

## § 77.2 Definitions.

As used in this part, the following terms shall have the following meanings, unless the context indicates otherwise:

(a) The phrase *attorney for the government* means the Attorney General; the Deputy Attorney General; the Solicitor General; the Assistant Attorneys General for, and any attorney employed in, the Antitrust Division, Civil Division, Civil Rights Division, Criminal Division, Environment and Natural Resources Division, and Tax Division; the Chief Counsel for the DEA and any attorney employed in that office; the Chief Counsel for ATF and any attorney employed in that office; the General Counsel of the FBI and any attorney employed in that office or in the (Office of General Counsel) of the FBI; any attorney employed in, or head of, any other legal office in a Department of Justice agency; any United States Attorney; any Assistant United States Attorney; any Special Assistant to the Attorney General or Special Attorney duly appointed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 515; any Special Assistant United States Attorney duly appointed pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 543 who is authorized to conduct criminal or civil law enforcement investigations or proceedings on behalf of the United States; and any other attorney employed by the Department of Justice who is authorized to conduct criminal or civil law enforcement proceedings on behalf of the United States. The phrase *attorney for the government* also includes any independent counsel, or employee of such counsel, appointed under chapter 40 of title 28, United States Code. The phrase *attorney for the government* does not include attorneys employed as investigators or other law enforcement agents by the Department of Justice who are not authorized to represent the United States in criminal or civil law enforcement litigation or to supervise such proceedings.

(b) The term *case* means any proceeding over which a state or federal court has jurisdiction, including criminal prosecutions and civil actions. This term also includes grand jury investigations and related proceedings (such as motions to quash grand jury subpoenas and motions to compel testi-

mony), applications for search warrants, and applications for electronic surveillance.

(c) The phrase *civil law enforcement investigation* means an investigation of possible civil violations of, or claims under, federal law that may form the basis for a civil law enforcement proceeding.

(d) The phrase *civil law enforcement proceeding* means a civil action or proceeding before any court or other tribunal brought by the Department of Justice under the authority of the United States to enforce federal laws or regulations, and includes proceedings related to the enforcement of an administrative subpoena or summons or civil investigative demand.

(e) The terms *conduct* and *activity* means any act performed by a Department attorney that implicates a rule governing attorneys, as that term is defined in paragraph (h) of this section.

(f) The phrase *Department attorney[s]* is synonymous with the phrase “attorney[s] for the government” as defined in this section.

(g) The term *person* means any individual or organization.

(h) The phrase *state laws and rules and local federal court rules governing attorneys* means rules enacted or adopted by any State or Territory of the United States or the District of Columbia or by any federal court, that prescribe ethical conduct for attorneys *and* that would subject an attorney, whether or not a Department attorney, to professional discipline, such as a code of professional responsibility. The phrase does not include:

(1) Any statute, rule, or regulation which does not govern ethical conduct, such as rules of procedure, evidence, or substantive law, whether or not such rule is included in a code of professional responsibility for attorneys;

(2) Any statute, rule, or regulation that purports to govern the conduct of any class of persons other than attorneys, such as rules that govern the conduct of all litigants and judges, as well as attorneys; or

(3) A statute, rule, or regulation requiring licensure or membership in a particular state bar.

(i) The phrase *state of licensure* means the District of Columbia or any State

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or Territory where a Department attorney is duly licensed and authorized to practice as an attorney. This term shall be construed in the same manner as it has been construed pursuant to the provisions of Pub. L. 96-132, 93 Stat. 1040, 1044 (1979), and Sec. 102 of the Departments of Commerce, Justice and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agency Appropriations Act, 1999, Pub. L. 105-277.

(j)(1) The phrase *where such attorney engages in that attorney's duties* identifies which rules of ethical conduct a Department attorney should comply with, and means, with respect to particular conduct:

(i) If there is a case pending, the rules of ethical conduct adopted by the local federal court or state court before which the case is pending; or

(ii) If there is no case pending, the rules of ethical conduct that would be applied by the attorney's state of licensure.

(2) A Department attorney does not "engage[] in that attorney's duties" in any states in which the attorney's conduct is not substantial and continuous, such as a jurisdiction in which an attorney takes a deposition (related to a case pending in another court) or directs a contact to be made by an investigative agent, or responds to an inquiry by an investigative agent. Nor does the phrase include any jurisdiction that would not ordinarily apply its rules of ethical conduct to particular conduct or activity by the attorney.

(k) The phrase *to the same extent and in the same manner as other attorneys* means that Department attorneys shall only be subject to laws and rules of ethical conduct governing attorneys in the same manner as such rules apply to non-Department attorneys. The phrase does not, however, purport to eliminate or otherwise alter state or federal laws and rules and federal court rules that expressly exclude some or all government attorneys from particular limitations or prohibitions.

[Order No. 2216-99, 64 FR 19275, Apr. 20, 1999, as amended by Order No. 2650-2003, 68 FR 4929, Jan. 31, 2003]

### § 77.3 Application of 28 U.S.C. 530B.

In all criminal investigations and prosecutions, in all civil investigations and litigation (affirmative and defensive), and in all civil law enforcement investigations and proceedings, attorneys for the government shall conform their conduct and activities to the state rules and laws, and federal local court rules, governing attorneys in each State where such attorney engages in that attorney's duties, to the same extent and in the same manner as other attorneys in that State, as these terms are defined in § 77.2 of this part.

### § 77.4 Guidance.

(a) *Rules of the court before which a case is pending.* A government attorney shall, in all cases, comply with the rules of ethical conduct of the court before which a particular case is pending.

(b) *Inconsistent rules where there is a pending case.* (1) If the rule of the attorney's state of licensure would prohibit an action that is permissible under the rules of the court before which a case is pending, the attorney should consider:

(i) Whether the attorney's state of licensure would apply the rule of the court before which the case is pending, rather than the rule of the state of licensure;

(ii) Whether the local federal court rule preempts contrary state rules; and

(iii) Whether application of traditional choice-of-law principles directs the attorney to comply with a particular rule.

(2) In the process of considering the factors described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, the attorney is encouraged to consult with a supervisor or Professional Responsibility Officer to determine the best course of conduct.

(c) *Choice of rules where there is no pending case.* (1) Where no case is pending, the attorney should generally comply with the ethical rules of the attorney's state of licensure, unless application of traditional choice-of-law principles directs the attorney to comply with the ethical rule of another jurisdiction or court, such as the ethical rule adopted by the court in which the case is likely to be brought.

(2) In the process of considering the factors described in paragraph (c)(1) of