

This initiative connects pro bono attorneys with disabled low-income clients who have been denied Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability (SSD) benefits, and lost their administrative appeals. SSI is a need-based program available to extremely low-income, disabled individuals. SSD provides benefits to disabled individuals based on their employment history. These benefits dramatically improve the quality of life for people without means. Pro bono attorneys will draft briefs to federal district court—E.D.N.Y. or S.D.N.Y.—and argue the hearings in the occasional event that oral argument is scheduled. Experts at Legal Services NYC screen and evaluate the cases and provide mentorship throughout. Cases take approximately 50 hours.

Scope of work for pro bono volunteers includes:

- a. Appearing on the case, and negotiating with opposing counsel and the court for a suitable briefing schedule.
- b. Cases usually already have a complaint filed before being sent. In the event this has not been done, draft complaint with input from client, records, and LSNYC attorneys.
- c. Draft briefs in support of client's case, with input from LSNYC attorneys.
- d. Argument is unlikely, but can be requested and is sometimes granted.
- e. If you win, file for attorneys' fees under EJA. (LSNYC anticipates that fees in pro bono matters will be donated by the firm to LSNYC or to a similar organization serving low-income New Yorkers.)
- f. In the event of a remand, pro bono attorney is not obliged to represent the client at any hearing.

Law firms, corporations, law firm lawyers, and in-house counsel who are interested in partnering with LSNYC are encouraged to reach out to learn more. Please contact Adam J. Heintz, Director of Pro Bono Services, at 646-442-3582 or aheintz@legalservicesnyc.org.

[Volunteer Application](#)