

Committee Opinion
May 2, 1983

LEGAL ETHICS OPINION 518

CONFLICT OF INTEREST/COUNTY
ATTORNEY-REPRESENTATION OF
INDIGENT PERSON.

It is not ethically improper for an attorney who represents a county and the county's law enforcement officers to defend an indigent person in criminal cases which were investigated by the county's law enforcement officers. Before undertaking such representation, however, the attorney must disclose his relationship with the county and its law enforcement officers and obtain the indigent person's informed consent regarding the attorney's representation of the indigent person. Having undertaken the Representation, the attorney must disclose to the indigent person all influences affecting his independent professional judgment and after each such disclosure continue to obtain the client's informed consent regarding the attorney's representation of the indigent person. [DR:5-101(A), DR: 5-105(B) and (C) Virginia Code of Professional Responsibility]

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