

# SPOTLIGHT ON: PRO BONO WEEK 2022

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advocate



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THE PRO BONO  
CHALLENGE

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*For #Probonoweeek2022, Chambers speaks to Rose Harvey-Sullivan about why barristers should continue to take on pro bono cases.*





Why is pro bono work important?



Limits on legal aid mean that many people are expected to navigate difficult and sensitive legal cases on their own – like in family law or inquests. The system can be complicated and hard to understand, and this, combined with the emotional toll, can mean that people either give up or the wrong outcome is reached (especially if one party has a barrister and the other doesn't). Doing pro bono work in these kinds of areas is especially important to help make sure that the procedure is fair, and the outcome is just.





Please tell us about your recent pro bono cases



I've represented a father in family law proceedings for several years on a pro bono basis. He was falsely accused of abuse towards his ex-partner, who was granted legal aid as a result of her allegations and so had her own barrister. The father's contact with their children was limited whilst proceedings were ongoing. At the end of the first trial, the allegations were found to be untrue, and substantial contact was granted. However, the children's mother couldn't accept this and kept stopping his contact.



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The father wouldn't have been able to afford to go back to court again unless he had pro bono assistance and was not in a position to represent himself. He would likely have ended up losing contact with his children, who love him and enjoy spending time with him. We have just concluded proceedings with a shared care arrangement having been ordered. I feel proud that I have helped this family to stay together, and that the children will have their father in their lives for the rest of their childhoods.