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DEERING'S CALIFORNIA CODES ANNOTATED
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*** THIS DOCUMENT IS CURRENT THROUGH 2009-2010 EXTRAORDINARY SESSIONS 1-5, ***
7, AND 8, AND URGENCY LEGISLATION THROUGH CH 141 OF THE 2010 REGULAR SESSION

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONS CODE
Division 3. Professions and Vocations Generally
Chapter 4. Attorneys
Article 4. Admission to the Practice of Law

GO TO CALIFORNIA CODES ARCHIVE DIRECTORY

Cal Bus & Prof Code § 6068 (2010)

§ 6068. Duties as an attorney

It is the duty of an attorney to do all of the following:

- (a) To support the Constitution and laws of the United States and of this state.
- (b) To maintain the respect due to the courts of justice and judicial officers.
- (c) To counsel or maintain those actions, proceedings, or defenses only as appear to him or her legal or just, except the defense of a person charged with a public offense.
- (d) To employ, for the purpose of maintaining the causes confided to him or her those means only as are consistent with truth, and never to seek to mislead the judge or any judicial officer by an artifice or false statement of fact or law.
- (e)
 - (1) To maintain inviolate the confidence, and at every peril to himself or herself to preserve the secrets, of his or her client.
 - (2) Notwithstanding paragraph (1), an attorney may, but is not required to, reveal confidential information relating to the representation of a client to the extent that the attorney reasonably believes the disclosure is necessary to prevent a criminal act that the attorney reasonably believes is likely to result in death of, or substantial bodily harm to, an individual.
- (f) To advance no fact prejudicial to the honor or reputation of a party or witness, unless required by the justice of the cause with which he or she is charged.

(g) Not to encourage either the commencement or the continuance of an action or proceeding from any corrupt motive of passion or interest.

(h) Never to reject, for any consideration personal to himself or herself, the cause of the defenseless or the oppressed.

(i) To cooperate and participate in any disciplinary investigation or other regulatory or disciplinary proceeding pending against himself or herself. However, this subdivision shall not be construed to deprive an attorney of any privilege guaranteed by the *Fifth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States*, or any other constitutional or statutory privileges. This subdivision shall not be construed to require an attorney to cooperate with a request that requires him or her to waive any constitutional or statutory privilege or to comply with a request for information or other matters within an unreasonable period of time in light of the time constraints of the attorney's practice. Any exercise by an attorney of any constitutional or statutory privilege shall not be used against the attorney in a regulatory or disciplinary proceeding against him or her.

(j) To comply with the requirements of Section 6002.1.

(k) To comply with all conditions attached to any disciplinary probation, including a probation imposed with the concurrence of the attorney.

(l) To keep all agreements made in lieu of disciplinary prosecution with the agency charged with attorney discipline.

(m) To respond promptly to reasonable status inquiries of clients and to keep clients reasonably informed of significant developments in matters with regard to which the attorney has agreed to provide legal services.

(n) To provide copies to the client of certain documents under time limits and as prescribed in a rule of professional conduct which the board shall adopt.

(o) To report to the agency charged with attorney discipline, in writing, within 30 days of the time the attorney has knowledge of any of the following:

(1) The filing of three or more lawsuits in a 12-month period against the attorney for malpractice or other wrongful conduct committed in a professional capacity.

(2) The entry of judgment against the attorney in a civil action for fraud, misrepresentation, breach of fiduciary duty, or gross negligence committed in a professional capacity.

(3) The imposition of judicial sanctions against the attorney, except for sanctions for failure to make discovery or monetary sanctions of less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

(4) The bringing of an indictment or information charging a felony against the attorney.

(5) The conviction of the attorney, including any verdict of guilty, or plea of guilty or no contest, of a felony, or a misdemeanor committed in the course of the practice of law, or in a manner in which a client of the attorney was the victim, or a necessary element of which, as determined by the statutory or common law definition of the misdemeanor, involves improper conduct of an attorney, including dishonesty or other moral turpitude, or an attempt or a conspiracy or solicitation of another to commit a felony or a misdemeanor of that type.

(6) The imposition of discipline against the attorney by a professional or occupational disciplinary agency or licensing board, whether in California or elsewhere.

(7) Reversal of judgment in a proceeding based in whole or in part upon misconduct, grossly incompetent

representation, or willful misrepresentation by an attorney.

(8) As used in this subdivision, "against the attorney" includes claims and proceedings against any firm of attorneys for the practice of law in which the attorney was a partner at the time of the conduct complained of and any law corporation in which the attorney was a shareholder at the time of the conduct complained of unless the matter has to the attorney's knowledge already been reported by the law firm or corporation.

(9) The State Bar may develop a prescribed form for the making of reports required by this section, usage of which it may require by rule or regulation.

(10) This subdivision is only intended to provide that the failure to report as required herein may serve as a basis of discipline.

HISTORY:

Added Stats 1939 ch 34 § 1. Amended Stats 1985 ch 453 § 11; Stats 1986 ch 475 § 2; Stats 1988 ch 1159 § 5; Stats 1990 ch 1639 § 4 (AB 3991); Stats 1999 ch 221 § 1 (SB 143), ch 342 § 2 (SB 144); Stats 2001 ch 24 § 4 (SB 352); Stats 2003 ch 765 § 1 (AB 1101), operative July 1, 2004.

NOTES:

Amendments:

1985 Amendment:

In addition to making technical changes, added subd (i).

1986 Amendment:

(1) Substituted "disciplinary investigation or other regulatory or disciplinary" for "State Bar investigation or other State Bar" in subd (i); and (2) added subds (j)-(n).

1988 Amendment:

(1) Added subd (n); (2) redesignated former subd (n) to be subd (o); and (3) added subd (o)(10).

1990 Amendment:

Added "privilege guaranteed by the *Fifth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States* or any other" in subd (i).

1999 Amendment:

(1) Substituted "those" for "such" in subds (c) and (d); (2) added the third and fourth sentences of subd (i); and (3)