

Some states require submission of attorney Websites for approval; some state offer guidelines for ethical content. see the page on general [Advertising and Solicitation](#).

### State Ethics Opinions:

- **Arizona** ([State Bar of Arizona: 97-04, 4/7/97](#)):
  - *Advertising*: do not necessarily need their Web sites to the Arizona State Bar
- **California** ([State Bar of California: 96-0014, 10/16/98](#)):
  - Web site must conform to the other advertising rules.
- *Solicitation*: This Proposed Formal Interim Opinion states that an attorney's Web site itself is not considered to be a "solicitation"
- **Connecticut** ([Connecticut Bar Association: 97-29, 10/22/97](#)):
  - *Advertising*: Web sites are considered advertising under the Rules of Professional Conduct.
  - *Solicitation*: This Informal Opinion says that generally the solicitation portion of the Rules of Professional Conduct do not apply to an attorney's Web site.
- **Florida** ([The Florida Bar: 12/99](#)): The Florida Bar offers e-mail and Web site guidelines.
- **Illinois** ([Illinois State Bar Association: 96-10, 5/6/96](#)):
  - *Advertising*: This Advisory Opinion states that an attorney's Web site is not considered "communication directed to a specific recipient" and falls under the general rules covering advertising.
  - *Solicitation*: This Advisory Opinion says that use of e-mail by an attorney to directly contact specific recipients is considered solicitation.
- **Iowa**
  - ([Iowa Supreme Court Board of Professional Ethics and Conduct/Iowa State Bar Association: 96-02, 8/29/96](#)): This opinion discusses the use of specific language on an attorney's Web site, especially regarding specialization and disclaimers.
  - ([Iowa Supreme Court Board of Professional Ethics and Conduct/Iowa State Bar Association: 95-30, 5/16/96](#)): This opinion states that attorney Web sites constitute advertising and all applicable provisions of the Iowa Code of Professional Responsibility for Lawyers be followed.
- **Kentucky** ([Kentucky Bar Association/University of Kentucky Law School: E-403, July 1998](#)): Especially question 2.
  - *Advertising*: This opinion states that an attorney's Web site falls under the general advertising portion of the Rules of Professional Conduct unless direct communication with a specific recipient takes place.
  - *Solicitation*: This opinion states that direct communication with a specific recipient by e-mail falls under the Rules of Professional Conduct covering solicitation.
- **Massachusetts** ([Massachusetts Bar Association: 98-2, 5/29/98](#)):
  - *Advertising*: This opinion says that informational attorney Web sites do not need to be labeled as "advertising." Additionally, copies of the content of the Web site should be kept for two years.

- *Solicitation*: This opinion states that attorney Web sites that allow concurrent interaction between prospective clients and attorneys should comply with specific solicitation regulations.
- **Michigan** ([State Bar of Michigan: RI-276, 7/11/96](#)):
  - *Advertising*: This opinion states that if information from an attorney is posted for users to access, but is not interactive, (such as a Web site) it is not considered solicitation, but should still comply with other applicable ethical rules.
  - *Solicitation*: This opinion states that attorneys may directly e-mail specific addressees to solicit legal business as long as they follow ethical rules for direct mail solicitation.
- **New York**
  - ([The Association of the Bar of the City of New York: 1998-2, 12/21/98](#)): Scroll about halfway down.
    - *Advertising*: The ABCNY Committee on Professional and Judicial Ethics opinion states that "law firms should maintain a copy of its website for at least one year, but need not file a copy with the Departmental Disciplinary Committee."
    - *Solicitation*: The ABCNY Committee on Professional and Judicial Ethics opinion says that "a law firm that establishes a discussion area on its website should exercise caution and vigilance to avoid the establishment of an attorney-client relationship and impermissible advertising or solicitation."
  - ([New York State Bar Association: 709, 9/16/98](#)): This opinion suggests that attorneys include the Statement of Client Rights and Responsibilities on their Web sites. Attorneys should also retain a copy of their Web sites for at least a year, but attorneys do not need to file that copy with the disciplinary committee.
- **North Carolina** ([North Carolina Bar Association: RPC 239, 7/25/96](#)):
  - *Advertising*: This opinion states that attorney Web sites are "public media advertisements" and, as such, copies of the Web pages should be retained for two years along with notations of when the pages were used.
  - *Solicitation*: This opinion states that attorney Web sites are generally not considered solicitation.
- **Texas** ([State Bar of Texas: Advertising Review](#)): Attorney Web sites should comply with all advertising rules. The State Bar provides information on the advertising rules including: the rules themselves, interpretive comments, frequently asked questions, hints and examples, and forms.
- **Vermont** ([Vermont Bar Association: 97-5, 1997](#)): This opinion compares attorney Web sites to "yellow page advertisements" and states that the general rules on advertising are in effect.
- **Virginia** ([Virginia State Bar: A-0110, 04/14/98](#)): This is an advisory opinion from the Virginia State Bar's Standing Committee on Lawyer Advertising and Solicitation
  - *Advertising*: This opinion says that attorney Web sites are "public communications" and a hard copy of the Web site or other advertising postings should be kept for a year.
  - *Solicitation*: This opinion states that communications by an attorney in a "real time" chat room fall under the restrictions on solicitation, and such

communication to solicit retention as counsel would be prohibited with the victim or immediate family in a personal injury or wrongful death matter.

- **West Virginia** ([West Virginia Bar Association: L.E.I. 98-03, 10/16/98](#)):
  - *Advertising*: This opinion states that attorney Web sites are advertising via public media and should be considered similarly to a brochure.
  - *Solicitation*: This opinion says that e-mails from an attorney to a prospective client or newsgroup postings should have a subject reading "Advertising Material." Attorneys are also prohibited from initiating contact through "real time communications" (chat room) for the purpose of soliciting clients.