



The State of South Carolina
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

PRO BONO PROGRAM

South Carolina consistently leads the Nation in the rate of men killing women. In 2003 alone, at least thirty-six (36) women were killed by men with whom they had an intimate relationship. In an effort to curb these terrible statistics, the Attorney General has launched a Pro Bono program to assist in the prosecution of first and second offense Criminal Domestic Violence (CDV) cases at the Summary Court (City Municipal Court and County Magistrate Court) level.

Although some counties provide prosecutors for these cases, there is no uniform requirement in South Carolina that an attorney prosecute first and second offense CDV cases at the Summary Court level. In fact, for the vast majority of the State, the burden of prosecution often falls upon the shoulders of the arresting law enforcement officer – a person who has very little training in regards to, and presumably little interest in, the legal profession. It is likely that the offender in these cases, who is most often in control of the couple's finances, will have an attorney present for his defense.

Under the Attorney General's Pro Bono program, private attorneys may volunteer to provide legal services to the victims of domestic violence whose cases are being tried at the Summary Court level. These attorneys need not have a background in prosecution. The Office of the Attorney General provides training to each attorney and certifies him/her as a Special Prosecutor for the Office. The Pro Bono Program Coordinator then provides the attorney with case assignments and information. The Pro Bono program is currently available in Kershaw and Orangeburg counties, and will be available in York County beginning in 2005. For more information, or to volunteer for the program, please contact:

Alexandra H. Chase
Pro Bono Program
Office of the Attorney General

Post Office Box 11549
Columbia, South Carolina 29211-1549

Tele: 803-734-7105
Fax: 803-734-6679
Email: ProBono@ag.state.sc.us