

**Pro Bono Practices and Opportunities in Qatar<sup>1</sup>**

**I. Introduction**

The pro bono legal market does not have any great tradition in Qatar for a variety of reasons. Qatari nationals are well looked after by both the State and the buoyant economy in Qatar and so the need for pro bono legal representation amongst Qatari nationals would be extremely rare. The poorer section of any society comprise those persons who are jobless or are involved in employment involving unskilled labor. In Qatar, there is virtually no unemployment and all unskilled labor is provided by expatriate workers who are invariably intransient and thus not likely to be in Qatar long enough to become involved in legal issues (skilled work is provided by Qatari nationals, predominantly in the government sector, however skilled work also predominantly provided by expatriates). Pro bono opportunities may well exist in terms of issues between such unskilled labor and any unscrupulous employer in the private sector, but this market at this point remains very underdeveloped. The Qatar government is also very supportive of charitable organizations, so their requirements for legal services is also likely to be minor.

**II. Overview of Pro Bono Practices**

(a)	<b>Professional Regulation</b>	
	1. Describe the laws/rules that regulate the provision of legal services?	Law (23) for year 2006 regarding enacting the code of law practice (“Advocacy Law”) which is applicable generally for Qatar proper. <sup>2</sup>  QFCA Rules No 6 of 2018 contains Legal Services Code which is applicable to law firms operating in and from the Qatar Financial Centre (“QFC”) which is a separate jurisdiction to Qatar proper. <sup>3</sup>
	2. Describe any licensure requirements governing the provision of legal services.	Entry into the Roll of Practicing Lawyer under the Advocacy Law requires a formal application to the Ministry of Justice and is open to those persons with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qatari citizenship or citizenship of a Gulf Cooperation Council (the “GCC”) country (provided the GCC country provides reciprocal rights.</li> <li>• A law degree from a recognized university.</li> <li>• Full mental capacity and at least 21 years of age.</li> <li>• Respectable, reputable character and worthy of respect accorded to members of the profession.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> This chapter was drafted with the support of Frank Lucente of Al Tamimi & Co.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.almeezan.qa/LawPage.aspx?id=2563&language=en> (last visited on October 2, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> See [http://www.complinet.com/qfcra/display/display.html?rbid=1557&record\\_id=5427&element\\_id=5348&highlight=legal+services#r5427](http://www.complinet.com/qfcra/display/display.html?rbid=1557&record_id=5427&element_id=5348&highlight=legal+services#r5427) (last visited on October 2, 2019).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No convictions for felonies or crimes involving moral turpitude or dishonesty, unless having been rehabilitated.</li> <li>• Completion of a term of training – shall have completed the training term which comprises six month training at the Centre for Judicial and Legal Studies, in addition to eighteen months at a practicing lawyer’s office who has engaged in legal practice for at least five years, or has worked at the judiciary, public prosecution or any other legal work at any Ministry, government agency, public entity or institution.</li> </ul> <p>Qatari faculty members of Qatari nationality who have obtained a doctorate degree and teach law in a recognized university may also be enrolled in the Roll of Practicing Lawyers.</p> <p>For the QFC a legal services firm must obtain a license from the QFC Authority and lawyers within that firm must be members of a Recognized Legal Body that satisfies the QFC Authority’s discretionary power to determine what qualifies as a Recognized Professional Body.</p>
<b>(b)</b>	<b>Pro Bono Practice and Culture</b>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the rules that regulate the provision of pro bono legal services e.g. any explicit regulation or limitation on providing free legal services in some or all contexts, details of any mandatory or minimum fees imposed on provision of legal services.</li> <li>2. Are lawyers required by such rules to work a minimum number of pro bono hours? If so, how many?</li> <li>3. Are aspiring lawyers required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services in order to become licensed lawyers?</li> </ol>	<p>The Advocacy Law requires that a party to a proceeding can have a lawyer appointed by the Court if the party is insolvent or is unable to find a lawyer willing to take on the case. In such circumstances, the Court has the discretionary power to appoint any lawyer, who cannot refuse the appointment unless that lawyer can show cause why such appointment should not be made. The lawyer can apply to the court for payment of fees but the amount a court will pay is usually so miniscule it is not worth the lawyer’s time making an application, usually being an amount not exceeding 3,000 USD for the entire proceeding.</p> <p>The QFC has no equivalent rule.</p> <p>Lawyers in Qatar are not required to work a minimum number of pro bono hours.</p> <p>Aspiring lawyers in Qatar are not required to complete a minimum number of hours of pro bono legal services in order to become licensed lawyers.</p>

	<p>4. What are the main areas of law which require or present opportunities for the provision of pro bono legal services? What are the major unmet legal needs?</p>	<p>Generally, the main areas of law which require or present opportunities for the provision of pro bono legal services in Qatar are criminal cases against expatriate workers or labor law claims by expatriate workers.</p>
	<p>5. Who are the main providers of pro bono legal services? e.g., NGOs, governmental or other public services, schools and universities, private law firms (local or international) or corporate organizations?</p>	<p>There may be some charitable organizations/NGOs who provide some assistance for expatriate workers facing legal problems but information concerning the same is not made publicly available.</p> <p>The Human Rights Committee and the Department of Labour (both government entities) will on occasion investigate breaches of the law by employers upon the complaint of an employee and the Ministry of Labour has a dispute resolution process for employment dispute.</p>
(c)	<b>Obstacles to Provision of Pro Bono Legal Services</b>	
	<p>1. Do lawyers require a license to provide pro bono legal services?</p>	<p>There is no specific license required to provide pro bono legal services in Qatar.</p>
	<p>2. Do foreign lawyers require any additional license(s) to provide pro bono legal services?</p>	<p>Foreign lawyers are generally prohibited from providing legal services unless they are members of a QFC registered law firm. Otherwise there is no obstacle to providing pro bono legal services.</p>
	<p>3. Do lawyers require professional indemnity legal insurance cover for any pro bono legal services that they provide? If so, are they prohibited from working under the cover of another pro bono provider, such as a private law firm or organization working on the same pro bono project?</p>	<p>The Advocacy Law sets out no requirement for professional indemnity legal insurance for the provision of pro bono legal services.</p> <p>The QFC Authority requires all professional firms to maintain professional indemnity insurance, but make no specific provision for the level of insurance to be maintained. Whether the insurance cover will prohibit pro bono work will be a matter for such policy documents. There are insurances available that will cover pro bono cases.</p>
	<p>4. Are there any rules that prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients?</p>	<p>There are no rules in Qatar that prohibit advertising of pro bono successes or soliciting new pro bono clients.</p>
	<p>5. Do lawyers receive any “Continuing Legal Education” or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked?</p>	<p>Lawyers in Qatar do not receive any “Continuing Legal Education” or equivalent credit for pro bono hours worked – and there are no continuing legal education rules in Qatar.</p>
(d)	<b>Sources of Pro Bono Opportunities and Key Contacts</b>	

	1. Describe any governmental sources of pro bono and/or other legal services in Qatar.	There are no governmental sources of pro bono and/or other legal services in Qatar.
	2. Describe the main non-governmental sources of pro bono and/or other pro bono resources in Qatar.	There may be some charitable organizations/NGOs who provide some assistance for expatriate workers facing legal problems but information concerning the same is not made publicly available.
	3. Is there any public or private organization with which a local or foreign attorney can register in order to be made aware of pro bono opportunities?	There are no public or private organizations with which a local or foreign attorney can register in order to be made aware of pro bono opportunities in Qatar.

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