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New ABA Ethics Opinion on Pro Se Lawyers

Formal Ethics Opinion: 'No Contact' ABA Model Rule Also Applies When Lawyers Represent Themselves

Under ABA Model Rule 4.2—the "no contact" rule—a lawyer may not contact someone represented by another lawyer without the consent of the other lawyer or authorization by law or court order. But does this also apply when lawyers represent themselves, rather than clients? Late last month, the ABA Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility released a formal opinion that says pro se lawyers are bound by Model Rule 4.2 even though Comment 4 to the rule says parties in a lawsuit may communicate with each other. Even when representing themselves, a lawyer might still have an unfair advantage over a nonlawyer in a case, the opinion says, so not following this rule could result in "overreaching, disruption of the represented person's client-lawyer relationship, and acquisition of uncounseled disclosures." [ABA Journal](#) has more information about this opinion, including whether any standing committee members dissented.

Women's Exit from Big Law to In-House Positions Continues—But Why?

Why do so many women leave Big Law firms for in-house positions? Many cite the pressure to bill a lot of hours—but it's not accurate to assume this is always driven by a desire for more work-life balance. In fact, many women who make this move say they now work just as many hours as before—but differently. Some say they like the variety in their in-house work, the lack of competition between lawyers over credit for bringing in new work, and the ability to be proactive rather than bouncing from one high-billing crisis to another. This trend is intensifying, according to data from Leopard Solutions: In the first nine months of 2022, only 28% of women who left one of the top 200 U.S. law firms went to another of comparable size (down from 35% in 2021), and in-house positions remain the most popular next step. [Bloomberg Law](#) takes a deep dive, talking with several lawyers and career experts about why women are leaving Big Law and the implications for their former firms' efforts toward diversity, equity and inclusion.

The Florida Bar Sets Up New Way for Lawyers to Offer Hurricane-Related Help to Other Lawyers

To assist its members who want to help their peers affected by Hurricane Ian, The Florida Bar has created a special section within its Florida Bar News classified ads. Called [Hurricane Ian Help](#), this ad section currently contains offers made by Florida lawyers looking to share free office furniture, temporary office and conference room space, remote paralegal assistance, and coverage of both in-person and virtual hearings. A [news item from the bar](#) indicates how to offer resources to be added to the listings.

New Report, Resource Center from IAALS Highlight Growing Trend Toward Unbundled Legal Services

The pandemic helped normalize digitization and technology use by legal services providers, including or especially those who offer unbundled legal services, according to the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System. That's one reason why IAALS moved forward with a 2021 virtual national conference on the subject of unbundling, in partnership

with the Chicago Bar Foundation, the ABA Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services, and the Self-Represented Litigation Network. Last week, IAALS released [a report highlighting key takeaways](#) from that conference and launched [an unbundling resource center](#) on its website.



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