

Ethical and Practical Considerations for Judges, Lawyers, and Law Students in the Era of ChatGPT



**The Anthony M. Kennedy American Inn of Court
Team 1
Tuesday, September 19, 2023**

List of Authorities

Act 1 – *What is ChatGPT and How is it being Used?*

Scene 1: Kennedy Blue Trio | Scene 2: The Overworked Associate

CALIFORNIA RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

California Rules of Prof. Conduct, Rule 1.1 Competence:

- “(a) A lawyer shall not intentionally, recklessly, with gross negligence, or repeatedly fail to perform legal services with competence.
(b) For purposes of this rule, “competence” in any legal service shall mean to apply the (i) learning and skill, and (ii) mental, emotional, and physical ability reasonably necessary for the performance of such service.”

California Rules of Prof. Conduct, Rule 1.3 Diligence:

- “(a) A lawyer shall not intentionally, repeatedly, recklessly or with gross negligence fail to act with reasonable diligence in representing a client.
(b) For purposes of this rule, ‘reasonable diligence’ shall mean that a lawyer acts with commitment and dedication to the interests of the client and does not neglect or disregard, or unduly delay a legal matter entrusted to the lawyer.”

California Rules of Prof. Conduct, Rule 1.4 Duty to Communicate:

- “(a) A lawyer shall:
- (1) promptly inform the client of any decision or circumstance with respect to which disclosure or the client’s informed consent* is required by these rules or the State Bar Act;
 - (2) reasonably*¹ consult with the client about the means by which to accomplish the client’s objectives in the representation;
 - (3) keep the client reasonably* informed about significant developments relating to the representation, including promptly complying with reasonable* requests for information and copies of significant documents when necessary to keep the client so informed; and (4) advise the client about any relevant limitation on the lawyer’s conduct when the lawyer knows* that the client expects assistance not permitted by the Rules of Professional Conduct or other law.
- (b) A lawyer shall explain a matter to the extent reasonably* necessary to permit the client to make informed decisions regarding the representation.

¹ An asterisk (*) identifies a word or phrase defined in rule 1.0.1.

(c) A lawyer may delay transmission of information to a client if the lawyer reasonably believes* that the client would be likely to react in a way that may cause imminent harm to the client or others.

(d) A lawyer’s obligation under this rule to provide information and documents is subject to any applicable protective order, non-disclosure agreement, or limitation under statutory or decisional law.”

California Rules of Prof. Conduct, Rule 1.6 Confidentiality:

“(a) A lawyer shall not reveal information protected from disclosure by Business and Professions Code section 6068², subdivision (e)(1) unless the client gives informed consent,* or the disclosure is permitted by paragraph (b) of this rule.

(b) A lawyer may, but is not required to, reveal information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068, subdivision (e)(1) to the extent that the lawyer reasonably believes* the disclosure is necessary to prevent a criminal act that the lawyer reasonably believes* is likely to result in death of, or substantial* bodily harm to, an individual, as provided in paragraph (c).

(c) Before revealing information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068, subdivision (e)(1) to prevent a criminal act as provided in paragraph (b), a lawyer shall, if reasonable* under the circumstances:

(1) make a good faith effort to persuade the client:

(i) not to commit or to continue the criminal act; or

(ii) to pursue a course of conduct that will prevent the threatened death or substantial* bodily harm; or do both (i) and (ii); and

(2) inform the client, at an appropriate time, of the lawyer’s ability or decision to reveal information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068, subdivision (e)(1) as provided in paragraph (b).

(d) In revealing information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068, subdivision (e)(1) as provided in paragraph (b), the lawyer’s disclosure must be no more than is necessary to prevent the criminal act, given the information known* to the lawyer at the time of the disclosure.

(e) A lawyer who does not reveal information permitted by paragraph (b) does not violate this rule.”

California Rules of Prof. Conduct, Rule 3.1 Meritorious Claims or Contentions:

“(a) A lawyer shall not:

(1) bring or continue an action, conduct a defense, assert a position in litigation, or take an appeal, without probable cause and for the purpose of harassing or maliciously injuring any person;* or

² Cal. Bus. and Prof. Code § 6068 outlines the duties of a licensed attorney in California.

(2) present a claim or defense in litigation that is not warranted under existing law, unless it can be supported by a good faith argument for an extension, modification, or reversal of the existing law.

(b) A lawyer for the defendant in a criminal proceeding, or the respondent in a proceeding that could result in incarceration, or involuntary commitment or confinement, may nevertheless defend the proceeding by requiring that every element of the case be established.”

California Rules of Prof. Conduct, Rule 3.3 Candor Toward the Tribunal*:

“(a) A lawyer shall not:

(1) knowingly* make a false statement of fact or law to a tribunal* or fail to correct a false statement of material fact or law previously made to the tribunal* by the lawyer;

(2) fail to disclose to the tribunal* legal authority in the controlling jurisdiction known* to the lawyer to be directly adverse to the position of the client and not disclosed by opposing counsel, or knowingly* misquote to a tribunal* the language of a book, statute, decision or other authority; or

(3) offer evidence that the lawyer knows* to be false. If a lawyer, the lawyer’s client, or a witness called by the lawyer, has offered material evidence, and the lawyer comes to know* of its falsity, the lawyer shall take reasonable* remedial measures, including, if necessary, disclosure to the tribunal,* unless disclosure is prohibited by Business and Professions Code section 6068, subdivision (e) and rule 1.6. A lawyer may refuse to offer evidence, other than the testimony of a defendant in a criminal matter, that the lawyer reasonably believes* is false.

(b) A lawyer who represents a client in a proceeding before a tribunal* and who knows* that a person* intends to engage, is engaging or has engaged in criminal or fraudulent* conduct related to the proceeding shall take reasonable* remedial measures to the extent permitted by Business and Professions Code section 6068, subdivision (e) and rule 1.6.

(c) The duties stated in paragraphs (a) and (b) continue to the conclusion of the proceeding.

(d) In an ex parte proceeding where notice to the opposing party in the proceeding is not required or given and the opposing party is not present, a lawyer shall inform the tribunal* of all material facts known* to the lawyer that will enable the tribunal* to make an informed decision, whether or not the facts are adverse to the position of the client.”

California Rules of Prof. Conduct, Rule 5.1 Responsibilities of Managerial and Supervisory Lawyers:

“(a) A lawyer who individually or together with other lawyers possesses managerial authority in a law firm,* shall make reasonable* efforts to ensure that the firm* has in effect measures giving reasonable* assurance that all lawyers in the firm* comply with these rules and the State Bar Act.

(b) A lawyer having direct supervisory authority over another lawyer, whether or not a member or employee of the same law firm,* shall make reasonable* efforts to ensure that the other lawyer complies with these rules and the State Bar Act.

(c) A lawyer shall be responsible for another lawyer's violation of these rules and the State Bar Act if:

(1) the lawyer orders or, with knowledge of the relevant facts and of the specific conduct, ratifies the conduct involved; or

(2) the lawyer, individually or together with other lawyers, possesses managerial authority in the law firm* in which the other lawyer practices, or has direct supervisory authority over the other lawyer, whether or not a member or employee of the same law firm,* and knows* of the conduct at a time when its consequences can be avoided or mitigated.”

California Rules of Prof. Conduct, Rule 5.2 Responsibilities of Subordinate Lawyer:

(a) A lawyer shall comply with these rules and the State Bar Act notwithstanding that the lawyer acts at the direction of another lawyer or other person.*

(b) A subordinate lawyer does not violate these rules or the State Bar Act if that lawyer acts in accordance with a supervisory lawyer's reasonable* resolution of an arguable question of professional duty.

California Rules of Prof. Conduct, Rule 5.3 Responsibilities Regarding Nonlawyer Assistants:

With respect to a nonlawyer employed or retained by or associated with a lawyer:

(a) a lawyer who individually or together with other lawyers possesses managerial authority in a law firm,* shall make reasonable* efforts to ensure that the firm* has in effect measures giving reasonable* assurance that the nonlawyer's conduct is compatible with the professional obligations of the lawyer;

(b) a lawyer having direct supervisory authority over the nonlawyer, whether or not an employee of the same law firm,* shall make reasonable* efforts to ensure that the person's* conduct is compatible with the professional obligations of the lawyer; and

(c) a lawyer shall be responsible for conduct of such a person* that would be a violation of these rules or the State Bar Act if engaged in by a lawyer if:

(1) the lawyer orders or, with knowledge of the relevant facts and of the specific conduct, ratifies the conduct involved; or

(2) the lawyer, individually or together with other lawyers, possesses managerial authority in the law firm* in which the person* is employed, or has direct supervisory authority over the person,* whether or not an employee of the same law firm,* and knows* of the conduct at a time when its consequences can be avoided or mitigated but fails to take reasonable* remedial action.

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Act 2 – ChatGPT in the Courtroom

Scene 1: Pro Per Representation | Scene 2: Big Law Oversight

CALIFORNIA CODE OF JUDICIAL ETHICS

CANON 1

A JUDGE SHALL UPHOLD THE INTEGRITY* AND INDEPENDENCE* OF THE JUDICIARY

An independent, impartial,* and honorable judiciary is indispensable to justice in our society. A judge should participate in establishing, maintaining, and enforcing high standards of conduct, and shall personally observe those standards so that the integrity* and independence* of the judiciary is preserved. The provisions of this code are to be construed and applied to further that objective. A judicial decision or administrative act later determined to be incorrect legally is not itself a violation of this code.

CANON 2

A JUDGE SHALL AVOID IMPROPRIETY AND THE APPEARANCE OF IMPROPRIETY IN ALL OF THE JUDGE’S ACTIVITIES

A. Promoting Public Confidence

A judge shall respect and comply with the law and shall act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary. A judge shall not make statements, whether public or nonpublic, that commit the judge with respect to cases, controversies, or issues that are likely to come before the courts or that are inconsistent with the impartial performance of the adjudicative duties of judicial office.

CANON 3

A JUDGE SHALL PERFORM THE DUTIES OF JUDICIAL OFFICE IMPARTIALLY,* COMPETENTLY, AND DILIGENTLY

B. Adjudicative Responsibilities

(7) A judge shall accord to every person who has a legal interest in a proceeding, or that person’s lawyer, the full right to be heard according to law.*

(8) A judge shall dispose of all judicial matters fairly, promptly, and efficiently. A judge shall manage the courtroom in a manner that provides all litigants the opportunity to have their matters fairly adjudicated in accordance with the law.*

D. Disciplinary Responsibilities

(2) Whenever a judge has personal knowledge,* or concludes in a judicial decision, that a lawyer has committed misconduct or has violated any provision of the Rules of Professional Conduct, the judge shall take appropriate corrective action, which may include reporting the violation to the appropriate authority.

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(b) For purposes of this rule, “competence” in any legal service shall mean to apply the (i) learning and skill, and (ii) mental, emotional, and physical ability reasonably necessary for the performance of such service.”

California Rules of Prof. Conduct, Rule 1.5 (a) Fees for Legal Services:

(a) A lawyer shall not make an agreement for, charge, or collect an unconscionable or illegal fee.

California Rules of Prof. Conduct, Rule 5.1 Responsibilities of Managerial and Supervisory Lawyers:

“(a) A lawyer who individually or together with other lawyers possesses managerial authority in a law firm,* shall make reasonable* efforts to ensure that the firm* has in effect measures giving reasonable* assurance that all lawyers in the firm* comply with these rules and the State Bar Act.

(b) A lawyer having direct supervisory authority over another lawyer, whether or not a member or employee of the same law firm,* shall make reasonable* efforts to ensure that the other lawyer complies with these rules and the State Bar Act.

(c) A lawyer shall be responsible for another lawyer’s violation of these rules and the State Bar Act if:

(1) the lawyer orders or, with knowledge of the relevant facts and of the specific conduct, ratifies the conduct involved; or

(2) the lawyer, individually or together with other lawyers, possesses managerial authority in the law firm* in which the other lawyer practices, or has direct supervisory authority over the other lawyer, whether or not a member or employee of the same law firm,* and knows* of the conduct at a time when its consequences can be avoided or mitigated.”

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- (b) A subordinate lawyer does not violate these rules or the State Bar Act if that lawyer acts in accordance with a supervisory lawyer's reasonable* resolution of an arguable question of professional duty.

STATUTES

California Business and Professions Code Section 6148:

“(a) In any case not coming within Section 6147 in which it is reasonably foreseeable that total expense to a client, including attorney fees, will exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000), the contract for services in the case shall be in writing. At the time the contract is entered into, the attorney shall provide a duplicate copy of the contract signed by both the attorney and the client, or the client's guardian or representative, to the client or to the client's guardian or representative. The written contract shall contain all of the following:

- (1) Any basis of compensation including, but not limited to, hourly rates, statutory fees or flat fees, and other standard rates, fees, and charges applicable to the case.
- (2) The general nature of the legal services to be provided to the client.
- (3) The respective responsibilities of the attorney and the client as to the performance of the contract.”

California Business and Professions Code Section 6086.7

- “(a) A court shall notify the State Bar of any of the following:
- (1) A final order of contempt imposed against an attorney that may involve grounds warranting discipline under this chapter. The court entering the final order shall transmit to the State Bar a copy of the relevant minutes, final order, and transcript, if one exists.
 - (2) Whenever a modification or reversal of a judgment in a judicial proceeding is based in whole or in part on the misconduct, incompetent representation, or willful misrepresentation of an attorney.
 - (3) The imposition of any judicial sanctions against an attorney, except sanctions for failure to make discovery or monetary sanctions of less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000).
 - (4) The imposition of any civil penalty upon an attorney pursuant to Section 8620 of the Family Code.
 - (5) A violation described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 1424.5 of the Penal Code by a prosecuting attorney, if the court finds that the prosecuting attorney acted in bad faith and the impact of the violation contributed to a guilty

- verdict, guilty or nolo contendere plea, or, if identified before conclusion of trial, seriously limited the ability of a defendant to present a defense.
- (b) In the event of a notification made under subdivision (a) the court shall also notify the attorney involved that the matter has been referred to the State Bar.
- (c) The State Bar shall investigate any matter reported under this section as to the appropriateness of initiating disciplinary action against the attorney.”

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