

A LAWYER'S CREED OF PROFESSIONALISM

A. WITH RESPECT TO MY CLIENTS

1. I will be courteous and civil in all aspects of my professional relations with my clients.
2. I will provide my clients with objective advice.
3. I will endeavor to accomplish my clients' lawful objectives as expeditiously and efficiently as possible.
4. I will raise and explore with my clients the possibility of using alternative methods to resolve disputes.
5. I will counsel my clients against tactics that are intended solely to delay resolution of a particular matter or to unnecessarily drain the financial resources of another party.
6. I will advise my clients that civility and courtesy are expected of me as a member of my profession, are not to be equated with weakness and that I will conduct myself accordingly.
7. I will advise my clients that initiating and engaging in settlement discussions is consistent with effective representation and with my professional responsibilities.
8. I will respond with reasonable promptness to all inquiries from my clients.

Preamble

As a lawyer I will endeavor to make our legal system work fairly and efficiently. To that end, I pledge to act professionally, with civility and integrity; to abide by the letter and spirit of the Ohio Rules of Professional Conduct; to adhere to this Creed of Professionalism when dealing with my clients, courts, attorneys and other participants in the legal system; and to serve the general public and our system of justice.

9. I will keep my clients informed with respect to, and explain to them the importance of, all significant developments in matters in which I am representing them.

B. WITH RESPECT TO THE COURTS AND OTHER TRIBUNALS

1. I will be a vigorous advocate on behalf of my client, while recognizing as an officer of the court that excessive zeal may be detrimental to my client's interests as well as to the proper functioning of our system of justice.
2. I will at all times be courteous and respectful to judges and to the members of their staff. I will not file frivolous pleadings, motions or briefs.
3. I will not continue to pursue claims or defenses when it becomes apparent that they lack merit.
4. I will encourage my clients to stipulate to facts as to which there is no genuine dispute.
5. When dates for hearings or trials are being scheduled or

have been set, I will verify the availability of key participants and witnesses and promptly notify the court (or other tribunal) and other counsel of any problems.

6. As soon as I have knowledge of any circumstance that will necessitate the cancellation or rescheduling of a hearing, trial or deposition, I will notify other counsel and, where appropriate, the court (or other tribunal).
7. I will be prepared and punctual when attending depositions, hearings, meetings, and other matters.

C. WITH RESPECT TO OTHER LAWYERS AND PARTICIPANTS IN THE LEGAL SYSTEM

1. I will be courteous and civil in all oral, written and electronic communications, including Internet publications, and in all personal encounters, and I will instruct the members of my staff to act accordingly.
2. I will agree to reasonable requests for extensions of time, or for waivers of

procedural formalities, that will not prejudice the legitimate interests of my client.

3. I will consult and cooperate with other counsel with respect to the scheduling of depositions, hearings, meetings and other matters.
4. I will not use litigation, the threat of litigation or litigation procedures, such as discovery, to harass other parties.
5. I will not serve motions, pleadings or other documents at a time, or in a manner, that is intended to deprive other counsel of a fair and reasonable opportunity within which to respond or prepare.
6. I will not utilize notice of depositions or subpoenas in a manner that is intended to harass or unfairly burden witnesses or parties.
7. I will endeavor to provide reasonable accommodation to witnesses for their personal obligations when scheduling their participation at depositions, trials, hearings or other matters.

8. I will be punctual and act with dignity when attending depositions, hearings, meetings and other matters.

9. At depositions:

- a. I will not be rude or abusive when asking questions of a deponent;
- b. I will not interfere with the questioning of witnesses by other counsel by, for example, making "speaking objections" or rude comments or by coaching or giving improper instructions to witnesses; and
- c. I will not engage in any conduct that would be inappropriate in the presence of a judge.

10. When propounding written discovery, I will be concise in my instructions and I will prepare interrogatories and requests for production that are focused and unambiguous.
11. When responding to written discovery, my responses will be fair, non-evasive and timely.

12. When negotiating a document, I will concentrate on matters that are material to the subject matter of the document and I will not quibble over matters of form or style.

13. When submitting to other counsel and parties a revised draft of a document, I will clearly identify all changes that I have made from the preceding draft.

D. WITH RESPECT TO THE PUBLIC AND TO OUR SYSTEM OF JUSTICE

1. I will be mindful of the fact that, as a member of a self-regulating profession, it is my duty to maintain and improve our professional standards.
2. I will be mindful of the need to protect the image and dignity of the legal profession in the eyes of the public and will be so guided when communicating with the public and in the way I conduct myself.
3. I will be mindful that the law is a respected profession and that among my goals as a lawyer is to improve the administration of justice.
4. I will help provide pro bono representation to persons who cannot afford adequate legal assistance, and I will endeavor to make our system of justice available to all.