

K. Publications, Videos and Websites

Professionalism commissions have developed a variety of publications, videos and other writings that are used statewide and in some cases, nationwide. These publications range from materials that are distributed throughout the legal community to articles that are published in bar journals.

For example, the Florida Center distributes *The Rules Regulating The Florida Bar/Ideals and Goals of Professionalism* to all first year law students in Florida. The handbook addresses: the independence of lawyers in their relationships with clients; conflicts of duty that lawyers face in various situations; lawyers' responsibility to communicate effectively with clients; the lawyer's responsibilities as an officer of the court; the lawyer's responsibility to protect the image of the profession; and the responsibilities of lawyers to the public. This handbook is intended to spark discussion in small group formats, and it is suggested that the handbook be used with practical and hypothetical examples.

The New Jersey Commission has published *Principles of Professionalism* and distributed it to lawyers and judges. Adopted in 1997, these principles are organized around the headings "Lawyers' Relations With Clients," "Lawyers' Relations With Other Counsel", "Lawyers' Relations With the Court," and "Judges' Relations With Lawyers and Others." These principles range from the general, such as the duties of honesty, respect, and courtesy owed by all members of the legal community to each other and to clients, to the specific, such as the principle that lawyers should respect their colleagues' schedules by accommodating requests for date changes or extensions. In addition, the New Jersey Commission writes articles about professionalism that have been published in state and county bar publications and in the weekly legal newspaper.

The North Carolina Commission circulates the *Principles of Professionalism for Attorneys and Judges* and encourages each district to adopt or amend and adopt these guidelines for professionalism.

The North Carolina Commission also has produced an Historical Video Series. The Commission conducts video interviews with distinguished lawyers, judges and professionals across the state in order to preserve their thoughts and commentary on the professionalism issue and its evolution throughout the years. These videos serve as historical memoirs for the purpose of spreading the professionalism message at law schools, law firms and voluntary bar associations.

A website may serve not only as an additional means of disseminating material concerning professionalism, but also as a way to provide information about the commissions and to attract new members.¹ The Texas Center has an exemplary website that provides electronic publications of all resources of the Center, links to other legal and ethics sites, and links to law schools and bar associations across the country. The information available on the website at <http://www.txethics.org/> includes:

- Professional Ethics Committee Opinions
- The Texas Lawyers' Creed
- Texas Bar Journal articles
- The Texas Disciplinary System Seminar Schedule

¹ The website addresses for all the commissions are included in the contact information in the Appendix.

- Rules Concerning Lawyer Advertising
- Texas Disciplinary Rules
- Gender-Neutral Courtroom Procedures
- Comparison Tables of Ethics Codes
- Legal Assistants' Code of Ethics
- Bibliography of Professional Ethics Topics
- Links to Related Websites

The North Carolina Commission's website at <http://www.nccourts.org/Courts/CRS/Councils/Professionalism/> provides information about the Commission's programs and documents and also serves as a resource for professionalism articles and links to other related websites.

The Ohio Commission's website is <http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/Boards/CP>. The website includes descriptions of Commission events, programs, and initiatives in development. It also provides a link to the Lawyer to Lawyer Mentoring Program webpage and access to electronic copies of Commission publications. The Commission has published *Professional Ideals for Ohio Lawyers and Judges*. This publication includes *A Lawyer's Creed*, *A Lawyer's Aspirational Ideals* and *A Judicial Creed*, which were adopted by the Supreme Court upon recommendation by the Commission. Also included is the Supreme Court *Statement Regarding Provision of Pro Bono Legal Services by Ohio Lawyers*. In a joint effort with the Supreme Court of Ohio Clients' Security Fund, the Commission has also published *A Consumer's Practical Guide to Managing a Relationship with a Lawyer*. This guide provides general, practical information about the lawyer-client relationship, including how to find a lawyer, what to expect after hiring a lawyer, and how to avoid problems in the lawyer-client relationship. Attorneys may distribute this guide to their clients and judges may provide it to persons involved in the court system. Copies of the *Consumer's Guide* and other Commission publications may be mailed, free of charge, upon request.

The Texas Center for Legal Ethics completely redesigned its website in 2009 to better serve the bar and the public. The new website, www.LegalEthicsTexas.com, includes a more user-friendly access to ethics resources, including all applicable ethics rules and ethics opinions promulgated by the Professionalism Committee of the Supreme Court of Texas. The web site also includes a new blog, *On the Merits*, which looks at media accounts of lawyers and the legal system with an eye toward correcting the common myths and misconceptions that increase cynicism about how the legal system works. Future expansion of the website will include an expanded library of ethics resources for members of the Center.

In 2011, the Illinois Commission on Professionalism redesigned its website, www.ilsccp.org, to present in a clearer, more user-friendly format, information about the projects and initiatives of the Commission. The website contains applications for approval of professional responsibility CLE courses and resources and guidelines for the development of quality professional responsibility CLE. With respect to mentoring, the website contains applications for approval of mentoring programs, a list of the approved program administrators, and resources for mentoring. The website will continue to be updated to accommodate communication between mentoring pairs and program administrators, CLE providers, and others. Launch of a blog is planned for late 2011.

The Commission has published several articles in various bar journals and newsletters, and intends to expand its publication in 2011 and beyond.