

# Creed of Professionalism of the North Carolina Wake County/Tenth Judicial District Bar

The American legal system embodies our nation's shared values of individual freedom and dignity and the right to due process and equal protection under the law. As lawyers, we are guardians for our legal system, and we have an important professional responsibility to recognize, honor, and enhance the rule of law. We are in a privileged position, and therefore we work under special obligations. To forget or to set aside these obligations is to dishonor our profession.

Professionalism encompasses a dedication to excellence in serving clients, a respect for the rule of law, the court and other lawyers, and commitment to seek a just result in all matters undertaken for clients. The practice of law is a profession and not a business. A lawyer need not sacrifice the opportunity to prosper, but the practice of law must be motivated by service rather than inspired by profit. As a lawyer, I subscribe to the following Creed of Professionalism:

## *Individual Commitment to Professionalism*

*M*y word is my bond. Integrity is an absolute. Fairness and civility are essential. Financial considerations will never override my professional responsibility.

*T*o my clients, I offer loyalty, competence, diligence, and good judgment. I will represent you as I would want to be represented. I will provide timely information on all matters pertaining to your case. I will be worthy of your trust by providing vigorous advocacy, independent guidance, reasoned counseling, and fair value in services performed for fees paid. I will work to achieve and maintain proficiency in my practice and continue to expand my knowledge of the law.

*T*o the public and our profession, I offer service. I will strive to improve the law and our legal system, and to make our legal system more accessible, responsive, and effective for all. I recognize the importance of contributing my time and resources to the Bar, public service, community and civic activities. I will honor the requirements, the spirit, and the intent of the rules of professional conduct.

*T*o my colleagues in the practice of law, I offer concern for your welfare. As we work together, I will respect your personal and family commitments. I will share my learning and experience so that we may all improve our skills and abilities.

*T*o the courts and to those who assist them, I offer respect, candor, and courtesy. I will respect and strive to improve the judicial process. I will serve as an officer of the court, encouraging respect for the law and avoiding the abuse or misuse of the law, its procedures, its participants, and its processes.

*T*o opposing parties and their counsel, I offer honesty, fairness, and courtesy. I will seek truth and strive to resolve our clients' disputes in a dignified manner. I will pursue the most efficient and least costly solutions to problems and avoid unnecessary delay.

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*Note:* Portions of this Creed were adopted from "A Lawyer's Creed" by the Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism for the Supreme Court of Georgia, "The Professional Creed" of the American Inns of Court, an essay by Edward Abbey published by Henry Holt & Company, and the writings of Robert L. McMillan.