

Friday, 02 December 2011

New "[Charity Corps](#)" Matches Nonprofits with Volunteer Attorneys

Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman and New York State Bar Association President Vincent E. Doyle III have announced the launch of a joint initiative to match volunteer attorneys with nonprofit organizations in need of legal counsel. The innovative partnership, called "Charity Corps," will help improve governance and legal compliance by assisting nonprofits that cannot afford legal counsel.

Charity Corps attorneys will help ensure that nonprofits fulfill their responsibilities and continue to provide critical services through difficult economic times. The Attorney General's Charities Bureau will support the initiative by providing training and guidance to volunteer attorneys and nonprofits. Charity Corps will be administered by the New York State Bar Association.

"Nonprofits are vital to our local communities and state, and we are committed to ensuring that they continue their important work--especially at a time when their services are most in need," Attorney General Schneiderman said. "Charity Corps will provide nonprofits with the necessary legal counsel they otherwise could not afford, helping to improve compliance while also providing the means to carry on with their missions. I want to thank President Vincent Doyle and the New York State Bar Association for their partnership and support of this initiative on behalf of New York's nonprofits and the people they serve."

"The State Bar Association is pleased to partner with the Attorney General's Office to promote voluntary legal services that help nonprofits better realize their missions," President Doyle (Connors & Vilardo LLP) said. "New York's attorneys stand ready to serve our important charitable sector-- housing, shelter and youth programs, mental health and crisis intervention clinics, high school dropout prevention programs, relief and development assistance, civil rights organizations, veterans' assistance groups and others--by helping them with their governance and legal compliance needs. By facilitating pro bono relationships with nonprofits that cannot afford lawyers, the State Bar Association helps do the public good."

Charity Corps will begin as a pilot program, serving up to 50 nonprofits in its first year. Ultimately, the program is expected to assist substantially more underserved nonprofits across New York State. To be eligible, an organization must have a 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. It must also lack in-house counsel and be unable to afford outside counsel. Organizations interested in participating in the program must file their applications by December 31, 2011. For additional eligibility information, including applications and volunteer attorney forms, please visit www.nysba.org/CharityCorps.

- Nonprofits seeking to apply for legal counsel should [submit an application](#) (PDF) by December 31, 2011.
- Attorneys wishing to volunteer with Charity Corps should [submit an Attorney Volunteer form](#) (PDF) to the Leadership Committee.
- To contact Charity Corps, please send an e-mail to charitycorps@nysba.org.