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October 30, 2017

From: José L. Ramírez-Coll, President-Elect

Federal Bar Association, Hon. Raymond L. Acosta Puerto Rico  
Chapter

Re: **A CALL TO ACTION!**

To our fellow Federal Bar Association members,  
our fellow federal practitioners and  
all practicing Puerto Rico attorneys:

First and foremost, I hope you and your family and friends are in good health and in the path to recovery after the recent hurricanes. Today, more than a month after hurricane María struck Puerto Rico's shores, the island is still slowly (but surely!) getting back on its feet. We are all aware of the current statistics regarding the amount of families and businesses without power and running water and know first-hand the daily struggles that many of our own families, friends and colleagues are going through. As attorneys, many of us have asked ourselves what can we do to help others during this time of need.

The Federal Bar Association, Hon. Raymond L. Acosta Puerto Rico Chapter ("FBA") is working with other organizations not only to develop initiatives to assist those less fortunate in these pivotal times in Puerto Rico, but to identify volunteering opportunities for those willing to give what, for attorneys, is arguably our number one asset: **our time and experience**.

#### **FEMA<sup>1</sup> Disaster Assistance Drive**

One of the areas where short-term assistance is desperately needed is helping people around the island in the completion of FEMA assistance applications. As you all know, there are currently thousands of people across Puerto Rico that are not able to receive aid from FEMA or other agencies due to lack of access to a working phone or an internet connection. The FBA is working with other public and private entities and organizations to recruit attorneys willing to donate their time to spend a few hours at designated judicial centers around the island and other locations where remote internet access has been set up for this task. All that is required is a few hours of your time, a personal computer or tablet device and willingness to help.

There are two phases to this project. The first involves the training of those of you who volunteer. The second, the actual execution of the service. Thanks to

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<sup>1</sup> FEMA stands for the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Note: FEMA is not co-sponsoring any of these events.

the assistance and resources of the Legal Services Corporation of Puerto Rico and the public interest initiative "Ayuda Legal Huracán María," the FBA is offering its membership and any interested attorneys several free training sessions on how to volunteer and help in the completion of FEMA assistance applications. In addition, in the coming days we will distribute a schedule with the dates and locations around the island where those that have participated in training sessions can report to assist those less fortunate in completing said applications.

This week, two limited-enrollment<sup>2</sup> training sessions<sup>3</sup> will be offered on how to help others in the completion of FEMA assistance applications, in the following locations:

**Ponce – Universidad Católica de Puerto Rico**

Escuela de Derecho, Salón Corte  
2250 Boulevard Luis A. Ferré Aguayo  
Ponce, Puerto Rico

**Date and time:** Wednesday, November 1, 2017, starting at 10:00 am<sup>4</sup>

**San Juan – Corporación de Servicios Legales de Puerto Rico**

1859 Avenida Ponce de León, Pda. 26  
Santurce, Puerto Rico

**Date and time:** Thursday, November 2, 2017, starting at 2:00 pm

Please register by clicking on the following link: <https://www.federalbar.org/events>.

We hope that, even if you are not available to participate in these initial training sessions, you will be willing to volunteer in this effort at a later time. As mentioned, this initial drive just requires several hours of your time: a few for training, and a few more to help others. If you would like to volunteer but cannot participate in the training sessions this week, please click here: <https://www.federalbar.org/events>.

**The Time to Act Is Now!**

As an attorney, a member of our Bar, and most of all as a Puerto Rican, I personally feel a sense of civic duty that calls me to act now, and use the tools at my disposal to assist those less fortunate in these trying times for our beautiful island and its great people. I hope that you will heed this call and volunteer as well. Just by giving some of your time for a day or two you can make a significant difference in our community. If you have any questions regarding the initiative outlined above, feel free to contact me at [jramirez@amrelaw.com](mailto:jramirez@amrelaw.com).

Sincerely,  
s/ José L. Ramírez-Coll, Esq.  
President-Elect  
Federal Bar Association, Puerto Rico Chapter

<sup>2</sup> Enrollment limited to 20 persons at this time.

<sup>3</sup> The FBA will attempt to seek Continued Legal Education ("CLE") credits for these seminars. However, given the urgency of these matters and the current state of affairs, the FBA cannot guarantee that CLE credit will be granted for the upcoming sessions.

<sup>4</sup> The seminars (in Spanish) last about two hours each, but audience participation and questions are encouraged, so they may run over the two-hour mark.