Texas Tech Law clinic or public-sector externship beyond those required to earn credit for the course; and
4. Law-related services provided on a pro bono basis for a private attorney or Texas Tech Law faculty member on pro bono case.

E. Non-Law-Related Activities: Non-law-related activities include, but are not limited to:

1. Volunteering at a nonprofit, charitable, civic, or community organization; and
2. Volunteering at a public agency.

Non-law-related activities exclude fundraising for Texas Tech University and the Texas Tech University School of Law.

F. Prior Approval: Before completing hours, students should receive the written approval of the Director of Pro Bono Projects, who will establish procedures consistent with this policy to fully implement this program. As part of these procedures, the Director may develop a list of “preapproved” projects and placements that will not require individual approval.

G. No Compensation: To count under this policy, activities performed must be uncompensated; students may not receive monetary compensation, academic credit, or other tangible benefits for performing the service. Students may be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses and still count the hours served.

H. Location: Service may be provided in Lubbock or in any other area, and may be completed online or via distance.

I. Opportunities and Publicity: The Director of Pro Bono Projects will maintain a database of law-related and non-law-related opportunities, and will regularly publicize these to the student body in appropriate ways. Students will be formally introduced to this graduation requirement during New-Student Orientation, which may include the Extended First-Year Orientation. The law school will also endeavor to sponsor at least one public-service project for student participation each semester.

- J. **Training:** Before starting law-related activities, students must complete a training session that addresses professionalism and ethics, including the unauthorized practice of law.
- K. **Timekeeping:** Students must report their hours and activities using a preapproved timesheet. The timesheet must be signed by the student, the activity supervisor (which typically should be an attorney for law-related hours), and the Director of Pro Bono Projects. Hours will not be counted until completed timesheets are submitted.
- L. **Recognition:** Students who complete at least double the number of required hours for graduation will be recognized at the annual Honors & Awards ceremony during their final year, and in the graduation program.
- M. **Faculty Public Service:** The faculty commits to perform at least 10 hours of public service each year. These activities will be reported to the Dean on the annual report form. Public service is broadly defined and is not limited to actual legal work.

Adopted by the faculty on _____, 2015.