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Model Rule 5.5 Adjusts to Remote Office Life

ABA Ethics Committee Eases Model Rule 5.5 to Allow Remote Work in Other Jurisdictions

In an opinion released last week, the ABA Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility eased Model Rule 5.5 to allow lawyers to work remotely in jurisdictions where they're not licensed as long as they only engage in law they're authorized to practice. Though influenced by the pandemic and the new ways that lawyers have been working, this change is permanent. Most states use Model Rule 5.5 as the basis for their own standard regarding practice in other jurisdictions, according to [Bloomberg Law](#). Which jurisdictions have relaxed their rules about remote work since the start of the pandemic, and which ones had eased them before the COVID-19 crisis?

Remembering Paula Littlewood, Bar Executive and Advocate for Legal Innovation

Paula Littlewood, former executive director of the Washington State Bar Association and a champion for innovation in the legal industry, died of pancreatic cancer last week. Littlewood, a 55-year-old mother of two, also previously served on the ABA Commission on the Future of Legal Services and the ABA Task Force on the Future of Legal Education. Littlewood was perhaps best known for her work in implementing the now-eliminated Limited License Legal Technician program in Washington state and encouraging other jurisdictions to replicate it, which several have. During her illness, she continued to advocate for regulatory reform, serving on the board of Responsive Law and the board of advisors for the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System (widely known as the IAALS). A [news item on the WSBA website](#) shares candid photos, fond memories, and a statement from Littlewood's family; [ABA Journal](#) also offers a remembrance of Littlewood, as well as a link to a podcast that featured her this past July.

ROSS Intelligence to Cease Operations but Continue Legal Battle with Thomson Reuters

Legal tech startup ROSS Intelligence is shutting down because the lawsuit against it by Thomson Reuters has left it without sufficient funds and unable to raise new financing or explore possible acquisition. The ROSS platform is no longer accepting new customers and will cease operations on January 31, 2021. However, the company plans to continue its legal fight, using insurance funds to pay its litigation fees. Thomson Reuters alleges that ROSS stole copyrighted Westlaw content to build a competing legal research product; ROSS denies this and says Thomson Reuters is using litigation as a weapon to squelch competition. At [LawSites blog](#), Robert Ambrogi shares his thoughts on the shutdown and on what this case could mean for other legal tech firms.

Coping Strategies: Dealing with the Blurring of Work and Life, Lack of Office Chit-Chat

When Gina McCarthy was head of the Environmental Protection Agency in the Obama administration, she had a hard-and-fast rule about leaving work at work and home at home. (McCarthy went on to lead the Natural Resources Defense Council and recently announced that she will leave that position for the newly created role of national climate

advisor within the Biden administration.) While she was physically going to work, she enjoyed chatting with colleagues, finding those side conversations important for motivation and rapport. For McCarthy and for many others, the pandemic has eliminated both the barrier between work and home and the opportunity for office chit-chat. In an interview with [Fast Company](#), McCarthy shares what she's doing instead to stay productive and balanced.

ABA Appointment Process to Open Soon

ABA President-Elect Reginald M. Turner is seeking recommendations for appointments to ABA standing and special committees, commissions and other entities. Lawyers who wish to serve must be members of the ABA and have a desire to contribute to its work. The [online instructions and application](#) will go live on December 31, 2020; recommendations must be received by February 19, 2021. A [letter from Turner](#) offers more details about the appointment process.

Bar Leader Weekly is on hiatus until Wednesday, January 13. The ABA Division for Bar Services wishes happy holidays to all who celebrate, and a wonderful, healthy 2021 for everyone!



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