

Rule 7.1. Communications Concerning a Lawyer's Services.

(a) A lawyer shall not make a false or misleading communication about the lawyer or the lawyer's services. A communication is false or misleading if it:

- (1) contains a material misrepresentation of fact or law, or omits a fact necessary to make the statement considered as a whole not materially misleading;
- (2) is likely to create an unjustified or unreasonable expectation about results the lawyer can achieve or has achieved; or
- (3) contains a testimonial or endorsement that violates any portion of this Rule.

(b) A lawyer shall not interact with a prospective client in a manner that involves coercion, duress, or harassment.

Comments

[1] This Rule governs all communications about a lawyer's services. Whatever means are used to make known a lawyer's services, statements about them must be truthful.

[2] Truthful statements that are misleading are also prohibited by this Rule. A truthful statement is misleading if it omits a fact necessary to make the lawyer's communication considered as a whole not materially misleading. A truthful statement is also misleading if there is a substantial likelihood that it will lead a reasonable person to formulate a specific conclusion about the lawyer or the lawyer's services for which there is no reasonable factual foundation.

[3] By way of example, this Rule permits the following, so long as they are not false or misleading: public dissemination of information concerning a lawyer's name or firm name, address, email address, website, and telephone number; the kinds of services the lawyer will undertake; the basis on which the lawyer's fees are determined, including prices for specific services and payment and credit arrangements; the use of actors or dramatizations to portray the lawyer, law firm, client, or events; the courts or

jurisdictions where the lawyer is permitted to practice, and other information that might invite the attention of those seeking legal assistance.

[4] An advertisement that truthfully reports a lawyer's achievements on behalf of clients or former clients may be misleading if presented so as to lead a reasonable person to form an unjustified expectation that the same results could be obtained for other clients in similar matters without reference to the specific factual and legal circumstances of each client's case. Similarly, an unsubstantiated comparison of the lawyer's services or fees with the services or fees of other lawyers may be misleading if presented with such specificity as would lead a reasonable person to conclude that the comparison can be substantiated. The inclusion of an appropriate disclaimer or qualifying language may preclude a finding that a statement is likely to create unjustified expectations or otherwise mislead the public.

[5] A lawyer can communicate practice areas and can state that he or she "specializes" in a field based on experience, training, and education, subject to the "false or misleading" standard set forth in this Rule. A lawyer shall not state or imply that the lawyer is certified as a specialist in a particular field unless the lawyer has been certified as a specialist by an objective entity and the name of the entity is clearly identified in the communication.

[6] In order to avoid coercion, duress, or harassment, a lawyer should proceed with caution when initiating contact with someone in need of legal services, especially when the contact is "live," whether that be in-person, face-to-face, live telephone and other real-time visual or auditory person-to-person communications, where the person is subject to a direct personal encounter without time for reflection

[7] Firm names, letterhead and professional designations are communications concerning a lawyer's services. A firm may be designated by the names of all or some of its current members, by the names of deceased or retired members where there has been a succession in the firm's identity or by a trade name if it is not false or misleading. A lawyer or law firm also may be designated by a distinctive website address, social

media username or comparable professional designation that is not misleading. A law firm name or designation is misleading if it implies a connection with a government agency, with a deceased lawyer who was not a former member of the firm, with a lawyer not associated with the firm or a predecessor firm, with a nonlawyer or with a public or charitable legal services organization. If a firm uses a trade name that includes a geographical name such as “Springfield Legal Clinic,” an express statement explaining that it is not a public legal aid organization may be required to avoid a misleading implication.

[8] A law firm with offices in more than one jurisdiction may use the same name or other professional designation in each jurisdiction.

[9] Lawyers may not imply or hold themselves out as practicing together in one firm when they are not a firm, as defined in Rule 1.0(d), because to do so would be false and misleading.

[10] It is misleading to use the name of a lawyer holding public office in the name of a law firm, or in communications on the law firm’s behalf, during any substantial period in which the lawyer is not practicing with the firm. A firm may continue to use in its firm name the name of a lawyer who is serving in Utah’s part-time legislature as long as that lawyer is still associated with the firm.

[11] See Rules 5.3 (duties of lawyers and law firms with respect to the conduct of non-lawyers); Rule 8.4(a) (duty to avoid violating the Rules through the acts of another); and Rule 8.4(e) (prohibition against stating or implying an ability to influence improperly a government agency or official or to achieve results by means that violate the Rules of Professional Conduct or other law).

[12] This Rule differs from the ABA Model Rule. Additional changes have been made to the comments.

Effective August 14, 2020

Rule 7.2. Advertising.

Reserved.

Effective August 14, 2020

Rule 7.3. Solicitation of Clients.

Reserved.

Effective August 14, 2020

Rule 7.4. Communication of Fields of Practice.

Reserved.

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Rule 7.5. Firm Names and Letterheads.

Reserved.

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