

REPORT . . .
LAWYERS PROFESSIONAL
RESPONSIBILITY BOARD

By

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Minnesota Office of Lawyers Professional Responsibility

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This month, instead of devoting my article to a single substantive ethical issue, I will discuss instead several important administrative matters.

MODEL RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

For many years professional ethics were governed by the Canons of Professional Ethics. In the late 1960's the ABA Model Code of Professional Responsibility was promulgated, and in 1970 the Minnesota Supreme Court adopted that Code as the standard of professional conduct for Minnesota attorneys. Now barely a decade later, the ABA is giving serious consideration to scrapping the Model Code and substituting the Model Rules of Professional Conduct.

An ABA Commission, chaired by Attorney Robert J. Kutak of Omaha, Nebraska, has recently circulated a discussion draft of the Model Rules of Professional Conduct. The text remains under discussion and is subject to further revision. It is, however, anticipated that a final version of the Model Rules will be submitted to the ABA House of Delegates in February, 1981.

This limited article cannot possibly discuss the details of the Model Rules. The Model Rules do, however, contain some radical departures from the current Code and will undoubtedly spark controversy. Greater emphasis is placed upon the lawyer's duty to be candid and fair to the Court as opposed to his duty to zealously represent his client. Rules governing solicitation of legal business would be greatly liberalized. Sections dealing with conflicts of interest are expanded. The Model Rules also wrestle with the thorny issues of client perjury, lawyer competence, and the responsibility of senior attorneys to supervise their subordinates.

I hope that all attorneys will educate themselves about the Model Rules. Jim Keeler of the State Bar Association office has advised me that those interested in learning about the Model Rules may contact that office for assistance in obtaining a copy of the proposed Rules.

It should be noted that even if the Model Rules are approved by the ABA, they will not be effective in Minnesota unless and until the Minnesota Supreme Court adopts them. Until the Court otherwise orders, the current Code of Professional Responsibility will continue to govern Minnesota attorneys.

DISTRICT ETHICS COMMITTEES

In a recent *Bench & Bar* article it was noted that \$33.00 of the annual attorney registration fee is earmarked by the Supreme Court for the Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board. That fee would be much higher were it not for the volunteer work of the many attorneys and citizens who serve on the local District Ethics Committees. In about 90% of the cases the initial investigation, report and recommendation are made by the local District Ethics Committees. I am sure that all of you will give them your cooperation and support. The Chairmen of the Committees which do this important work are as follows:

First District	Lloyd J. Moosbrugger St. Paul, Minnesota
Second District	Gordon Shumaker, Jr. St. Paul, Minnesota
Third District	Richard H. Bins Rochester, Minnesota
Fourth District	John D. Levine Minneapolis, Minnesota
Fifth District	William L. Hoversten Waseca, Minnesota
Sixth District	Bailey Blethen Mankato, Minnesota
Seventh District	Charles R. Kennedy Wadena, Minnesota
Eighth District	Robert A. Nicklaus Chaska, Minnesota
Ninth District	Lawrence Frank Redwood Falls, Minnesota
Tenth District	Hugh V. Plunkett, Jr. Austin, Minnesota

Eleventh District	Gerald J. Brown Duluth, Minnesota
Twelfth District	Wendell Nelson Litchfield, Minnesota
Thirteenth District	Thomas W. Lewis Windom, Minnesota
Fourteenth District	Robert R. Remark Fertile, Minnesota
Fifteenth District	Neal A. Lano Grand Rapids, Minnesota
Sixteenth District	Robert R. Pflueger Ortonville, Minnesota
Seventeenth District	Newton Johnson Fairmont, Minnesota
Eighteenth District	Robert B. Danforth Elk River, Minnesota
Nineteenth District	Donald T. Raleigh Lake Elmo, Minnesota
Range Bar	Tom Wangensteen Chisholm, Minnesota

**BRUCE E. MARTIN APPOINTED
ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR**

Marilyn B. Knudsen recently resigned as Assistant Administrative Director to return to private practice. She will also serve as a part-time public defender in Ramsey County. Marilyn leaves with our sincere appreciation and best wishes.

Bruce E. Martin has recently assumed the position of the University of Minnesota Law School. Bruce spent about five years in the office of the Mankato City Attorney, holding that position for the last two years.

