

BOARD AGENDA ITEM MARCH 131
PROPOSED NEW AND AMENDED RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT
OF THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA

Batch 5 Rules and Batch 3&4 Rules Referred to the Commission for Further Consideration,

(Adopted by the Board Committee on Regulation and Admissions on March 5, 2010.)*

(Adopted by the Board of Governors on March 6, 2010.)*

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* The Board of Governor’s adoption of the proposed rules is subject to consideration of possible revisions following a comprehensive public comment distribution of the entire body of proposed rules.

Rule 1.2 Scope Of Representation And Allocation Of Authority Between Client And Lawyer

(Commission's Proposed Rule – Clean Version)

- (a) Subject to paragraphs (c) and (d), a lawyer shall abide by a client's decisions concerning the objectives of representation and, as required by Rule 1.4, shall consult with the client as to the means by which they are to be pursued. A lawyer may take such action on behalf of the client as is impliedly authorized to carry out the representation. A lawyer shall abide by a client's decision whether to settle a matter. Except as otherwise provided by law in a criminal case, the lawyer shall abide by the client's decision, after consultation with the lawyer, as to a plea to be entered, whether to waive jury trial and whether the client will testify.
- (b) A lawyer's representation of a client, including representation by appointment, does not constitute an endorsement of the client's political, economic, social or moral views or activities.
- (c) A lawyer may limit the scope of the representation if the limitation is reasonable under the circumstances and the client gives informed consent.
- (d)
 - (1) A lawyer shall not counsel a client to engage, or assist a client in conduct that the lawyer knows is criminal, fraudulent, or a violation of any law, rule, or ruling of a tribunal.
 - (2) Notwithstanding paragraph (d)(1), a lawyer may discuss the legal consequences of any proposed course of conduct with a client and may counsel or assist a client to make a good faith effort to determine the validity, scope, meaning or application of a law, rule, or ruling of a tribunal.

Comment

Allocation of Authority between Client and Lawyer

- [1] Paragraph (a) confers upon the client the ultimate authority to determine the purposes to be served by legal representation, within the limits imposed by law and the lawyer's professional obligations. See e.g. Penal Code section 1018. A lawyer is not authorized merely by virtue of the lawyer's retention by a client, to impair the client's substantial rights or the client's claim itself. *Blanton v. Womancare, Inc.* (1985) 38 Cal.3d 396, 404 [212 Cal.Rptr. 151, 156].) Accordingly, the decisions specified in paragraph (a), such as whether to settle a civil matter or waive a jury trial in a civil matter, must also be made by the client. See Rule 1.4(c) for the lawyer's duty to communicate with the client about such decisions. With respect to the means by which the client's objectives are to be pursued, the lawyer shall consult with the client as required by Rule 1.4(a)(2) and may take such action as is impliedly authorized to carry out the representation, provided the lawyer does not violate Rule 1.6 or Business and Professions Code section 6068(e).
- [2] On occasion, however, a lawyer and a client may disagree about the means to be used to accomplish the client's objectives. Clients normally defer to the special knowledge and skill of their lawyer with respect to the means to be used to accomplish their objectives, particularly with respect to technical, legal and tactical matters. Conversely, lawyers usually defer to the client regarding such questions as the expense to be incurred and concern for third persons

who might be adversely affected. Because of the varied nature of the matters about which a lawyer and client might disagree and because the actions in question may implicate the interests of a tribunal or other persons, this Rule does not prescribe how such disagreements are to be resolved. Other law, however, may be applicable and should be consulted by the lawyer. The lawyer should also consult with the client and seek a mutually acceptable resolution of the disagreement. If such efforts are unavailing and the lawyer has a fundamental disagreement with the client, the lawyer may withdraw from the representation. See Rule 1.16(b). Conversely, the client may resolve the disagreement by discharging the lawyer. See Rule 1.16(a)(3).

- [3] At the outset of, or during a representation, the client may authorize the lawyer to take specific action on the client's behalf without further consultation. Absent a material change in circumstances and subject to Rule 1.4, a lawyer may rely on such an advance authorization. The client may, however, revoke such authority at any time.
- [4] In a case in which the client appears to be suffering diminished capacity, the lawyer's duty to abide by the client's decisions is to be guided by reference to Rule 1.14.

Independence from Client's Views or Activities

- [5] Legal representation should not be denied to people who are unable to afford legal services, or whose cause is controversial or the subject of popular disapproval. By the same token, representing a client does not constitute approval of the client's views or activities.

Agreements Limiting Scope of Representation

- [6] The scope of services to be provided by a lawyer may be limited by agreement with the client or by the terms under which the lawyer's

services are made available to the client. When a lawyer has been retained by an insurer to represent an insured, for example, the representation may be limited to matters related to the insurance coverage. A limited representation may be appropriate because the client has limited objectives for the representation. In addition, the terms upon which representation is undertaken may exclude specific means that might otherwise be used to accomplish the client's objectives. Such limitations may exclude actions that the client thinks are too costly or that the lawyer regards as imprudent.

- [7] Although this Rule affords the lawyer and client substantial latitude to limit the representation, the limitation must be reasonable under the circumstances. If, for example, a client's objective is limited to securing general information about the law the client needs in order to handle a common and typically uncomplicated legal problem, the lawyer and client may agree that the lawyer's services will be limited to a brief telephone consultation. Such a limitation, however, would not be reasonable if the time allotted was not sufficient to yield advice upon which the client could rely. Although an agreement for a limited representation does not exempt a lawyer from the duty to provide competent representation, the limitation is a factor to be considered when determining the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness and preparation reasonably necessary for the representation. See Rule 1.1. Even where the scope of representation is expressly limited, the lawyer may still have a duty to alert the client to reasonably apparent legal problems outside the scope of representation.

- [8] All agreements concerning a lawyer's representation of a client must accord with the Rules of Professional Conduct and other law. See, e.g., Rules 1.1, 1.8 and 5.6. See also California Rules of Court 3.35-3.37 (limited scope rules applicable in civil matters generally), and 5.70-5.71 (limited scope rules applicable in family law matters).

Criminal, Fraudulent and Prohibited Transactions

- [9] Paragraph (d) prohibits a lawyer from knowingly counseling or assisting a client to commit a crime or fraud or to violate any rule, law, or ruling of a tribunal. However, this Rule does not prohibit a lawyer from giving a good faith opinion about the foreseeable consequences of a client's proposed conduct. Nor does the fact that a client uses advice in a course of action that is criminal or fraudulent of itself make a lawyer a party to the course of action. There is a critical distinction between presenting an analysis of legal aspects of questionable conduct and recommending the means by which a crime or fraud might be committed with impunity.
- [10] The prohibition in paragraph (d)(1) applies whether or not the client's conduct has already begun and is continuing. For example, a lawyer may not draft or deliver documents that the lawyer knows are fraudulent; nor may the lawyer counsel how the wrongdoing might be concealed. The lawyer may not continue assisting a client in conduct that the lawyer originally believed was legally proper but later discovers is criminal, fraudulent, or the violation of any rule, law, or ruling of a tribunal. In any event, the lawyer shall not violate his or her duty of protecting all confidential information as provided in Rule 1.6 and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e). When a lawyer has been retained with respect to client conduct described in paragraph (d)(1), the lawyer shall limit his or her actions to those that appear to the lawyer to be in the best lawful interest of the client, including counseling the client about possible corrective or remedial action. In some cases, the lawyer's response is limited to the lawyer's right and, where appropriate, duty to resign or withdraw in accordance with Rule 1.16.
- [11] Paragraph (d)(2) authorizes a lawyer to counsel or assist a client to make a good faith effort to determine the validity, scope, meaning or

application of a law, rule or ruling of a tribunal. Determining the validity, scope, meaning or application of a law, rule, or ruling of a tribunal in good faith may require a course of action involving disobedience of the law, rule, or ruling of a tribunal, or of the meaning placed upon it by governmental authorities. Paragraph (d)(2) also authorizes a lawyer to advise a client on the consequences of violating a law, rule, or ruling of a tribunal the client does not contend is unenforceable or unjust in itself, as a means of protesting a law or policy the client finds objectionable. For example, a lawyer may properly advise a client about the consequences of blocking the entrance to a public building as a means of protesting a law or policy the client believes to be unjust.

- [12] If a lawyer comes to know or reasonably should know that a client expects assistance not permitted by these Rules or other law or if the lawyer intends to act contrary to the client's instructions, the lawyer must consult with the client regarding the limitations on the lawyer's conduct. See Rule 1.4(a)(6).

Rule 1.6 Confidentiality of Information

(Commission's Proposed Rule – Clean Version)

- (a) A lawyer shall not reveal information protected from disclosure by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) unless the client gives informed consent or the disclosure is permitted by paragraph (b).
- (b) A lawyer may, but is not required to, reveal information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) to the extent that the lawyer reasonably believes the disclosure is necessary:
 - (1) to prevent a criminal act that the lawyer reasonably believes is likely to result in death of, or substantial bodily harm to, an individual, as provided in paragraph (c);
 - (2) to secure legal advice about the lawyer's compliance with the lawyer's professional obligations;
 - (3) to establish a claim or defense on behalf of the lawyer in a controversy between the lawyer and the client relating to an issue of breach, by the lawyer or by the client, of a duty arising out of the lawyer-client relationship;
 - (4) to comply with a court order; or
 - (5) to protect the interests of a client under the limited circumstances identified in Rule 1.14(b).
- (c) *Further obligations under paragraph (b)(1).* Before revealing information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) in order to prevent a criminal act as provided in paragraph (b)(1), a lawyer shall, if reasonable under the circumstances:
 - (1) make a good faith effort to persuade the client: (i) not to commit or to continue the criminal act or (ii) to pursue a course of conduct that will prevent the threatened death or substantial bodily harm; or do both (i) and (ii); and
 - (2) inform the client, at an appropriate time, of the lawyer's ability or decision to reveal information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) as provided in paragraph (b)(1).
- (d) In revealing information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) as permitted by paragraph (b), the lawyer's disclosure must be no more than is necessary to prevent the criminal act, secure confidential legal advice, establish a claim or defense in a controversy between the lawyer and a client, protect the interests of the client, or to comply with a court order given the information known to the lawyer at the time of the disclosure.
- (e) A lawyer who does not reveal information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) as permitted by paragraph (b) does not violate this Rule.

Comment

- [1] This Rule governs the disclosure by a lawyer of information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) during the lawyer's representation of the client. See Rule 1.18 for the lawyer's duties with respect to information provided to the lawyer by a

prospective client, Rule 1.9(c)(2) for the lawyer's duty not to reveal information relating to the lawyer's prior representation of a former client, and Rules 1.8.2 and 1.9(c)(1) for the lawyer's duties with respect to the use of such information to the disadvantage of clients and former clients.

Policies Furthered by the Duty of Confidentiality

[2] Paragraph (a) relates to a lawyer's obligations under Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1), which provides it is a duty of a lawyer: "To maintain inviolate the confidence, and at every peril to himself or herself to preserve the secrets, of his or her client." A lawyer's duty to preserve the confidentiality of client information involves public policies of paramount importance. (*In re Jordan* (1974) 12 Cal.3d 575, 580 [116 Cal.Rptr. 371].) Preserving the confidentiality of client information contributes to the trust that is the hallmark of the lawyer-client relationship. The client is thereby encouraged to seek legal assistance and to communicate fully and frankly with the lawyer even as to embarrassing or detrimental subjects. The lawyer needs this information to represent the client effectively and, if necessary, to advise the client to refrain from wrongful conduct. Almost without exception, clients come to lawyers in order to determine their rights and what is, in the complex of laws and regulations, deemed to be legal and correct. Based upon experience, lawyers know that almost all clients follow the advice given, and the law is upheld. Paragraph (a) thus recognizes a fundamental principle in the lawyer-client relationship, that, in the absence of the client's informed consent, a lawyer must not reveal information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1). (See, e.g., *Commercial Standard Title Co. v. Superior Court* (1979) 92 Cal.App.3d 934, 945 [155 Cal.Rptr.393].)

Information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1).

[3] As used in this Rule, "information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1)" consists of information gained by virtue of the representation of a client, whatever its source, that (a) is protected by the lawyer-client privilege, (b) is likely to be embarrassing or detrimental to the client if disclosed, or (c) the client has requested be kept confidential. Therefore, the lawyer's duty of confidentiality as defined in Business and Professions Code section 6068(e) is broader than lawyer-client privilege. (See *In the Matter of Johnson* (Rev. Dept. 2000) 4 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 179; *Goldstein v. Lees* (1975) 46 Cal.App.3d 614, 621 [120 Cal. Rptr. 253].)

Scope of the Lawyer-Client Privilege

[4] The protection against compelled disclosure or compelled production that is afforded lawyer-client communications under the privilege is typically asserted in judicial and other proceedings in which a lawyer or client might be called as a witness or otherwise compelled to produce evidence. Because the lawyer-client privilege functions to limit the amount of evidence available to a tribunal, its protection is somewhat limited in scope.

Scope of the Duty of Confidentiality

[5] A lawyer's duty of confidentiality, on the other hand, is not so limited as the lawyer-client privilege. The duty protects the relationship of trust between a lawyer and client by preventing the lawyer from revealing the client's protected information, regardless of its source and even when not confronted with compulsion. As a result, any information the lawyer has learned during the representation, even if not relevant to the matter for which the lawyer was retained, is protected under the duty so long as the lawyer acquires the information by virtue of being in

the lawyer-client relationship. Information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) is not concerned only with information that a lawyer might learn after a lawyer-client relationship has been established. Information that a lawyer acquires about a client before the relationship is established, but which is relevant to the matter for which the lawyer is retained, is protected under the duty regardless of its source. The duty also applies to information a lawyer acquires during a lawyer-client consultation, whether from the client or the client's representative, even if a lawyer-client relationship does not result from the consultation. See Rule 1.18. Thus, a lawyer may not reveal information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) except with the consent of the client or an authorized representative of the client, or as authorized by these Rules or the State Bar Act.

Relationship of Confidentiality to Lawyer Work Product

- [6] "Information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1)" does not ordinarily include (i) a lawyer's legal knowledge or legal research or (ii) information that is generally known in the local community or in the trade, field or profession to which the information relates. However, the fact that information can be discovered in a public record does not, by itself, render that information "generally known" and therefore outside the scope of this Rule. (See *In the Matter of Johnson* (Rev. Dept. 2000) 4 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 179.)
- [7] Paragraph (a) prohibits a lawyer from revealing information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1). This prohibition also applies to disclosures by a lawyer that do not in themselves reveal protected information but could reasonably lead to the discovery of such information by a third person. A lawyer's use of a hypothetical to discuss issues relating to the client's representation is permissible so

long as there is no reasonable likelihood that the listener will be able to ascertain the identity of the client or the situation involved.

Authorized Disclosure

- [8] Lawyers in a firm may, in the course of the firm's practice, disclose to each other information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) that is related to a client of the firm, unless the client has instructed that particular information be confined to specified lawyers.

Disclosure Adverse to Client as Permitted by Paragraph (b)(1)

- [9] Notwithstanding the important public policies promoted by the duty of confidentiality, the overriding value of life permits certain disclosures otherwise prohibited under Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1). Paragraph (b)(1) is based on Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(2), which narrowly permits a lawyer to disclose information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) even without client consent. Evidence Code section 956.5, which relates to the evidentiary lawyer-client privilege, sets forth a similar express exception. Although a lawyer is not permitted to reveal protected information concerning a client's past, completed criminal acts, the policy favoring the preservation of human life that underlies this exception to the duty of confidentiality and the evidentiary privilege permits disclosure to prevent a future or ongoing criminal act.

Lawyer Not Subject to Discipline for Revealing Protected Information as Permitted Under Paragraph (b)(1)

- [10] Rule 1.6(b)(1) reflects a balancing between the interests of preserving client confidentiality and of preventing a criminal act that a lawyer reasonably believes is likely to result in death or substantial bodily

harm to an individual. A lawyer who reveals protected information as permitted under paragraph (b)(1) is not subject to discipline.

No Duty to Reveal Information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1)

[11] Neither Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(2) nor paragraph (b)(1) imposes an affirmative obligation on a lawyer to reveal information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) in order to prevent harm. A lawyer may decide not to reveal such information. Whether a lawyer chooses to reveal protected information as permitted under this Rule is a matter for the individual lawyer to decide, based on all the facts and circumstances, such as those discussed in Comment [12] of this Rule.

Deciding to Reveal Protected Information as Permitted Under Paragraph (b)(1)

[12] Disclosure permitted under paragraph (b)(1) is ordinarily a last resort, when no other available action is reasonably likely to prevent the criminal act. Prior to revealing protected information as permitted under paragraph (b)(1), the lawyer must, if reasonable under the circumstances, make a good faith effort to persuade the client to take steps to avoid the criminal act or threatened harm. Among the factors to be considered in determining whether to disclose such information are the following:

- (1) the amount of time that the lawyer has to make a decision about disclosure;
- (2) whether the client or a third party has made similar threats before and whether they have ever acted or attempted to act upon them;

- (3) whether the lawyer believes the lawyer's efforts to persuade the client or a third person not to engage in the criminal conduct have or have not been successful;
- (4) the extent of adverse effect to the client's rights under the Fifth, Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution and analogous rights and privacy rights under Article 1 of the Constitution of the State of California that may result from disclosure contemplated by the lawyer;
- (5) the extent of other adverse effects to the client that may result from disclosure contemplated by the lawyer; and
- (6) the nature and extent of protected information that must be disclosed to prevent the criminal act or threatened harm.

A lawyer may also consider whether the prospective harm to the victim or victims is imminent in deciding whether to disclose the protected information. However, the imminence of the harm is not a prerequisite to disclosure, and a lawyer may disclose the protected information without waiting until immediately before the harm is likely to occur.

Counseling Client or Third Person Not to Commit a Criminal Act Reasonably Likely to Result in Death of Substantial Bodily Harm

[13] Paragraph (c)(1) provides that, before a lawyer may reveal information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1), the lawyer must, if reasonable under the circumstances, make a good faith effort to persuade the client not to commit or to continue the criminal act, or to persuade the client to otherwise pursue a course of conduct that will prevent the threatened death or substantial bodily harm, including persuading the client to take action to prevent a third person from committing or continuing a criminal act. If necessary, the client

may be persuaded to do both. The interests protected by such counseling are the client's interests in limiting disclosure of protected information and in taking responsible action to deal with situations attributable to the client. If a client, whether in response to the lawyer's counseling or otherwise, takes corrective action – such as by ceasing the client's own criminal act or by dissuading a third person from committing or continuing a criminal act before harm is caused – the option for permissive disclosure by the lawyer would cease because the threat posed by the criminal act would no longer be present. When the actor is a nonclient or when the act is deliberate or malicious, the lawyer who contemplates making adverse disclosure of protected information may reasonably conclude that the compelling interests of the lawyer or others in their own personal safety preclude personal contact with the actor. Before counseling an actor who is a nonclient, the lawyer should, if reasonable under the circumstances, first advise the client of the lawyer's intended course of action. If a client or another person has already acted but the intended harm has not yet occurred, the lawyer should consider, if reasonable under the circumstances, efforts to persuade the client or third person to warn the victim or consider other appropriate action to prevent the harm. Even when the lawyer has concluded that paragraph (b)(1) does not permit the lawyer to reveal protected information, the lawyer nevertheless is permitted to counsel the client as to why it might be in the client's best interest to consent to the lawyer's disclosure of that information.

Requirement under Paragraph (c)(2) to Inform Client of Lawyer's Ability or Decision to Reveal Protected Information

[14] A lawyer is required to keep a client reasonably informed about significant developments regarding the employment or representation. Rule 1.4 and Business and Professions Code, section 6068(m). Paragraph (c)(2), however, recognizes that under certain circumstances, informing a client of the lawyer's ability or decision to

reveal protected information under paragraph (b)(1) would likely increase the risk of death or substantial bodily harm, not only to the originally-intended victims of the criminal act, but also to the client or members of the client's family, or to the lawyer or the lawyer's family or associates. Therefore, paragraph (c)(2) requires a lawyer to inform the client of the lawyer's ability or decision to reveal protected information as provided in paragraph (b)(1) only if it is reasonable to do so under the circumstances. Paragraph (c)(2) further recognizes that the appropriate time for the lawyer to inform the client may vary depending upon the circumstances. See Comment [16]. Among the factors to be considered in determining an appropriate time, if any, to inform a client are:

- (1) whether the client is an experienced user of legal services;
- (2) the frequency of the lawyer's contact with the client;
- (3) the nature and length of the professional relationship with the client;
- (4) whether the lawyer and client have discussed the lawyer's duty of confidentiality or any exceptions to that duty;
- (5) the likelihood that the client's matter will involve information within paragraph (b)(1);
- (6) the lawyer's belief, if applicable, that so informing the client is likely to increase the likelihood that a criminal act likely to result in the death of, or substantial bodily harm to, an individual; and
- (7) the lawyer's belief, if applicable, that good faith efforts to persuade a client not to act on a threat have failed.

Disclosure of Protected Information as Permitted by Paragraph (b)(1) Must Be No More Than is Reasonably Necessary to Prevent the Criminal Act

[15] Paragraph (d) requires that disclosure of protected information as permitted by paragraph (b)(1), when made, must be no more extensive than the lawyer reasonably believes necessary to prevent the criminal act. Disclosure should allow access to the protected information to only those persons who the lawyer reasonably believes can act to prevent the harm. Under some circumstances, a lawyer may determine that the best course to pursue is to make an anonymous disclosure to the potential victim or relevant law-enforcement authorities. What particular measures are reasonable depends on the circumstances known to the lawyer. Relevant circumstances include the time available, whether the victim might be unaware of the threat, the lawyer's prior course of dealings with the client, and the extent of the adverse effect on the client that may result from the disclosure contemplated by the lawyer.

Avoiding a Chilling Effect on the Lawyer-Client Relationship

[16] The foregoing flexible approach to a lawyer informing a client of his or her ability or decision to reveal protected information recognizes the concern that informing a client about limits on confidentiality may have a chilling effect on client communication. See Comment [2]. To avoid that chilling effect, one lawyer may choose to inform the client of the lawyer's ability to reveal protected information as early as the outset of the representation, while another lawyer may choose to inform a client only at a point when that client has imparted information that comes within paragraph (b)(1), or even choose not to inform a client until the lawyer attempts to counsel the client under Comment [13]. In each situation, the lawyer will have satisfied the lawyer's obligation under paragraph (c)(2), and will not be subject to discipline.

Informing Client that Disclosure Has Been Made; Termination of the Lawyer-Client Relationship

[17] When a lawyer has revealed protected information under paragraph (b)(1), in all but extraordinary cases the relationship between lawyer and client that is based in mutual trust and confidence will have deteriorated so as to make the lawyer's representation of the client impossible. Therefore, when the relationship has deteriorated because of the lawyer's disclosure, the lawyer is required to seek to withdraw from the representation, see Rule 1.16, unless the client has given his or her informed consent to the lawyer's continued representation. The lawyer normally must inform the client of the fact of the lawyer's disclosure. If the lawyer has a compelling reason for not informing the client, such as to protect the lawyer, the lawyer's family or a third person from the risk of death or substantial bodily harm, the lawyer must withdraw from the representation. See Rule 1.16.

Other Consequences of the Lawyer's Disclosure

[18] Depending on the circumstances of a lawyer's disclosure of protected information as permitted by this Rule, there may be other important issues that a lawyer must address. For example, a lawyer who is likely to testify in a matter involving the client must comply with Rule 3.7. Similarly, the lawyer must also consider the lawyer's duty of competence (Rule 1.1) and whether the lawyer has a conflict of interest in continuing to represent the client (Rule 1.7).

Disclosure as Permitted by Paragraphs (b)(2) through (b)(5)

[19] If a legal claim by a client or the client's representative alleges a breach of duty by the lawyer involving representation of the client or a disciplinary charge filed by or with the cooperation of the client or the client's representative alleges misconduct of the lawyer involving

representation of the client, paragraph (b)(3) permits the lawyer to respond only to the extent the lawyer reasonably believes necessary to establish a defense. The same is true with respect to a claim involving conduct or representation of a former client.

- [20] A lawyer entitled to a fee is permitted by paragraph (b)(3) to prove the services rendered in an action to collect it. This aspect of the Rule expresses the principle that the beneficiary of a fiduciary relationship may not exploit it to the detriment of the fiduciary.
- [21] A lawyer may be ordered to reveal information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) by a court or by another tribunal or governmental entity claiming authority pursuant to other law to compel the disclosure. Absent informed consent of the client to do otherwise, the lawyer must assert on behalf of the client all nonfrivolous claims that the order is not authorized by other law or that the information sought is protected against disclosure by the lawyer-client privilege or other applicable law. See, e.g., *People v. Kor* (1954) 129 Cal. App. 2d 436 [277 P.2d 94]. In the event of an adverse ruling, the lawyer must consult with the client to the extent required by Rule 1.4 about the possibility of appeal. Unless review is sought, however, paragraph (b)(4) permits the lawyer to comply with the court's order.
- [22] Paragraph (d) permits disclosure as permitted by paragraphs (b)(2) through (b)(5) only to the extent the lawyer reasonably believes the disclosure is necessary to accomplish one of the purposes specified. Where practicable, the lawyer should first seek to persuade the client to take suitable action to obviate the need for disclosure. In any case, a disclosure adverse to the client's interest should be no greater than the lawyer reasonably believes necessary to accomplish the purpose. If the disclosure will be made in connection with a judicial proceeding, the disclosure should be made in a manner that

limits access to the protected information to the tribunal or other persons having a need to know it and appropriate protective orders or other arrangements should be sought by the lawyer to the fullest extent practicable.

- [23] Paragraph (b) permits but does not require the disclosure of information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) to accomplish the purposes specified in paragraphs (b)(2) through (b)(5).

Acting Competently to Preserve Confidentiality

- [24] A lawyer must act competently to safeguard information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) against inadvertent or unauthorized disclosure by the lawyer or other persons who are participating in the representation of the client or who are subject to the lawyer's supervision. See Rules 1.1, 5.1 and 5.3.
- [25] When transmitting a communication that includes information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1), the lawyer must take reasonable precautions to prevent the information from coming into the hands of unintended recipients. This duty, however, does not require that the lawyer use special security measures if the method of communication affords a reasonable expectation of privacy. Special circumstances, however, may warrant special precautions. Factors to be considered in determining the reasonableness of the lawyer's expectation of confidentiality include the sensitivity of the information and the extent to which the privacy of the communication is protected by law or by a confidentiality agreement. A client may require the lawyer to implement special security measures not required by this Rule or may give informed consent to the use of a means of communication that would otherwise be prohibited by this Rule.

Former Client

[26] The duty of confidentiality continues after the lawyer-client relationship has terminated. See Rule 1.9(c)(2). See Rule 1.9(c)(1) for the prohibition against using such information to the disadvantage of the former client.

Rule 1.7 Conflict of Interest: Current Clients

(Commission's Proposed Rule – Clean Version)

- (a) Except as provided in paragraph (b), a lawyer shall not represent a client if the representation involves a concurrent conflict of interest. A concurrent conflict of interest exists if:
- (1) the representation of one client will be directly adverse to another client; or
 - (2) there is a significant risk that the representation of one or more clients will be materially limited by the lawyer's responsibilities to another client, a former client or a third person or by a personal interest of the lawyer.
- (b) Notwithstanding the existence of a concurrent conflict of interest under paragraph (a), a lawyer may represent a client if:
- (1) the lawyer reasonably believes that the lawyer will be able to provide competent and diligent representation to each affected client;
 - (2) the representation is not prohibited by law;
 - (3) the representation does not involve the assertion of a claim by one client against another client represented by the lawyer in the same litigation or other proceeding before a tribunal; and
 - (4) each affected client gives informed written consent.

Comment

General Principles

[1] Undivided Loyalty and independent professional judgment are essential elements in the lawyer's relationship to a client. Concurrent conflicts of interest can arise from the lawyer's responsibilities to another client, a former client or a third person or from the lawyer's own interests. See Comments [6]-[7], [8], [9], [10]-[12]. This Rule and the other conflict rules (1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 1.18) seek to protect a lawyer's ability to carry out the lawyer's basic fiduciary duties to each client. In addition to the duty of undivided loyalty and the duty to exercise independent professional judgment, the conflict rules are also concerned with (1) the duty to maintain confidential client information; (2) the duty to disclose to the client all material information and significant developments; and (3) the duty to represent the client competently and diligently within the bounds of the law. See Rule 1.2(a) regarding the allocation of authority between lawyer and client. For specific rules regarding certain concurrent conflicts of interest, see Rules 1.8.1 through 1.8.11. For former client conflicts of interest, see Rule 1.9. For conflicts of interest involving prospective clients, see Rule 1.18. For definitions of "informed consent" and "informed written consent," see Rule 1.0(e) and (e-1), and Comments [6] and [7] to that Rule.

[2] Resolution of a conflict of interest under this Rule requires the lawyer to: (1) clearly identify the client or clients; (2) determine the scope of each relevant representation of a client or proposed representation of a client; (3) determine whether a conflict of interest exists; (4) decide whether the representation may be undertaken despite the existence of a conflict, i.e., whether lawyer has the ability to obtain the client's consent to the conflict; and

(5) if so, consult with the clients affected under paragraph (a) and obtain their informed written consent. The clients affected under paragraph (a) include both of the clients referred to in paragraph (a)(1) and the one or more clients whose representation might be materially limited under paragraph (a)(2).

[3] A conflict of interest may exist before representation is undertaken, in which event the representation must be declined, unless the lawyer obtains the informed written consent of each client under the conditions of paragraph (b). To determine whether a conflict of interest exists, a lawyer should adopt reasonable procedures, appropriate for the size and type of firm and practice, to determine in both litigation and non-litigation matters the persons and issues involved. See also Comment to Rule 5.1. Ignorance caused by a failure to institute such procedures will not excuse a lawyer's violation of this Rule. Whether a lawyer-client relationship exists or, having once been established, is continuing, is beyond the scope of these Rules.

[4] If a conflict arises after representation has been undertaken, the lawyer ordinarily must withdraw from the representation, unless the lawyer has obtained the informed written consent of the client under the conditions of paragraph (b). See Rule 1.16. Where more than one client is involved, whether the lawyer may continue to represent any of the clients is determined both by the lawyer's ability to comply with duties owed to a client who becomes a former client and by the lawyer's ability to represent adequately the remaining client or clients, given the lawyer's duties to the former client. See Rule 1.9. See also Comment [29].

[5] [RESERVED]

Paragraph (a)(1): Identifying Conflicts of Interest: Directly Adverse

[6] The duty of undivided loyalty to a current client prohibits undertaking representation directly adverse to that client without that client's informed written consent. Thus, absent consent, a lawyer may not act as an advocate

in one matter against a person the lawyer represents in some other matter, even when the matters are wholly unrelated. The client as to whom the representation is directly adverse is likely to feel betrayed, and the resulting damage to the lawyer-client relationship is likely to impair the lawyer's ability to represent the client effectively. In addition, the client on whose behalf the adverse representation is undertaken reasonably may fear that the lawyer will pursue that client's case less effectively out of deference to the other client, i.e., that the representation may be materially limited by the lawyer's interest in retaining the current client. Thus, a directly adverse conflict arises, for example, when a lawyer accepts representation of a client that is directly adverse to another client the lawyer currently represents in another matter. See *Flatt v. Superior Court* (1994) 9 Cal.4th 275. Similarly, a directly adverse conflict under paragraph (a)(1) occurs when a lawyer, while representing a client, accepts in another matter the representation of a person or organization who, in the first matter, is directly adverse to the lawyer's client. A directly adverse conflict may also arise when a lawyer is required to cross-examine a client who appears as a witness in a lawsuit involving another client. On the other hand, simultaneous representation in unrelated matters of clients whose interests are only economically adverse, such as representation of competing economic enterprises in unrelated litigation, does not ordinarily constitute a conflict of interest and thus may not require consent of the respective clients. Other instances that ordinarily would not constitute direct adversity include: (1) a representation adverse to a non-client where another client of the lawyer is interested in the financial welfare or the profitability of the non-client, as might occur, for example, if a client is the landlord of, or a lender to, the non-client; (2) working for an outcome in litigation that would establish precedent economically harmful to another current client who is not a party to the litigation; (3) representing two clients who have a dispute with one another if the lawyer's work for each client concerns matters other than the dispute; (4) representing clients having antagonistic positions on the same legal question that has arisen in different cases, unless doing so would interfere with the lawyer's ability to represent either client competently, as

might occur, e.g., if the lawyer were advocating inconsistent positions in front of the same tribunal. See Comments [14]-[17A].

[7] Directly adverse conflicts can also arise in transactional matters. For example, if a lawyer is asked to represent the seller of a business in negotiations with a buyer represented by the lawyer, not in the same transaction but in another, unrelated matter, the lawyer could not undertake the representation without the informed written consent of each client. Paragraph (a)(1) applies even if the parties to the transaction have a common interest or contemplate working cooperatively toward a common goal.

[7A] If a lawyer proposes to represent two or more parties on the same side of a negotiation or lawsuit, the situation is analyzed under paragraph (a)(2), not paragraph (a)(1). See Comments [29]-[33].

Paragraph (a)(2): Identifying Conflicts of Interest: Material Limitation

[7B] Conflicts of interest that create a significant risk that a lawyer's representation of one or more clients will be materially limited as provided in paragraph (a)(2) can arise from: (1) duties owed a former client or a third person (see Comment [9]); (2) a lawyer's personal interests (see Comments [10]-[12]); or (3) a lawyer's joint representation of two or more clients in the same matter (see Comments [29]-[33]).

[8] Even where there is no direct adversity, a conflict of interest exists if there is a significant risk that a lawyer's ability to consider, recommend or carry out an appropriate course of action for the client will be materially limited as a result of the lawyer's other responsibilities or interests. For example, a lawyer asked to represent two or more clients in the same matter, such as several individuals seeking to form a joint venture, is likely to be materially limited in the lawyer's ability to recommend or advocate all possible positions that each might take because of the lawyer's duty of loyalty to the other clients. The conflict in effect forecloses alternatives that would otherwise be

available to each of the clients. The mere possibility of subsequent harm does not itself require disclosure and informed written consent. The critical questions are the likelihood that a difference in interests exists or will eventuate and, if it does, whether it will materially interfere with the lawyer's independent professional judgment in considering alternatives or foreclose courses of actions that reasonably should be pursued on behalf of each client. See Comments [29]-[33]. Depending on the circumstances, various relationships a lawyer has may likewise create a significant risk that the lawyer's representation will be materially limited, for example, where (1) the lawyer has a legal, business, financial, professional, or personal relationship with a party or witness in the same matter; (2) the lawyer knows or reasonably should know that: (i) the lawyer previously had a legal, business, financial, professional, or personal relationship with a party or witness in the same matter, and (ii) the previous relationship would substantially affect the lawyer's representation; (3) the lawyer has or had a legal, business, financial, professional, or personal relationship with another person or entity and the lawyer knows or reasonably should know that either the relationship or the person or entity would be affected substantially by resolution of the matter; (4) a lawyer or law firm representing a party or witness in the matter has a lawyer-client relationship with the lawyer, the lawyer's law firm, or another lawyer in the lawyer's law firm; and (5) a lawyer representing a party or witness in the matter is a spouse, parent or sibling of the lawyer, or has an intimate personal relationship with the lawyer or with another lawyer in the lawyer's law firm.

Lawyer's Responsibilities to Former Clients and Other Third Persons

[9] A lawyer's duties of undivided loyalty and independence of professional judgment may be materially limited by responsibilities to former clients under Rule 1.9 or by the lawyer's responsibilities to other persons, such as fiduciary duties arising from a lawyer's service as a trustee, executor or corporate director. See, e.g., *William H. Raley Co, Inc. v. Superior Court* (1983) 149 Cal.App.3d 1042 [197 Cal.Rptr. 232].

Personal Interest Conflicts

[10] The lawyer's own interests should not be permitted to have an adverse effect on the representation of a client. For example, if the probity of a lawyer's own conduct in a transaction is in serious question, it may be difficult or impossible for the lawyer to give the client detached advice. A lawyer's legal, business, professional or financial interest in the subject matter of the representation might also give rise to a conflict under paragraph (a)(2), where, for example, (1) the lawyer is a party to a contract being litigated; (2) the lawyer represents a client in litigation with a corporation in which the lawyer is a shareholder; or (3) the lawyer represents a landlord in lease negotiations with a professional organization of which the lawyer is a member. Similarly, when a lawyer has discussions concerning possible employment with an opponent of the lawyer's client, or with a law firm representing the opponent, such discussions could materially limit the lawyer's representation of the client. In addition, a lawyer may not allow related business interests to affect representation, for example, by referring clients to an enterprise in which the lawyer has an undisclosed financial interest. See Rules 1.8.1 through 1.8.11 for specific rules pertaining to a number of personal interest conflicts, including business transactions with clients. See also Rule 3.7 concerning a lawyer as witness and Rule 1.10 (personal interest conflicts under Rule 1.7 ordinarily are not imputed to other lawyers in a law firm).

[11] When lawyers representing different clients in the same matter or in substantially related matters are closely related by blood or marriage, or when there is an intimate personal relationship between the lawyers, there may be a significant risk that client confidences will be revealed and that the lawyer's family relationship will interfere with both loyalty and independent professional judgment. As a result, each client is entitled to know of the existence and implications of the relationship between the lawyers before the lawyer agrees to undertake the representation. Thus, a lawyer who is related to another lawyer, e.g., as parent, child, sibling or spouse, or who is in an intimate

personal relationship with another lawyer, ordinarily may not represent a client in a matter where that lawyer is representing another party, unless each client gives informed written consent. The prohibition on representation arising from a close family relationship is personal and ordinarily is not imputed to members of firms with whom the lawyers are associated. See Rule 1.10.

[12] A lawyer is prohibited from engaging in sexual relationships with a client unless the sexual relationship predates the formation of the lawyer-client relationship. See Rule 1.8.10.

Interest of Person Paying for a Lawyer's Service

[13] A lawyer may be paid from a source other than the client, including a co-client, if the client gives informed written consent and the arrangement does not compromise the lawyer's duty of loyalty or independent judgment to the client. See Rule 1.8.6. If acceptance of the payment from any other source presents a significant risk that the lawyer's representation of the client will be materially limited by the lawyer's own interest in accommodating the person paying the lawyer's fee or by the lawyer's responsibilities to a payor who is also a co-client, then the lawyer must comply with the requirements of paragraph (b) before accepting the representation, including determining whether the lawyer has the ability to obtain the client's consent to the representation and, if so, whether the client has adequate information about the material risks of the representation. See Comments [14]-[17A].

Prohibited Representations

[14] Ordinarily, clients may consent to representation notwithstanding a conflict. However, as indicated in paragraph (b), in some situations a lawyer cannot properly ask for such agreement or provide representation on the basis of the client's consent. When the lawyer is representing more than one client, the question of consent must be resolved as to each client.

[15] A lawyer's ability to obtain consent is typically determined by considering whether the interests of the clients will be adequately protected if the clients are permitted to give their informed written consent to representation burdened by a conflict of interest. Thus, under paragraph (b)(1), representation is prohibited if in the circumstances the lawyer cannot reasonably conclude that the lawyer will be able to provide competent and diligent representation. See Rule 1.1.

[16] Paragraph (b)(2) describes conflicts to which a client cannot consent because the representation is prohibited by applicable law. For example, certain representations by a former government lawyer are also prohibited, despite the informed consent of the former client. See, e.g., Business & Professions Code section 6131.

[17] Paragraph (b)(3) describes conflicts for which client consent cannot be obtained because of the interests of the legal system in vigorous development of each client's position when the clients are aligned directly against each other in the same litigation or other proceeding before a tribunal. Whether clients are aligned directly against each other within the meaning of this paragraph requires examination of the context of the proceeding. See, e.g., *Woods v. Superior Court* (1983) 149 Cal.App.3d 931 [107 Cal.Rptr. 185] (the lawyer of a family-owned business organization should not represent one owner against the other in a marital dissolution action); *Klemm v. Superior Court* (1977) 75 Cal.App.3d 893, 898 [142 Cal.Rptr. 509] (a lawyer may not represent parties at hearing or trial when those parties' interests in the matter are in actual conflict). Although paragraph (b)(3) does not preclude a lawyer's multiple representation of adverse parties to a mediation (because mediation is not a proceeding before a "tribunal" under Rule 1.0(m)), such representation may be precluded by paragraph (b)(1).

[17A] Under paragraph (b)(4), a lawyer must obtain the informed written consent of each affected client before accepting or continuing a

representation that is prohibited under paragraph (a). If the lawyer cannot make the disclosure requisite to obtaining informed written consent, (see Rules 1.0.1(e) and 1.0.1(e-1)), without violating the lawyer's duty of confidentiality, then the lawyer may not accept or continue the representation for which the disclosure would be required. See Business and Professions Code section 6068(e)(1) and Rule 1.6. A lawyer might also be prevented from making a required disclosure because of a duty of confidentiality to former, current or potential clients, because of other fiduciary relationships such as service on a board directors, or because of contractual or court-ordered restrictions. In addition, effective client consent cannot be obtained when the person who grants consent lacks capacity or authority. See Civil Code section 38; and see Rule 1.14 regarding clients with diminished capacity.

Disclosure and Informed Written Consent

[18] Informed written consent requires that the lawyer communicate in writing to each affected client the relevant circumstances and the actual and reasonably foreseeable adverse consequences of the conflict on the client's interests and the lawyer's representation and that the client thereafter gives his or her consent in writing. See Rules 1.0.1(e) (informed consent) and 1.0.1(e-1) (informed written consent) and Comments [6] and [7] to that Rule. The information required depends on the nature of the conflict and the nature of the risks involved. When representation of multiple clients in a single matter is undertaken, the information must include the implications of the joint representation, including possible effects on loyalty, confidentiality and the lawyer-client privilege and the advantages and risks involved. See Comment [30] (effect of joint representation on confidentiality).

[19] Under some circumstances it may be impossible to make the disclosure necessary to obtain consent. See Comments [14]-[17A].

[20] Paragraph (b) requires the lawyer to obtain the informed consent of the client in writing. See Rule 1.0(n) (writing includes electronic transmission). The requirement of a written disclosure, (see Comment [18]), does not supplant the need in most cases for the lawyer to talk with the client, to explain the risks and advantages, if any, of representation burdened with a conflict of interest, as well as reasonably available alternatives, and to afford the client a reasonable opportunity to consider the risks and alternatives and to raise questions and concerns. Rather, the writing is required in order to impress upon clients the seriousness of the decision the client is being asked to make and to avoid disputes or ambiguities that might later occur in the absence of a writing.

Duration of Consent

[20A] A disclosure and an informed written consent are sufficient for purposes of this Rule only for so long as the relevant facts and circumstances remain unchanged. With any material change, the lawyer may not continue the representation without making a new written disclosure to each affected client and obtaining a new written consent.

Revoking Consent

[21] A client who has given consent to a conflict may revoke the consent and, like any other client, may terminate the lawyer's representation of that client at any time. Whether revoking consent to the client's own representation precludes the lawyer from continuing to represent other clients depends on the circumstances, including the nature of the conflict, whether the client revoked consent because of a material change in circumstances, the reasonable expectations of the other client, whether material detriment to the other clients or the lawyer would result, and the lawyer's confidentiality obligations to the client revoking consent.

Consent to Future Conflict

[22] Lawyers may ask clients to give advance consent to conflicts that might arise in the future, but a client's consent must be "informed" to comply with this Rule. A lawyer would have a conflict of interest in accepting or continuing a representation under a consent that does not comply with this Rule. Determining whether a client's advance consent is "informed," and thus complies with this Rule, is a fact-specific inquiry that will depend first on the factors discussed in Comments [18]-[20] (informed written consent). However, an advance consent can comply with this Rule even where the lawyer cannot provide all the information and explanation Comments [18]-[20] ordinarily requires. A lawyer's disclosure to a client must include: (i) a disclosure to the extent known of facts and reasonably foreseeable consequences; and (ii) an explanation that the lawyer is requesting the client to consent to a possible future conflict that would involve future facts and circumstances that to a degree cannot be known when the consent is requested. The lawyer also must disclose to the client whether the consent permits the lawyer to be adverse to the client on any matter in the future, whether the consent permits the lawyer to be adverse to the client in the current or in future litigation, and whether there will be any limits on the scope of the consent. Whether an advance consent complies with this Rule ordinarily also can depend on such things as the following: (1) the comprehensiveness of the lawyer's explanation of the types of future conflicts that might arise and of the actual and reasonably foreseeable adverse consequences to the client; (2) the client's degree of experience as a user of the legal services, including experience with the type of legal services involved in the current representation; (3) whether the client has consented to the use of an adequate ethics screen and whether the screen was timely and effectively instituted and fully maintained; (4) whether before giving consent the client either was represented by an independent lawyer of the client's choice, or was advised in writing by the lawyer to seek the advice of an independent lawyer of the client's choice and was given a reasonable opportunity to seek that advice; (5) whether the consent is limited to future

conflicts unrelated to the subject of the representation; and (6) the client's ability to understand the nature and extent of the advance consent. A client's ability to understand the nature and extent of the advance consent might depend on factors such as the client's education and language skills. An advance consent normally will comply with this Rule if it is limited to a particular type of conflict with which the client already is familiar. An advance consent normally will not comply with this Rule if it is so general and open-ended that it would be unlikely that the client understood the potential adverse consequences of granting consent. However, even a general and open-ended advance consent can be in compliance when given by an experienced user of the type of legal services involved that was independently represented regarding the consent or was advised in writing by the lawyer to seek the advice of an independent lawyer of the client's choice and was given a reasonable opportunity to seek that advice. In any case, advance consent will not be in compliance in the circumstances described in Comments [14]-[17A] (prohibited representations). See Rule 1.0.1(e) (informed consent) and 1.0.1 (e-1) (informed written consent). A lawyer who obtains from a client an advance consent that complies with this Rule will have all the duties of a lawyer to that client except as expressly limited by the consent. A lawyer cannot obtain an advance consent to incompetent representation. See Rule 1.8.8.

Conflicts in Litigation

[23] Paragraph (b)(3) prohibits representation of opposing parties in the same litigation, regardless of the clients' consent. On the other hand, simultaneous representation of parties whose interests in litigation may conflict, such as co-plaintiffs or co-defendants, is governed by paragraph (a)(2). A conflict may exist by reason of substantial discrepancy in the parties' testimony, incompatibility in positions in relation to an opposing party or the fact that there are substantially different possibilities of settlement of the claims or liabilities in question. Such conflicts can arise in criminal cases as well as civil. The potential for conflict of interest in representing multiple

defendants in a criminal case is so grave that ordinarily a lawyer should decline to represent more than one codefendant. On the other hand, joint representation of persons having similar interests in civil litigation is permitted if the requirements of paragraph (b) are satisfied.

[24] Ordinarily a lawyer may take inconsistent legal positions in different tribunals at different times on behalf of different clients. The mere fact that advocating a legal position on behalf of one client might create precedent adverse to the interests of a client represented by the lawyer in an unrelated matter does not create a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest exists, however, if there is a significant risk that a lawyer's action on behalf of one client will materially limit the lawyer's effectiveness in representing another client in a different case; for example, when a decision favoring one client will create a precedent likely to seriously weaken the position taken on behalf of the other client. Factors relevant in determining whether the clients need to be informed of the risk include: where the cases are pending, whether the issue is substantive or procedural, the temporal relationship between the matters, the significance of the issue to the immediate and long-term interests of the clients involved and the clients' reasonable expectations in retaining the lawyer. If there is significant risk of material limitation, then absent informed written consent of the affected clients, the lawyer must refuse one of the representations or withdraw from one or both matters to the extent permitted by Rule 1.16.

[24A] If permission from a tribunal to terminate a representation is denied, the lawyer is obligated to continue the representation notwithstanding the provisions of this Rule. See Rule 1.16(c).

[25] This Rule applies to a lawyer's representation of named class representatives in a class action, whether or not the class has been certified. For purposes of this Rule, an unnamed member of a plaintiff or a defendant class is not, by reason of that status, a client of a lawyer who represents or seeks to represent the class. Thus, the lawyer does not typically need to get

the consent of an unnamed class member before representing a client who is adverse to that person in an unrelated matter. Similarly, a lawyer seeking to represent an opponent in a class action does not typically need the consent of an unnamed member of the class whom the lawyer represents in an unrelated matter. A lawyer representing a class or proposed class may owe civil duties to unnamed class members, and this Comment is not intended to alter those civil duties in any respect.

Nonlitigation Conflicts

[26] Conflicts of interest under paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(2) arise in contexts other than litigation. For a discussion of directly adverse conflicts in transactional matters that are prohibited by paragraph (a)(1), see Comment [7]. Relevant factors in determining whether there is significant risk for material limitation as provided in paragraph (a)(2) include the duration and intimacy of the lawyer's relationship with the client or clients involved, the functions being performed by the lawyer, the likelihood that disagreements will arise and the likely prejudice to the client from the conflict. The question is often one of proximity and degree. See Comment [8].

[27] For example, conflict questions may arise in estate planning and estate administration. A lawyer may be called upon to prepare wills for several family members, such as husband and wife, and, depending upon the circumstances, a conflict of interest may be present.

[28] [RESERVED]

Special Considerations in Joint Representation

[29] When a lawyer represents multiple clients in a single matter, the lawyer's duties to one of the clients can interfere with the performance of the lawyer's duties to the other clients. In considering whether to represent multiple clients in the same matter, a lawyer should be mindful that if the joint

representation fails because the potentially adverse interests cannot be reconciled, the result can be additional cost, embarrassment and recrimination. Ordinarily, the lawyer will be forced to withdraw from representing all of the clients if the joint representation fails. In some situations, the risk of failure is so great that multiple representation is plainly impossible. For example, a lawyer cannot undertake joint representation of clients where contentious litigation or negotiations between them are imminent or contemplated. Generally, if the relationship between the parties has already assumed antagonism, the possibility that the clients' interests can be adequately served by joint representation is not likely. Other relevant factors include whether the lawyer subsequently will represent both parties on a continuing basis and whether the situation involves creating or terminating a relationship between the parties.

[29A] Examples of conflicts that arise under paragraph (a)(2) from representing multiple clients in the same matter and that will likely preclude a lawyer from accepting or continuing a joint representation unless the lawyer complies with paragraph (b) include the following situations: (1) the lawyer receives conflicting instructions from the clients and the lawyer cannot follow one client's instructions without violating another client's instruction; (2) the clients have inconsistent interests or objectives so that it becomes impossible for the lawyer to advance one client's interests or objectives without detrimentally affecting another client's interests or objectives; (3) the clients have antagonistic positions and the lawyer is obligated to advise each client about how to advance that client's position relative to the other's position; (4) the clients have inconsistent expectations of confidentiality because one client expects the lawyer to keep secret information that is material to the matter; (5) the lawyer has a preexisting relationship with one client that affects the lawyer's independent professional judgment on behalf of the other client(s); (6) the clients make inconsistent demands for the original file.

[30] A particularly important factor in determining the appropriateness of joint representation is the effect on lawyer-client confidentiality and the

lawyer-client privilege. With regard to the lawyer-client privilege, although each client's communications with the lawyer are protected as to third persons, as between jointly represented clients, the privilege does not attach. Hence, it must be assumed that if litigation results between the joint clients, the privilege will not protect any such communications. See Evidence Code sections 952 and 962. In addition, because of the lawyer's obligations under Rule 1.4, the lawyer must inform each jointly represented client in writing of that fact and also that the client should normally expect that his or her communications with the lawyer will be shared with other jointly-represented clients. See also Comments [18]-[20].

[31] [RESERVED]

[32] When seeking to establish or adjust a relationship between clients, the lawyer should make clear that the lawyer's role is not that of partisanship normally expected in other circumstances and, thus, that the clients may be required to assume greater responsibility for decisions than when each client is separately represented. Any limitations on the scope of the representation made necessary as a result of the joint representation should be fully explained to the clients at the outset of the representation. See Rule 1.2(c).

[33] Subject to the above limitations, each client in the joint representation has the right to the lawyer's undivided loyalty and the protection of Rule 1.9 concerning the obligations to a former client. The client also has the right to discharge the lawyer as stated in Rule 1.16.

Organizational Clients

[34] A lawyer who represents a corporation or other organization does not, by virtue of that representation, necessarily represent any constituent or affiliated organization, such as a parent or subsidiary. See Rule 1.13(a). Thus, the lawyer for an organization is not barred from accepting representation adverse to an affiliate in an unrelated matter, unless the

circumstances are such that the affiliate should also be considered a client of the lawyer, there is an understanding between the lawyer and the organizational client that the lawyer will avoid representation adverse to the client's affiliates, or the lawyer's obligations to either the organizational client or the new client are likely to limit materially the lawyer's representation of the other client.

[35] A lawyer for a corporation who is also a member of its board of directors (or a lawyer for another type of organization who has corresponding fiduciary duties to it) should determine whether the responsibilities of the two roles may conflict. The lawyer may be called on to advise the corporation in matters involving actions of the directors. Consideration should be given to the frequency with which such situations may arise, the potential intensity of the conflict, the effect of the lawyer's resignation from the board and the possibility of the corporation's obtaining legal advice from another lawyer in such situations. If there is material risk that the dual role will compromise the lawyer's independence of professional judgment, the lawyer should not serve as a director or should cease to act as the corporation's lawyer when conflicts of interest arise. The lawyer should advise the other members of the board that in some circumstances matters discussed at board meetings while the lawyer is present in the capacity of director might not be protected by the lawyer-client privilege and that conflict of interest considerations might require the lawyer's recusal as a director or might require the lawyer and the lawyer's firm to decline representation of the corporation in a matter.

Insurance Defense

[36] In *State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company v. Federal Insurance Company* (1999) 72 Cal.App.4th 1422 [86 Cal.Rptr.2d 20], the court held that the predecessor to paragraph (a) was violated when a lawyer, retained by an insurer to defend one suit against an insured, filed a direct action against the same insurer in an unrelated action without securing the insurer's consent. Notwithstanding *State Farm*, paragraph (a) does not apply

to the relationship between an insurer and a lawyer when, in each matter, the insurer's interest is only as an indemnity provider and not as a direct party to the action.

[37] Paragraph (a)(2) is not intended to modify the tripartite relationship among a lawyer, an insurer, and an insured that is created when the insurer appoints the lawyer to represent the insured under the contract between the insurer and the insured. Although the lawyer's appointment by the insurer makes the insurer and the insured the lawyer's joint clients in the matter, the appointment does not by itself create a significant risk that the representation of the insured, insurer, or both will be materially limited under paragraph (a)(2).

Public Service

[38] For special rules governing membership in a legal service organization, see Rule 6.3; for participation in law related activities affecting client interests, see Rule 6.4; and for work in conjunction with certain limited legal services programs, see Rule 6.5.

Rule 1.8.2 Use of Current Client's Information Relating to the Representation

(Commission's Proposed Rule – Clean Version)

A lawyer shall not use information relating to a client to the disadvantage of the client unless the client gives informed written consent, except as permitted by these Rules or the State Bar Act.

Comment

- [1] Use of information relating to a client, whether or not confidential, to the disadvantage of the client violates the lawyer's duty of loyalty. This Rule applies when the information is used to benefit either the lawyer or a third person, such as another client or business associate of the lawyer, to the disadvantage of the client. For example, if a lawyer learns that a client intends to purchase and develop several parcels of land, the lawyer may not use that information to purchase one of the parcels in competition with the client or to recommend that another client make such a purchase. The Rule does not prohibit uses that do not disadvantage the client. For example, a lawyer who learns a government agency's interpretation of trade legislation during the representation of one client may properly use that information to benefit other clients. This Rule prohibits disadvantageous use of client information unless the client gives informed written consent, except as permitted by these Rules or the State Bar Act. See Rules 1.6, 1.9(c), 4.1(a)(2), and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e).

Rule 1.8.11 Imputation of Prohibitions Under Rules 1.8.1 through 1.8.9
(Commission's Proposed Rule – Clean Version)

While lawyers are associated in a law firm, a prohibition in Rules 1.8.1 through 1.8.9 that applies to any one of them shall apply to all of them.

Comment

- [1] A prohibition on conduct by an individual lawyer in Rules 1.8.1 through 1.8.9 also applies to all lawyers associated in a law firm with the personally prohibited lawyer. For example, one lawyer in a law firm may not enter into a business transaction with a client of another lawyer associated in the law firm without complying with Rule 1.8.1, even if the first lawyer is not personally involved in the representation of the client. This Rule does not apply to Rule 1.8.10 since the prohibition in that Rule is personal and is not applied to associated lawyers.

Rule 1.9 Duties to Former Clients

(Commission's Proposed Rule – Clean Version)

- (a) A lawyer who has formerly represented a client in a matter shall not thereafter represent another person in the same or a substantially related matter in which that person's interests are materially adverse to the interests of the former client unless the former client gives informed written consent.
- (b) A lawyer shall not knowingly represent a person in the same or a substantially related matter in which a law firm with which the lawyer formerly was associated had previously represented a client
- (1) whose interests are materially adverse to that person; and
 - (2) about whom the lawyer, while at the former law firm, had acquired information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068(e) and Rules 1.6 and 1.9(c) that is material to the matter;
- unless the former client gives informed written consent.
- (c) A lawyer who formerly represented a client in a matter or whose present or former law firm has formerly represented a client in a matter shall not thereafter:
- (1) use information relating to a former client to the disadvantage of the former client except as these Rules or the State Bar Act would permit with respect to a current client, or when the information has become generally known; or

- (2) reveal information relating to a former client except as these Rules or the State Bar Act would permit with respect to a current client.

Comment

- [1] After termination of a lawyer-client relationship, the lawyer owes two duties to the former client. The lawyer may not (i) do anything that creates a substantial risk that it will injuriously affect his or her former client in any matter in which the lawyer represented the former client, or (ii) at any time use against his or her former client knowledge or information acquired by virtue of the previous relationship. (*Wutchumna Water Co. v. Bailey* (1932) 216 Cal. 564 [15 P.2d 505]) These duties exist to preserve a client's trust in the lawyer and to encourage the client's candor in communications with the lawyer by assuring that the client can entrust the client's matter to the lawyer and can confide information to the lawyer that will be protected as required by Rule 1.6 and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e) without fear that any such information later will be used against the client. Current and former government lawyers must comply with this Rule to the extent required by Rule 1.11.
- [2] Paragraph (a) addresses both of these duties. It first addresses the situation in which there is a substantial risk that a lawyer's representation of another client would result in the lawyer doing work that would injuriously affect the former client with respect to a matter in which the lawyer represented the former client. For example, a lawyer could not properly seek to rescind on behalf of a new client a contract the lawyer drafted on behalf of the former client. A lawyer who has

prosecuted an accused person could not represent the accused in a subsequent civil action against the government concerning the same matter.

- [3] Paragraph (a) also addresses the second of the two duties owed to a former client. It applies when there is a substantial risk that information protected by Rule 1.6 and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e) that was obtained in the prior representation would be used or disclosed in a subsequent representation in a manner that is contrary to the former client's interests and without the former client's informed written consent. For example, a lawyer who has represented a businessperson and learned extensive private financial information about that person ordinarily may not later represent that person's spouse in seeking a divorce. Similarly, a lawyer who has previously represented a client in connection with the environmental review associated with the land use approvals to build a shopping center ordinarily would be precluded from later representing neighbors seeking to oppose rezoning of the property on the basis of environmental considerations that existed when the lawyer represented the client; however, paragraph (a) would not apply if the lawyer later defends a tenant of the completed shopping center in resisting eviction for nonpayment of rent if there is no substantial relationship between the land use and eviction matters.
- [4] Paragraph (a) applies when the lawyer's representation is in the same matter as, or in a matter substantially related to, the lawyer's representation of the former client. The term "matter" for purposes of this Rule includes civil and criminal litigation, transactions of every kind, and all other types of legal representations. The scope of a "matter" for purposes of this Rule depends on the facts of a particular situation or transaction. The lawyer's involvement in a matter can also be a question of degree. An underlying question is whether the lawyer was so involved in the earlier matter that the subsequent

representation justly can be regarded as changing of sides in the matter in question. A lawyer might avoid the application of this Rule by limiting the scope of a representation so as to exclude matters on which the lawyer has a conflict of interest. See Rule 1.2(c) (limiting the scope of representation) and Rule 1.7, Comment [15].

- [5] The term "substantially related matter" as used in this Rule is not applied identically in all types of proceedings. In a disqualification proceeding, a court will presume conclusively that a lawyer has obtained confidential information material to the adverse engagement when it appears by virtue of the nature of the former representation or the relationship of the attorney to the former client that confidential information material to the current dispute normally would have been imparted to the attorney. (*H.F. Ahmanson & Co. v. Salomon Brothers, Inc.* (1991) 229 Cal.App.3d 1445, 1454 [280 Cal.Rptr. 614]) This disqualification application exists, at least in part, to protect the former client by avoiding an inquiry into the substance of the information that the former client is entitled to keep from being imparted to the lawyer's current client. (See *In re Complex Asbestos Litigation* (1991) 232 Cal.App.3d 572, 592 [283 Cal.Rptr. 732]; *Woods v. Superior Court* (1983) 149 Cal.App.3d 931, 934 [197 Cal.Rptr. 185].) In disciplinary proceedings, and in civil litigation between a lawyer and a former client, where the lawyer's new client is not present, the evidentiary presumption created for disqualification purposes does not apply and the lawyer can provide evidence concerning the information actually received in the prior representation.
- [6] Two matters are "the same or substantially related" for purposes of this Rule if they involve a substantial risk of a violation of one of the two duties to a former client described above in Comment [1]. This will occur: (i) if the matters involve the same transaction or legal dispute or other work performed by the lawyer for the former client; or (ii) if the lawyer normally would have obtained information in the prior

representation that is protected by Rule 1.6 and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e), and the lawyer would be expected to use or disclose that information in the subsequent representation because it is material to the subsequent representation.

- [7] Paragraph (a) applies when the new client's interests are materially adverse to the former client's interests. In light of the overall purpose of the Rule to protect candor and trust during the lawyer-client relationship, the term "materially adverse" should be applied with that purpose in mind. Accordingly, a client's interests are materially adverse to the former client if the lawyer's representation of the new client creates a substantial risk that the lawyer either (i) would perform work for the new client that would injuriously affect the former client in any manner in which the lawyer represented the former client, or (ii) would use or reveal information protected by Rule 1.6 and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e) that the former client would not want disclosed or in a manner that would be to the disadvantage of the former client.

Lawyers Moving Between Firms

- [8] Paragraph (b) addresses a lawyer's duties to a client who has become a former client because the lawyer no longer is associated with the law firm that represents or represented the client. In that situation, the lawyer has a conflict of interest only when the lawyer has actual knowledge of information protected by Rules 1.6, 1.9(c), and Business and Profession Code 6068(e). Thus, if a lawyer while with one firm acquired no knowledge or information relating to a particular client of the firm, and that lawyer later joined another firm, neither the lawyer individually nor the second firm would violate this Rule by representing another client in the same or a related matter even though the interests of the two clients conflict. See Rule 1.10(b) for the restrictions on a firm once a lawyer has terminated association with the firm.

- [9] Application of paragraph (b) depends on a situation's particular facts, aided by inferences, deductions or working presumptions that reasonably may be made about the way in which lawyers work together. A lawyer may have general access to files of all clients of a law firm and may regularly participate in discussions of their affairs; it should be inferred that such a lawyer in fact is privy to all information about all the firm's clients. In contrast, another lawyer may have access to the files of only a limited number of clients and participate in discussions of the affairs of no other clients; in the absence of information to the contrary, it should be inferred that such a lawyer in fact is privy to information about the clients actually served but not those of other clients. In such an inquiry, the burden of proof should rest upon the firm to which this Rule applies.

- [10] A lawyer changing professional association has a continuing duty to preserve confidentiality of information about a client formerly represented. See Rules 1.6, 1.9(c), and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e).

- [11] Paragraph (c) provides that confidential information acquired by a lawyer in the course of representing a client may not subsequently be used or revealed by the lawyer to the disadvantage of the former client. See Rule 1.6(a) with respect to the confidential information of a client the lawyer is obligated to protect, and Rule 1.6(b) for situations where the lawyer is permitted to reveal such information. The fact that a lawyer has once served a client does not preclude the lawyer from using generally known information about that client when later representing another client. However, the fact that information can be discovered in a public record does not, by itself, render that information generally known. (See *In the Matter of Johnson* (Rev. Dept. 2000) 4 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 179.)

Client Consent

[12] The provisions of this Rule are for the protection of former clients and can be waived if the former client gives informed written consent. See Rule 1.0.1(e). With regard to the effectiveness of an advance consent, see Comment [22] to Rule 1.7. With regard to the application of a lawyer's conflict to a firm with which a lawyer is or was formerly associated, see Rule 1.10.

Rule 1.12 Former Judge, Arbitrator, Mediator or Other Third-Party Neutral

(Commission's Proposed Rule – Clean Version)

- (a) Except as stated in paragraph (e), a lawyer shall not represent anyone in connection with a matter in which the lawyer participated personally and substantially as a judge or other adjudicative officer, or law clerk to such a person, or as an arbitrator, mediator or other third-party neutral, unless all parties to the proceeding give informed written consent.
- (b) A lawyer shall not participate in discussions regarding prospective employment with any person who is involved as a party, or as a lawyer for a party, or with a law firm for a party, in a matter in which the lawyer is participating, personally and substantially as a judge or other adjudicative officer, or as an arbitrator, mediator or other third-party neutral. A lawyer serving as a law clerk to a judge or other adjudicative officer may participate in discussions regarding prospective employment with a party, or with a lawyer or a law firm for a party in a matter in which the clerk is participating personally and substantially, but only with the approval of the judge or other adjudicative officer.
- (c) Except as provided in paragraph (d), if a lawyer is disqualified by paragraph (a), no lawyer in a firm with which that lawyer is associated may knowingly undertake or continue representation in the matter.
- (d) If a lawyer is disqualified by paragraph (a) because of the lawyer's previous service as a law clerk to a judge, adjudicative officer or a tribunal, no lawyer in a law firm with which that lawyer is associated may knowingly undertake or continue representation in the matter unless:
 - (1) the disqualified lawyer is timely and effectively screened from any participation in the matter and is apportioned no part of the fee therefrom; and
 - (2) written notice is promptly given to the parties and any appropriate tribunal to enable them to ascertain compliance with the provisions of this Rule.
- (e) An arbitrator selected as a partisan of a party in a multimember arbitration panel is not prohibited from subsequently representing that party.

Comment

[1] This Rule generally parallels Rule 1.11. "Personally and substantially" includes the receipt or acquisition of confidential information that is material to the matter. The term "personally and substantially" signifies that a judge who was a member of a multimember court, and thereafter left judicial office to practice law, is not prohibited from representing a client in a matter pending in the court, but in which the former judge did not participate, or acquire confidential information. So also the fact that a former judge exercised administrative responsibility in a court does not prevent the former judge from acting as a lawyer in a matter where the judge had previously exercised remote or incidental administrative responsibility that did not affect the merits, such as uncontested procedural duties typically performed by a presiding or supervising judge or justice. Compare the comment to Rule 1.11. The term "adjudicative officer" includes such officials as judges pro tempore, referees, special masters, hearing officers and other parajudicial officers, and also lawyers who serve as part-time judges.

[2] Like former judges, lawyers who have served as arbitrators, mediators or other third-party neutrals may be asked to represent a client in a matter in

which the lawyer participated personally and substantially. This Rule forbids such representation unless all of the parties to the proceedings give their informed written consent. See Rule 1.0.1(e). Other law or codes of ethics governing third-party neutrals may impose more stringent standards of personal or imputed disqualification. See Rule 2.4.

[3] Although lawyers who serve as third-party neutrals do not have information concerning the parties that is protected under Rule 1.6 and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e), they typically owe the parties an obligation of confidentiality under law or codes of ethics governing third-party neutrals. Paragraph (c) provides that conflicts of the personally disqualified lawyer will be imputed to other lawyers in a law firm.

[4] Paragraph (d) provides that conflicts of a lawyer personally disqualified because of the lawyer's previous service as a law clerk to a judge, adjudicative officer or a tribunal will be imputed to other lawyers in a law firm unless the conditions of paragraph (d) are met. Requirements for screening procedures are stated in Rule 1.0.1(k). Paragraph (d)(1) does not prohibit the screened lawyer from receiving a salary or partnership share established by prior independent agreement, but that lawyer may not receive compensation directly related to the matter in which the lawyer is disqualified.

[5] Notice, including a description of the screened lawyer's prior representation and of the screening procedures employed, generally should be given as soon as practicable after the need for screening becomes apparent.

Rule 1.14 Client with Diminished Capacity

(Commission's Proposed Rule – Clean Version)

- (a) When a client's capacity to make adequately considered decisions in connection with a representation is diminished, whether because of mental impairment or some other reason, the lawyer shall, as far as reasonably possible, maintain a normal lawyer-client relationship with the client.
- (b) Except where the lawyer represents a minor, a client in a criminal matter, or a person who is the subject of a conservatorship proceeding, when the lawyer reasonably believes
- (1) that the client has significantly diminished capacity such that the client is unable to make adequately considered decisions in connection with a representation and further that, as a result of such significantly diminished capacity,
 - (2) the client is at risk of substantial physical, financial or other harm unless action is taken, and
 - (3) the client cannot adequately act in his or her own interest,
- the lawyer may, but is not required to, notify an individual or organization that has the ability to take action to protect the client.
- (c) Information relating to the representation of a client with diminished capacity is protected by Rule 1.6 and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e). When taking protective action pursuant to paragraph (b), the lawyer is impliedly authorized under this Rule to reveal information about the client, but only to the extent the lawyer reasonably believes disclosure is necessary to protect the client's

interest, given the information known to the lawyer at the time of the disclosure.

Comment

- [1] The purpose of this Rule is to allow the lawyer to act competently on behalf of the client with diminished capacity, to further the client's goals in the representation, and to protect the client's interests. The normal lawyer-client relationship is based on the assumption that the client, when properly advised and assisted, is capable of making decisions about important matters. When the client suffers from diminished mental capacity, however, maintaining the ordinary lawyer-client relationship may not be possible in all respects. In particular, a client with significantly diminished capacity may not be competent to make legally binding decisions. Nevertheless, a client with diminished capacity often has the ability to understand, deliberate upon, and reach conclusions about many matters affecting the client's own well-being. For example, some persons of advanced age are capable of handling routine financial matters but may need special legal protection concerning major transactions. In addition to the obligations of a lawyer provided in this Rule, lawyers may be required to make reasonable accommodations for clients with disabilities that will permit them to enjoy the provision of full and equal legal services provided by the lawyer. See California Civil Code section 51 (Unruh Civil Rights Act).
- [2] The fact that a client suffers from diminished capacity does not affect the lawyer's obligation to treat the client with attention and respect. Even if the client has a legal representative, the lawyer should as far

as possible accord the represented person the full status of client, particularly in maintaining communication. As used in paragraph (a) of this Rule, the lawyer's obligation to "maintain a normal lawyer-client relationship with the client" may require the lawyer to use a manner and means of communication adapted to the client's ability to comprehend and deliberate.

[3] As used in paragraph (b), "significantly diminished capacity such that the client is unable to make adequately considered decisions in connection with a representation" shall mean that the client is materially impaired in his or her capacity to understand and appreciate the rights and duties affected by the decision and the significant risks, consequences and reasonable alternatives involved in the decision, as described in Probate Code section 812, by virtue of a deficit in mental function of the types described in Probate Code section 811. However, the reference herein to relevant portions of the Probate Code is intended only to provide guidance to a lawyer who seeks to take protective action pursuant to paragraph (b) and does not require the lawyer to seek a legal determination that the client meets the standards of incapacity under Probate Code section 811 et seq. In appropriate circumstances, lawyers are encouraged to seek guidance from an appropriate diagnostician, but a lawyer who seeks such guidance must advise the diagnostician of the confidential nature and circumstances of the consultation. In addition, the lawyer should request the diagnostician to maintain the information disclosed in confidence.

[4] Before taking action pursuant to paragraph (b), the lawyer should take all reasonable steps to preserve client confidentiality and decision-making authority including explaining to the client the need to take such action and requesting the client's permission to do so. However, if the client refuses or is unable to give such permission, the lawyer may proceed under paragraph (b), (i) if no other action is available to the

lawyer that is reasonably likely to protect the client from the harm the client faces; and (ii) the lawyer has taken into account such factors as:

- (1) the amount of time that the lawyer has to make a decision about disclosure;
- (2) whether the disclosure is likely to lead to proceedings such as involuntary commitment proceedings, which the client may perceive as adverse to her or his interests;
- (3) whether the disclosure is likely to lead to proceedings which could have an effect on the client's rights under the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution or analogous rights and privacy rights under Article 1 of the Constitution of the State of California;
- (4) the extent of any other adverse effects to the client that may result from disclosure contemplated by the lawyer; and
- (5) the nature and extent of information that must be disclosed to prevent the risk of harm to the client.

A lawyer may also consider whether the prospective harm to the client is imminent in deciding whether to disclose the confidential information. However, the imminence of the harm is not a prerequisite to disclosure, and a lawyer may disclose the information without waiting until immediately before the harm is likely to occur.

[5] The client may wish to have family members or other persons participate in discussions with the lawyer. When necessary to assist in the representation, the presence of such persons generally will not affect the applicability of the lawyer-client privilege. See Evidence Code section 952. However, the lawyer must keep the client's

interests foremost and, except as authorized under paragraph (b), must to look to the client, and not family members, to make decisions on the client's behalf.

- [6] Paragraph (b) permits the lawyer to take protective measures deemed necessary to protect the client's interests. Such measures could include: consulting with family members; using a reconsideration period to permit clarification or improvement of circumstances; or using voluntary surrogate decision making tools such as durable powers of attorney or consulting with support groups, professional services, adult-protective agencies or other individuals or entities that have the ability to protect the client. In taking any protective action, the lawyer should be guided by such factors as the wishes and values of the client to the extent known, the client's best interests, and the goals of minimizing intrusion into the client's decision making autonomy, maximizing client capacities and respecting the client's family and social connections.
- [7] Paragraph (b) reflects a balancing between the interests of preserving client confidentiality and of protecting a client with significantly diminished capacity who is at risk of substantial physical, financial or other harm if no action is taken. A lawyer who reveals information as permitted under paragraph (b) is not subject to discipline.
- [8] Paragraph (b) does not authorize a lawyer to file a guardianship or conservatorship petition or to take similar action concerning the client, or to take any action that is adverse to the client. Nor does paragraph (b) authorize a lawyer to take such actions on behalf of another person where the lawyer would not otherwise be permitted to do so under Rule 1.7.
- [9] Paragraph (b) applies to the representation of a client with significantly diminished capacity, except in the case of a client who is (1) a minor,

(2) involved in a criminal matter or (3) who is under conservatorship or the subject of a conservatorship or protective proceeding. The rights of such persons are regulated under other statutory schemes. See Family Code section 3150, Welfare and Institutions Code sections 300, 602, 675 et seq.; Penal Code section 1368 et seq.; Lanterman-Petris-Short Act, Welfare and Institutions Code, Division 5, Part 1, sections 5000-5579; Probate Code, Division 4, Parts 1-8, sections 1400-3803.

- [10] A lawyer is permitted to act under paragraph (b) but is never required to do so. A lawyer who chooses not to reveal information permitted by paragraph (b) does not violate this Rule.

Rule 2.1 Advisor

(Commission's Proposed Rule – Clean Version)

In representing a client, a lawyer shall exercise independent professional judgment and render candid advice.

Comment

Scope of Advice

[1] A client is entitled to straightforward advice expressing the lawyer's honest assessment. Legal advice may involve facts and alternatives that a client may find unpleasant and may be disinclined to confront. In presenting advice, a lawyer endeavors to sustain the client's morale and may put advice in as acceptable a form as honesty permits. However, a lawyer should not be deterred from giving candid advice by the prospect that the advice will be unpalatable to the client.

[2] In some cases, advice couched in narrow legal terms may be of little value to a client, especially where practical considerations, such as cost or effects on other people, are predominant. Although a lawyer is not a moral advisor, in rendering advice, a lawyer may refer not only to law, but to other considerations such as moral, economic, social and political factors that may be relevant to the client's situation.

Rule 3.3 Candor Toward the Tribunal
(Commission's Proposed Rule – Clean Version)

- (a) A lawyer shall not knowingly:
- (1) make a false statement of fact or law to a tribunal or fail to correct a false statement of material fact or law previously made to the tribunal by the lawyer;
 - (2) fail to disclose to the tribunal legal authority in the controlling jurisdiction known to the lawyer to be directly adverse to the position of the client and not disclosed by opposing counsel; or
 - (3) offer evidence that the lawyer knows to be false. If a lawyer, the lawyer's client, or a witness called by the lawyer, has offered material evidence, and the lawyer comes to know of its falsity, the lawyer shall take reasonable remedial measures, including, if necessary, disclosure to the tribunal, unless disclosure is prohibited by Rule 1.6 and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e). A lawyer may refuse to offer evidence, other than the testimony of a defendant in a criminal matter, that the lawyer reasonably believes is false.
- (b) A lawyer who represents a client in an adjudicative proceeding and who knows that a person intends to engage, is engaging or has engaged in criminal or fraudulent conduct related to the proceeding shall take reasonable remedial measures to the extent permitted by Rule 1.6 and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e).
- (c) The duties stated in paragraphs (a) and (b) continue to the conclusion of the proceeding or the representation, whichever comes first.
- (d) In an ex parte proceeding, a lawyer shall inform the tribunal of all facts known to the lawyer that the lawyer knows or reasonably should know, are needed to enable the tribunal to make an informed decision, whether or not the facts are adverse.

Comment

- [1] This Rule governs the conduct of a lawyer who is representing a client in the proceedings of a tribunal. See Rule 1.0.1(m) for the definition of "tribunal." It also applies when the lawyer is representing a client in an ancillary proceeding conducted pursuant to the tribunal's adjudicative authority, such as a deposition. Thus, for example, paragraph (a)(3) requires a lawyer to take reasonable remedial measures if the lawyer comes to know that a client who is testifying in a deposition has offered evidence that is false.
- [2] This Rule sets forth the special duties of lawyers as officers of the court to avoid conduct that undermines the integrity of the adjudicative process. A lawyer acting as an advocate in an adjudicative proceeding has an obligation to present the client's case with persuasive force. However, although a lawyer in an adversary proceeding is not required to present an impartial exposition of the law or to vouch for the evidence submitted in a cause, the lawyer must not make false statements of law or fact or present evidence that the lawyer knows to be false. For example, the prohibition in paragraph (a)(1) against making false statements of law or failing to correct a material misstatement of law includes a prohibition on a lawyer citing as authority a decision that has been overruled or a statute that has been repealed or declared

unconstitutional, or failing to correct such a citation previously made to the tribunal by the lawyer.

Representations by a Lawyer

- [3] A lawyer is responsible for pleadings and other documents prepared for litigation but is usually not required to have personal knowledge of the facts asserted therein because litigation documents ordinarily present assertions of fact by the client, or a witness, and not by the lawyer. Compare Rule 3.1. However, an assertion of fact purporting to be based on the lawyer's own knowledge, as in a declaration or an affidavit by the lawyer or in a statement in open court, may properly be made only when the lawyer knows the assertion is true or believes it to be true on the basis of a reasonably diligent inquiry. *Bryan v. Bank of America* (2001) 86 Cal.App.4th 185 [103 Cal.Rptr.2d 148]. There are circumstances where failure to make a disclosure is the equivalent of an affirmative misrepresentation. *Di Sabatino v. State Bar* (1980) 27 Cal.3d 159 [162 Cal.Rptr. 458]. The obligation prescribed in Rule 1.2(d) not to counsel a client to commit or assist the client in committing a fraud applies in litigation. Regarding compliance with Rule 1.2(d), see the comment to that Rule. See also the comment to Rule 8.4(b).

Legal Argument

- [4] Although a lawyer is not required to make a disinterested exposition of the law, legal argument based on a knowing false representation of law constitutes dishonesty toward the tribunal. A tribunal that is fully informed on the applicable law is better able to make a fair and accurate determination of the matter before it. Paragraph (a)(2) requires a lawyer to disclose directly adverse and legal authority in the controlling jurisdiction that is known to the lawyer and that has not been disclosed by the opposing party. Legal authority in the controlling jurisdiction may include legal authority outside the jurisdiction in which the tribunal sits,

such as a federal statute or case that is determinative of an issue in a state court proceeding or a Supreme Court decision that is binding on a lower court. Under this Rule, the lawyer must disclose authorities the court needs to be aware of in order to rule intelligently on the matter. Paragraph (a)(2) does not impose on lawyers a general duty to cite authority from outside the jurisdiction in which the tribunal is located. Whether a criminal defense lawyer is required to disclose directly adverse legal authority in the controlling jurisdiction involves constitutional principles that are beyond the scope of these Rules. In addition, a lawyer may not knowingly edit and submit to a tribunal language from a book, statute, rule, or decision in such a way as to mislead the court, or knowingly fail to correct an inadvertent material misquotation that the lawyer previously made to the tribunal.

Offering Evidence

- [5] Paragraph (a)(3) requires that the lawyer refuse to offer evidence that the lawyer knows to be false, regardless of the client's wishes. A lawyer does not violate this Rule if the lawyer offers the evidence for the purpose of establishing its falsity.
- [6] If a lawyer knows that the client intends to testify falsely or wants the lawyer to introduce false evidence, the lawyer should seek to persuade the client that the evidence should not be offered. If the persuasion is ineffective and the lawyer continues to represent the client, the lawyer must refuse to offer the false evidence. With respect to criminal defendants, see Comment [7]. If only a portion of a witness's testimony will be false, the lawyer may call the witness to testify but may not elicit the testimony that the lawyer knows is false or base arguments to the trier of fact on evidence known to be false.
- [7] The duties stated in paragraphs (a) and (b) apply to all lawyers, including defense counsel in criminal cases. If a criminal defendant insists on

testifying, and the lawyer knows that the testimony will be false, the lawyer may offer the testimony in a narrative form if the lawyer made reasonable efforts to dissuade the client from the unlawful course of conduct and the lawyer has sought permission from the court to withdraw as required by Rule 1.16. (Business and Professions Code section 6068(d); *People v. Guzman* (1988) 45 Cal.3d 915 [248 Cal.Rptr. 467], disapproved on other grounds in *Price v. Superior Court* (2001) 25 Cal.4th 1046, 1069 fn.13 [108 Cal.Rptr.2d 409]; *People v. Johnson* (1998) 62 Cal.App.4th 608 [72 Cal.Rptr.2d 805]; *People v. Jennings* (1999) 70 Cal.App.4th 899 [83 Cal.Rptr.2d 33]; *People v. Brown* (1988) 203 Cal.App.3d 1335, 1340 [250 Cal.Rptr. 762].) The obligations of a lawyer under these Rules and the State Bar Act are subordinate to applicable constitutional provisions.

- [8] The prohibition against offering false evidence only applies if the lawyer knows that the evidence is false. A lawyer's reasonable belief that evidence is false does not preclude its presentation to the trier of fact. See, e.g., *People v. Bolton* (2008) 166 Cal.App.4th 343, [82 Cal.Rptr.3d 671]. A lawyer's knowledge that evidence is false, however, can be inferred from the circumstances. See Rule 1.0.1(f). Thus, although a lawyer should resolve doubts about the veracity of testimony or other evidence in favor of the client, the lawyer cannot ignore an obvious falsehood.

Remedial Measures

- [9] Having offered material evidence in the belief that it was true, a lawyer may subsequently come to know that the evidence is false. Or, a lawyer may be surprised when the lawyer's client, or another witness called by the lawyer, offers testimony the lawyer knows to be false, either during the lawyer's direct examination or in response to cross-examination by the opposing lawyer. In such situations or if the lawyer knows of the falsity of testimony elicited from the client during a deposition, the lawyer

must take reasonable remedial measures. The lawyer's proper course is to remonstrate with the client confidentially, advise the client of the consequences of providing perjured testimony and of the lawyer's duty of candor to the tribunal, and seek the client's cooperation with respect to the withdrawal or correction of the false statements or evidence. If that fails, the lawyer must take further remedial measures, see Comment [10], and may be required to seek permission to withdraw under Rule 1.16(b), depending on the materiality of the false evidence.

- [10] Reasonable remedial measures under paragraphs (a)(3) and (b) refer to measures that are available under these Rules and the State Bar Act, and which a reasonable lawyer would consider appropriate under the circumstances to comply with the lawyer's duty of candor to the tribunal. See e.g., Rules 1.2(d), 1.4, 1.16 and 8.4; Business and Professions Code sections 6068(d) and 6128. Remedial measures also include explaining to the client the lawyer's obligations under this Rule and, where applicable, the reasons for lawyer's decision to seek permission from the tribunal to withdraw, and remonstrating further with the client to take corrective action that would eliminate the need for the lawyer to withdraw. If the client is an organization, the lawyer should also consider the provisions of Rule 1.13. Remedial measures do not include disclosure of client confidential information, which the lawyer is required to maintain inviolate under Rule 1.6 and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e).
- [11] A lawyer's duty to take reasonable remedial measures under paragraph (a)(3) is limited to the proceeding in which the lawyer has offered the evidence in question. A lawyer's duty to take remedial measures under paragraph (b) does not apply to another lawyer who is retained to represent a person in an investigation or proceeding concerning that person's conduct in the prior proceeding.

Preserving Integrity of Adjudicative Process

[12] Lawyers have a special obligation to protect a tribunal against criminal or fraudulent conduct that undermines the integrity of the adjudicative process, such as bribing, intimidating or otherwise unlawfully communicating with a witness, juror, court official or other participant in the proceeding, unlawfully destroying or concealing documents or other evidence relating to the proceeding or failing to disclose information to the tribunal when required by law to do so. See Rule 3.4. Thus, paragraph (b) requires a lawyer to take reasonable remedial measures whenever the lawyer knows that a person, including the lawyer's client, intends to engage, is engaging or has engaged in criminal or fraudulent conduct related to the proceeding.

Duration of Obligation

[13] Paragraph (c) establishes a practical time limit on the obligation to rectify false evidence or false statements of law and fact. Either the conclusion of the proceeding or of the representation provides a reasonably definite point for the termination of the mandatory obligations under this Rule. A proceeding has concluded within the meaning of this Rule when a final judgment in the proceeding has been affirmed on appeal or the time for review has passed. There may be obligations that go beyond this Rule. See, e.g., Rule 3.8.

Withdrawal

[14] A lawyer's compliance with the duty of candor imposed by this Rule does not require that the lawyer withdraw from the representation of a client whose interests will be or have been adversely affected by the lawyer's taking reasonable remedial measures. The lawyer may, however, be required by Rule 1.16(a) to seek permission of the tribunal to withdraw if the lawyer's compliance with this Rule's duty of candor results in a

deterioration of the lawyer-client relationship such that the lawyer can no longer competently and diligently represent the client, or where continued employment will result in a violation of these Rules. Also see Rule 1.16(b) for the circumstances in which a lawyer will be permitted to seek a tribunal's permission to withdraw. This Rule does not modify the lawyer's obligations under Rule 1.6 and Business and Professions Code section 6068(e) or the California Rules of Court with respect to any request to withdraw that is premised on a client's misconduct.

Rule 3.8 Special Responsibilities of a Prosecutor
(Commission's Proposed Rule Following Review of Public Comments)

A prosecutor in a criminal case shall:

- (a) refrain from commencing or prosecuting a charge that the prosecutor knows is not supported by probable cause;
- (b) make reasonable efforts to assure that the accused has been advised of the right to, and the procedure for obtaining, counsel and has been given reasonable opportunity to obtain counsel;
- (c) not seek to obtain from an unrepresented accused a waiver of important pretrial rights, such as the right to a preliminary hearing, unless the tribunal has approved the appearance of the accused *in propria persona*;
- (d) comply with all constitutional obligations, as defined by relevant case law, regarding the timely disclosure to the defense of all evidence or information known to the prosecutor that tends to negate the guilt of the accused or mitigates the offense, and, in connection with sentencing, disclose to the defense and to the tribunal all unprivileged mitigating information known to the prosecutor, except when the prosecutor is relieved of this responsibility by a protective order of the tribunal;
- (e) not subpoena a lawyer in a grand jury proceeding, criminal proceeding, or civil proceeding related to a criminal matter to present evidence about a past or present client unless the prosecutor reasonably believes:
 - (1) the information sought is not protected from disclosure by any applicable privilege or the work product doctrine;
 - (2) the evidence sought is reasonably necessary to the successful completion of an ongoing investigation or prosecution; and
 - (3) there is no other reasonable alternative to obtain the information;
- (f) exercise reasonable care to prevent persons under the supervision or direction of the prosecutor, including investigators, law enforcement personnel, employees or other persons assisting or associated with the prosecutor in a criminal case from making an extrajudicial statement that the prosecutor would be prohibited from making under Rule 3.6.
- (g) When a prosecutor knows of new, credible and material evidence creating a reasonable likelihood that a convicted defendant did not commit an offense of which the defendant was convicted, the prosecutor shall:
 - (1) promptly disclose that evidence to an appropriate court or authority, and
 - (2) if the conviction was obtained in the prosecutor's jurisdiction,
 - (i) promptly disclose that evidence to the defendant unless a court authorizes delay, and
 - (ii) undertake further investigation, or make reasonable efforts to cause an investigation, to determine whether the defendant was convicted of an offense that the defendant did not commit.
- (h) When a prosecutor knows of clear and convincing evidence establishing that a defendant in the prosecutor's jurisdiction was convicted of an offense that the defendant did not commit, the prosecutor shall seek to remedy the conviction.

Comment

- [1] A prosecutor has the responsibility of a minister of justice and not simply that of an advocate. This responsibility carries with it specific obligations to see that the defendant is accorded procedural justice, that guilt is decided upon the basis of sufficient evidence, and that special precautions are taken to prevent and to rectify the conviction of innocent persons. Competent representation of the sovereign may require a prosecutor to undertake some procedural and remedial measures as a matter of obligation. Applicable law may require other measures by the prosecutor. Knowing disregard of those obligations, or a systematic abuse of prosecutorial discretion, could constitute a violation of Rule 8.4.
- [1A] The term "prosecutor" in this Rule includes the office of the prosecutor and all lawyers affiliated with the prosecutor's office who are responsible for the prosecution function.
- [1B] Paragraph (b) does not change the obligations imposed on prosecutors by applicable law. "Reasonable efforts" include determining, where appropriate, whether an accused has been advised of the right to, and the procedure for obtaining, counsel and taking appropriate measures if this has not been done.
- [2] A defendant may waive a preliminary hearing and thereby lose a valuable opportunity to challenge probable cause. Accordingly, prosecutors should not seek to obtain waivers of preliminary hearings or other important pretrial rights from unrepresented accused persons. Paragraph (c), however, does not forbid the lawful questioning of an uncharged suspect who has knowingly waived the right to counsel and the right to remain silent. Paragraph (c) also does not forbid prosecutors from seeking from an unrepresented accused a reasonable waiver of time for initial appearance or preliminary hearing as a means of facilitating the accused's voluntary cooperation in an ongoing law enforcement investigation.
- [2A] The obligations in paragraph (d) apply only with respect to controlling case law existing at the time of the obligation and not with respect to subsequent case law that is determined to apply retroactively. The disclosure obligations in paragraph (d) apply even if the defendant is acquitted or is able to avoid prejudice on grounds unrelated to the prosecutor's failure to disclose the evidence or information to the defense.
- [3] The exception in paragraph (d) recognizes that a prosecutor may seek an appropriate protective order from the tribunal if disclosure of information to the defense could result in substantial harm to an individual or to the public interest.
- [4] Paragraph (e) is intended to limit the issuance of lawyer subpoenas in grand jury and other criminal proceedings to those situations in which there is a genuine need to intrude into the lawyer-client or other privileged relationship.
- [5] Paragraph (f) supplements Rule 3.6, which prohibits extrajudicial statements that have a substantial likelihood of prejudicing an adjudicatory proceeding. This comment is not intended to restrict the statements which a prosecutor may make that comply with Rule 3.6(b) or 3.6(c).
- [6] Like other lawyers, prosecutors are subject to Rules 5.1 and 5.3, which relate to responsibilities regarding lawyers and nonlawyers who work for or are associated with the lawyer's office. Paragraph (f) reminds the prosecutor of the importance of these obligations in connection with the unique dangers of improper extrajudicial statements in a criminal case. In addition, paragraph (f) requires a prosecutor to exercise reasonable

care to prevent persons assisting or associated with the prosecutor from making improper extrajudicial statements, even when such persons are not under the direct supervision of the prosecutor. Ordinarily, the reasonable care standard will be satisfied if the prosecutor issues the appropriate cautions to law-enforcement personnel and other relevant individuals.

- [6A] Like other lawyers, prosecutors are also subject to Rule 3.3, which requires a lawyer to take reasonable remedial measures to correct material evidence that the lawyer has offered when that lawyer comes to know of its falsity. See Rule 3.3, Comment [12].
- [7] When a prosecutor knows of new, credible and material evidence creating a reasonable likelihood that a person was convicted of a crime that the person did not commit, and the conviction was obtained outside the prosecutor's jurisdiction, paragraph (g)(1) requires prompt disclosure to the court or other appropriate authority, such as the chief prosecutor of the jurisdiction where the conviction occurred. If the conviction was obtained in the prosecutor's jurisdiction, paragraph (g)(2) requires the prosecutor to examine the evidence and undertake further investigation to determine whether the defendant is in fact innocent. The scope of an inquiry under paragraph (g)(2) will depend on the circumstances. In some cases, the prosecutor may recognize the need to reinvestigate the underlying case; in others, it may be appropriate to await development of the record in collateral proceedings initiated by the defendant. The nature of a paragraph (g)(2) inquiry or investigation must be such as to provide a "reasonable belief," as defined in Rule 1.0.1(i), that the conviction should or should not be set aside. Alternatively, the prosecutor is required under paragraph (g)(2) to make reasonable efforts to cause another appropriate authority to undertake the necessary investigation, and to promptly disclose the evidence to the court and, absent court-authorized delay, to the defendant. Consistent with the objectives of Rules 4.2 and 4.3, disclosure to a represented defendant

must be made through the defendant's counsel, and, in the case of an unrepresented defendant, would ordinarily be accompanied by a request to a court for the appointment of counsel to assist the defendant in taking such legal measures as may be appropriate. The post-conviction disclosure duty applies to new, credible and material evidence of innocence regardless of whether it could previously have been discovered by the defense.

- [8] Under paragraph (h), once the prosecutor knows of clear and convincing evidence that the defendant was convicted of an offense that the defendant did not commit, the prosecutor must seek to remedy the conviction. Necessary steps may include disclosure of the evidence to the defendant, requesting that the court appoint counsel for an unrepresented indigent defendant and, where appropriate, or notifying the court that the prosecutor has knowledge that the defendant did not commit the offense of which the defendant was convicted.
- [9] A prosecutor's independent judgment, made in good faith, that the new evidence is not of such nature as to trigger the obligations of sections (g) and (h), does not constitute a violation of this Rule even if the judgment is subsequently determined to have been erroneous. For purposes of this rule, a judgment is made in good faith if the prosecutor reasonably believes that the new evidence does not create a reasonable likelihood that a convicted defendant did not commit an offense of which the defendant was convicted.
- [10] A current or former prosecutor, and any lawyer associated with such person in a law firm, is prohibited from advising, aiding or promoting the defense in any criminal matter or proceeding in which the prosecutor has acted or participated. See Business and Professions Code section 6131. See also Rule 1.7, Comment [16]

Rule 8.5 Disciplinary Authority; Choice Of Law

(Commission's Proposed Rule – Clean Version)

- (a) Disciplinary Authority. A lawyer admitted to practice in California is subject to the disciplinary authority of California, regardless of where the lawyer's conduct occurs. A lawyer not admitted in California is also subject to the disciplinary authority of California if the lawyer provides or offers to provide any legal services in California. A lawyer may be subject to the disciplinary authority of both California and another jurisdiction for the same conduct.
- (b) Choice of Law. In any exercise of the disciplinary authority of California, the rules of professional conduct to be applied shall be as follows:
- (1) for conduct in connection with a matter pending before a tribunal, the rules of the jurisdiction in which the tribunal sits apply, unless the rules of the tribunal provide otherwise; and
 - (2) these rules apply to any other conduct, in and outside this state, except where a lawyer admitted to practice in California, who is lawfully practicing in another jurisdiction, is required specifically by the jurisdiction in which he or she is practicing to follow rules of professional conduct different from these rules.

Comment

Disciplinary Authority

- [1] It is longstanding law that the conduct of a lawyer admitted to practice in California is subject to the disciplinary authority of California. Extension of the disciplinary authority of California to other lawyers

who provide or offer to provide legal services in California is for the protection of the citizens of California. A lawyer disciplined by a disciplinary authority in another jurisdiction may be subject to discipline in California for the same conduct. See e.g., Business and Professions Code section 6049.1.

Choice of Law

- [2] A lawyer may potentially be subject to more than one set of rules of professional conduct which impose different obligations. The lawyer may be licensed to practice in more than one jurisdiction with differing rules, or may be admitted to practice before a particular court with rules that differ from those of the jurisdiction or jurisdictions in which the lawyer is licensed to practice. Additionally, the lawyer's conduct may involve significant contacts with more than one jurisdiction.
- [3] Paragraph (b) seeks to resolve such potential conflicts. Its premise is that minimizing conflicts between rules, as well as uncertainty about which rules are applicable, is in the best interest of both clients and the profession (as well as the bodies having authority to regulate the profession). Accordingly, it takes the approach of (i) providing that any particular conduct of a lawyer shall be subject to only one set of rules of professional conduct and (ii) making the determination of which set of rules applies to particular conduct as straightforward as possible, consistent with recognition of appropriate regulatory interests of relevant jurisdictions.
- [4] Paragraph (b)(1) provides that as to a lawyer's conduct relating to a proceeding pending before a tribunal, the lawyer shall be subject only

to the rules of the jurisdiction in which the tribunal sits unless the rules of the tribunal, including its choice of law rule, provide otherwise. As to all other conduct, including conduct in anticipation of a proceeding not yet pending before a tribunal, paragraph (b)(2) provides that a lawyer shall be subject to these rules, unless a lawyer admitted in California is lawfully practicing in another jurisdiction, and may be required specifically by a jurisdiction in which he or she is practicing to follow rules of professional conduct different from these rules. In the case of conduct in anticipation of a proceeding that is likely to be before a tribunal, these rules apply, unless the tribunal is in a jurisdiction in which the lawyer is lawfully practicing and that jurisdiction requires different conduct.

- [5] The choice of law provision applies to lawyers engaged in transactional practice, unless international law, treaties or other agreements between competent regulatory authorities in the affected jurisdictions preempt these rules.