

§§ 10.12–10.19 [Reserved]

PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE CODE
OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

§ 10.20 Canons and Disciplinary Rules.

(a) Canons are set out in §§ 10.21, 10.30, 10.46, 10.56, 10.61, 10.76, 10.83, 10.100, and 10.110. Canons are statements of axiomatic norms, expressing in general terms the standards of professional conduct expected of practitioners in their relationships with the public, with the legal system, and with the legal profession.

(b) Disciplinary Rules are set out in §§ 10.22–10.24, 10.31–10.40, 10.47–10.57, 10.62–10.68, 10.77, 10.78, 10.84, 10.85, 10.87–10.89, 10.92, 10.93, 10.101–10.103, 10.111, and 10.112. Disciplinary Rules are mandatory in character and state the minimum level of conduct below which no practitioner can fall without being subjected to disciplinary action.

§ 10.21 Canon 1.

A practitioner should assist in maintaining the integrity and competence of the legal profession.

§ 10.22 Maintaining integrity and competence of the legal profession.

(a) A practitioner is subject to discipline if the practitioner has made a materially false statement in, or if the practitioner has deliberately failed to disclose a material fact requested in connection with, the practitioner's application for registration or membership in the bar of any United States court or any State court or his or her authority to otherwise practice before the Office in trademark and other non-patent cases.

(b) A practitioner shall not further the application for registration or membership in the bar of any United States court, State court, or administrative agency of another person known by the practitioner to be unqualified in respect to character, education, or other relevant attribute.

§ 10.23 Misconduct.

(a) A practitioner shall not engage in disreputable or gross misconduct.

(b) A practitioner shall not:

(1) Violate a Disciplinary Rule.

(2) Circumvent a Disciplinary Rule through actions of another.

(3) Engage in illegal conduct involving moral turpitude.

(4) Engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.

(5) Engage in conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice.

(6) Engage in any other conduct that adversely reflects on the practitioner's fitness to practice before the Office.

(c) Conduct which constitutes a violation of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section includes, but is not limited to:

(1) Conviction of a criminal offense involving moral turpitude, dishonesty, or breach of trust.

(2) Knowingly giving false or misleading information or knowingly participating in a material way in giving false or misleading information, to:

(i) A client in connection with any immediate, prospective, or pending business before the Office.

(ii) The Office or any employee of the Office.

(3) Misappropriation of, or failure to properly or timely remit, funds received by a practitioner or the practitioner's firm from a client to pay a fee which the client is required by law to pay to the Office.

(4) Directly or indirectly improperly influencing, attempting to improperly influence, offering or agreeing to improperly influence, or attempting to offer or agree to improperly influence an official action of any employee of the Office by:

(i) Use of threats, false accusations, duress, or coercion,

(ii) An offer of any special inducement or promise of advantage, or

(iii) Improperly bestowing of any gift, favor, or thing of value.

(5) Suspension or disbarment from practice as an attorney or agent on ethical grounds by any duly constituted authority of a State or the United States or, in the case of a practitioner who resides in a foreign country or is registered under § 11.6(c), by any duly constituted authority of:

(i) A State,

(ii) The United States, or

(iii) The country in which the practitioner resides.