

**Rule 5.2 Responsibilities of a Subordinate Lawyer**  
**(Commission's Proposed Rule Adopted on September 25 & 26, 2015 – Clean Version)**

- (a) A lawyer shall comply with these Rules and the State Bar Act notwithstanding that the lawyer acts at the direction of another lawyer or other person.
- (b) A subordinate lawyer does not violate these Rules or the State Bar Act if that lawyer acts in accordance with a supervisory lawyer's reasonable\* resolution of an arguable question of professional duty.

**Comment**

When lawyers in a supervisor-subordinate relationship encounter a matter involving professional judgment as to the lawyers' responsibilities under these Rules or the State Bar Act and the question can reasonably\* be answered only one way, the duty of both lawyers is clear and they are equally responsible for fulfilling it. Accordingly, the subordinate lawyer must comply with his or her obligations under paragraph (a). If the question reasonably\* can be answered more than one way, the supervisory lawyer may assume responsibility for determining which of the reasonable\* alternatives to select, and the subordinate may be guided accordingly. If the subordinate lawyer believes\* that the supervisor's proposed resolution of the question of professional duty would result in a violation of these Rules or the State Bar Act, the subordinate is obligated to communicate his or her professional judgment regarding the matter to the supervisory lawyer.