

## Contact Information

**ACAP toll free  
number:**

1(866)352-0707

**ACAP website:**

[www.floridabar.org/acap](http://www.floridabar.org/acap)

**Local Professionalism  
Panels:**

[www.floridabar.org/lpp](http://www.floridabar.org/lpp)

## CREED OF PROFESSIONALISM

**I revere the law, the judicial system and the legal profession, and will at all times in my professional and private lives uphold the dignity and esteem of each.**

I will further my profession's devotion to public service and to the public good.

I will strictly adhere to the spirit as well as the letter of my profession's code of ethics to the extent that the law permits, and will at all times be guided by a fundamental sense of honor, integrity and fair play.

I will not knowingly misstate, distort or improperly exaggerate any fact or opinion, and will not improperly permit my silence or inaction to mislead anyone.

I will conduct myself to assure the just, speedy and inexpensive determination of every action and resolution of every controversy.

I will abstain from all rude, disruptive, disrespectful and abusive behavior, and will at all times act with dignity, decency and courtesy.

I will respect the time and commitments of others.

I will be diligent and punctual in communicating with others and in fulfilling commitments.

I will exercise independent judgment and will not be governed by a client's ill will or deceit.

**My word is my bond.**

## LOCAL PROFESSIONALISM PANELS



## Promoting Professionalism in Florida

## Professionalism Standards and Remedies

Florida lawyers should always:

- **Be respectful, professional and courteous**
- **Tell the truth**
- **Be on time and prepared**
- **Show no bias or prejudice toward anyone**
- **Be considerate of the time of others**
- **Act with honor and integrity**
- **Communicate effectively**
- **Seek justice**

It is an unfortunate fact that not all lawyers exercise the best judgment regarding their obligation to maintain professional behavior when dealing with the courts, the public, and their colleagues. The Florida Bar has clear ethical standards for its members, along with defined protocols for appropriate sanctions.

The Florida Supreme Court has now established specific methods of countering unprofessional behavior, whether or not it rises to the level of an ethical breach. We have a Creed of Professionalism, Local Professionalism Panels, and the Attorney Consumer Assistance and Intake Program (ACAP). Information about all three is contained in this pamphlet.



## Florida Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism

The Florida Commission on Professionalism was created by the Florida Supreme Court

“.....with the overarching objective of increasing the professionalism aspirations of lawyers in Florida and ensuring that the practice of law remains a high calling with lawyers invested in not only the service of individual clients but also service of the public good as well. Over the years, we have come to understand that professionalism or acceptable professional behavior is not simply a matter of character or principles, nor is it simply an issue of rule-following or rule-violating. To the contrary, unacceptable professional conduct and behavior is often a matter of choice or decision-making ”

In Re: Code For Resolving Professionalism Complaints, 116 So.3d 280, 281 (Fla. 2013)

## Complaining About Unprofessional Behavior

Complaints about perceived unprofessional behavior by a lawyer may be made by a member of the public, by another lawyer or by a member of the judiciary. Complaints made by phone will be confidential. Written complaints may become part of the public record. There are two avenues available. Both are listed on the following page.



## Local Professionalism Panel:

Each judicial circuit has a Local Professionalism Panel comprised of local attorneys who have been appointed for this purpose. The back cover of this leaflet contains the information necessary to contact a member of your Local Panel. This may be done informally by phone or more formally by email or regular mail. The Panel member will attempt to resolve the complaint informally if possible, or may choose to refer it to the Attorney Consumer Assistance and Intake Program (ACAP) for further action.

## Attorney Consumer Assistance and Intake Program (ACAP):

This program fields and screens complaints against members of The Florida Bar. Depending on the nature and severity of the professionalism complaint, ACAP may either resolve the matter informally or refer it to the appropriate branch office of The Florida Bar's Lawyer Regulation Department for further action. Complaints may be initiated informally through ACAP either by phone or in writing. A formal complaint may also be filed under oath, as required by rule 3-7.3 (c) of The Rules Regulating The Florida Bar. Contact information for ACAP is on the back cover of this leaflet.