
E-80-16 Law office trade name

Question

May a lawyer or a law office operate under a trade name?

Opinion

The Ethics Committee has previously responded to a similar question in Formal Opinion E-76-3.

After reviewing the provisions of DR 2-102(B), and interpretations thereof, the committee concluded:

“Therefore, it is the opinion of this committee that it would be improper to use the name “City Legal Clinic,” either to designate a law partnership or a legal service corporation, in that it would be conducting private law practice under a *trade name* as prohibited under DR 2-102(B) and its predecessor Canon 33 of the Canons of Professional Ethics.” (emphasis supplied)

DR 2-102(B) is substantially the same as SCR 20.08(2) adopted by the Wisconsin Supreme Court effective Jan. 1, 1980. Therefore, the committee reaffirms prior Opinion E-76-3 cited above.