

ETHICS OPINION

RO-96-07

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

QUESTION:

Do the Alabama Rules of Professional Conduct apply to lawyer advertising on the Internet or private on-line services?

ANSWER:

The number of options available for disseminating lawyer advertising has grown rapidly and will continue to grow over time. However, the advertising and solicitation rules found within the Rules of Professional Conduct focus on content of advertising and not on the means used to advertise. It is the Disciplinary Commission's opinion that any information made available to the public about a lawyer or a lawyer's services on the Internet or private on-line services is subject to regulation under the rules on advertising and solicitation. It makes no difference whether it is done through a web page, a bulletin board, or via unsolicited electronic mail. Any advertising or promotional activity transmitted through the use of a computer is subject to regulation like any other form of lawyer advertising.

MLM/vf

10/23/96