

Committee Opinion  
January 14, 1991

LEGAL ETHICS OPINION 1395

ADVERTISING AND SOLICITATION –  
LAW FIRMS: PROPRIETY OF USING,  
AS PART OF THE NAME OF A LAW  
FIRM, NAME OF GEOGRAPHIC AREA  
OF THE STATE WHICH IS ALSO NAME  
OF A MILITARY INSTALLATION.

You have advised that your firm wishes to open a branch office using as a part of its trade name the name of a geographic area of the State which is the same as a military installation. You indicate that a variety of businesses in that geographic area use the term in their name.

You have requested that the Committee opine as to the propriety of employing the geographic area/military installation name in the name of the law firm.

The appropriate and controlling disciplinary rule relative to the question you have raised is DR:2-102(B), which permits a lawyer in private practice to use a trade name provided, among other caveats, that it does not imply a connection with a government agency.

The Committee is of the view that, assuming you are correct that the word which names both a geographic area and a military installation has been incorporated into the general parlance and has been adopted by numerous other businesses in their company names, such usage would then be sufficient to dilute any implication that the law firm has a connection with the military installation. Therefore, the Committee is of the opinion that the use of the word in the trade name of the law firm would not be improper in the circumstances you describe.

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