

Creed of Professionalism of the Fairfax Bar Association

I recognize that the practice of law is a profession and the essence of professionalism is personal integrity. I owe a duty to my clients, the courts, the legal community and the public to conduct myself as a professional. Professionalism extends beyond the code of professional responsibility. The responsibilities of professionalism demand truthfulness and honesty in all dealings and demand that I treat others with respect and dignity. I will conduct myself according to the following creed:

- 1. I owe the duty of utmost faith and loyalty to my clients and I will perform that duty to the best of my ability, but I will not permit zealotry in the representation of my clients to interfere with my ability to provide objective, realistic and independent advice.*
- 2. I will pursue the lawful objectives of my client as expeditiously and economically as possible. I will advise my client against pursuing, and I will not pursue, interests that are frivolous or otherwise without merit.*
- 3. I will advise my client not to pursue tactics which are intended to delay resolution of a dispute or to unduly burden the financial resources of the opposing party. I will endeavor to be punctual in attending all negotiations, legal proceedings and other scheduled events.*
- 4. I will counsel my client that a willingness to initiate and engage in settlement discussions is consistent with zealous and effective representation. I will endeavor to keep my client informed of all important points concerning the matter for which I am engaged.*
- 5. I will be candid in all communications with respect to both facts and the law.*
- 6. I will be courteous and civil in all communications with opposing counsel recognizing that the disputes are those of the clients. Moreover, I will advise my client that civility and courtesy are not signs of weakness.*
- 7. I will provide documents to, and otherwise communicate with, counsel for other parties at a time or in a manner which will not unfairly restrict an opportunity to respond. I will also attempt to accommodate the schedule of counsel for other parties when arranging depositions, hearings, meetings or other events when the legitimate interests of my client will not be affected.*
- 8. I will not attack the integrity or professionalism of counsel for other parties except in connection with a lawful proceeding concerning such matters.*
- 9. I recognize that discovery is an essential part of litigation, but I also recognize that discovery can be time consuming and costly for all parties. Therefore, with respect to discovery:*
 - a. I will confer with opposing counsel and attempt to agree upon a plan for the orderly exchange of information and orderly discovery proceedings;*
 - b. I will attempt to resolve discovery disputes with opposing counsel prior to filing any motion with the Court;*
 - c. I will advise my client to comply with all reasonable discovery requests.*
- 10. I will not make changes to written documents under negotiation in a manner which is calculated to cause any party or counsel to overlook the change.*
- 11. I will strongly urge an unrepresented party to seek counsel when engaged in litigation or transactions on behalf of my client(s) or for my own account.*
- 12. I will refrain from taking unfair advantage of clear and obvious mistakes made by counsel for other parties in administering matters which are already clearly agreed upon.*
- 13. I will act to keep the legal system free from all forms of wrongful discrimination.*
- 14. I recognize that professionalism mandates a commitment to community service and to assuring that legal services are made available to persons unable to afford legal representation.*
- 15. I will endeavor to enhance the image of the profession in the eyes of the public*