

Publications

Did you Know the USPTO Offers Pro Bono Patent Services?

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We recently published an alert titled “USPTO to Offer Pro Bono Services to Qualifying Inventors” ([read it here](#)), which was directed to the newly announced pro bono program offered by the USPTO to help qualifying inventors and applicants navigate the Patent Trial and Appeal Board (PTAB) process. We also briefly mentioned that the USPTO offers other pro bono services, and have since received a number of requests for qualifying information regarding the USPTO Patent Pro Bono Program.

The USPTO’s Patent Pro Bono Program provides free legal assistance to qualifying inventors and small businesses for the preparation and filing of patent applications. It traces its origins back to the landmark Leahy-Smith America Invents Act of 2011 (AIA) directive to “*work with and support intellectual property law associations across the country in the establishment of pro bono programs designed to assist financially under-resourced independent inventors and small businesses.*”

The Program is comprised of a national network coordinated by the USPTO to connect registered patent attorneys and agents with qualifying inventors and small businesses. Regional support includes non-profit organizations, bar associations, community organizations, and institutes of higher education.

Generally, to qualify, applicants must:

1. Have a gross income of less than three (3) times the federal poverty level;
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the patent system by either:
 1. Having a provisional application already on file with the USPTO, or
 2. By completing a certificate training course; and
3. The ability to describe the particular features of one’s invention and how it operates.

It is noted that various regional Program requirements may differ.

The USPTO provides an interactive map for prospective applicants to access and research their particular regional Program.

Please follow the following link for more information on the [Patent Pro Bono Program](#).