

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA  
CHAMBERS OF  
FEDERICO A. MORENO  
CHIEF U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE  
UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE  
THIRTEENTH FLOOR  
400 NORTH MIAMI AVENUE  
MIAMI, FLORIDA 33128

To: Members of the Southern District of Florida Bar  
From: Chief Judge Federico A. Moreno  
Re: Call for Assistance -- Pro Bono Panel  
Date: March 31, 2014

---

I am very pleased to announce that our District is embarking in a new direction that hopefully will result in more unrepresented litigants obtaining counsel than ever before. And we need your help!

You may have heard of the Court's decision last month to discontinue operations of the Volunteer Lawyers Project (VLP). In recent times the expenses of operating a program like the VLP simply have become disproportionately high when compared to the number of pro se cases it could service. Because the program was funded from funds collected through a portion of attorney admission fees from members of our Bar and pro hac vice fees, my colleagues and I felt a special responsibility to insure that those monies would be used as wisely as possible.

The decision to disband the VLP was not taken lightly, but rather after exploring various alternatives. In the end, our Judges determined that it would be a better use of resources for us to take a more active role in seeking out counsel for pro se litigants. This will permit much of the money used to fund the VLP's efforts to be shifted toward expense reimbursement for volunteer attorneys.

This is where each of you comes in. I urge all members of the Southern District to join us in a renewed commitment to assist the unrepresented in this District. How can you help? There are a number of ways, the easiest of which is to simply take a case! Pro Bono Opportunities can be found at the Court's website [www.flsd.uscourts.gov](http://www.flsd.uscourts.gov) and are regularly distributed by way of electronic email blast. In addition, I urge each of you to register via the website to be included in a Pro Bono Panel list of those attorneys have an interest in assisting with worthy cases in the future or who are in a position to help locate other attorneys, such as associates in their law firm, who may take cases. There is no commitment from registering, but rather this will simply help us build a database of first contacts when the need arises.

I would like to take this opportunity to especially thank those who have volunteered in the past through the VLP, and particularly its Director Randy Berg, for their important service to the Court. I am sure that their spirit of public service will carry on as we move forward with this new endeavor. My colleagues and I look forward to seeing each of you in Court.