

RULE CHANGE 2026(14)

COLORADO RULES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Rule 6.5

Rule 6.5. Nonprofit and Court-Annexed Limited Legal Services Programs

(a) A lawyer who, under the auspices of a program sponsored by a nonprofit organization or court, provides short-term limited legal services to a client without expectation by either the lawyer or the client that the lawyer will provide continuing representation in the matter, must comply with the Rules of Professional Conduct, including Rules 1.6 and 1.9(c), except as provided otherwise by this Rule. A lawyer providing services under this Rule:

(1) is subject to Rules 1.7 and 1.9(a) only if the lawyer knows that the representation of the client involves a conflict of interest; ~~and~~

(2) is subject to Rule 1.10 only if the lawyer knows that another lawyer associated with the lawyer in a law firm is disqualified by Rule 1.7 or 1.9(a) with respect to the matter;

(3) is subject to Rule 1.5 and Rules 1.15A-1.15E only if the lawyer or the sponsoring program collects fees for lawyer services from participating clients;

(4) is subject to the provisions of Rule 1.16 regarding termination of the representation only if the lawyer's representation of the client continues beyond the short-term limited legal services as established and defined by the program pursuant to the program's terms and conditions for participating clients;

(5) is subject to the requirement in Rule 1.16(d) to surrender papers and property to which the client is entitled only if the lawyer collects and retains papers or property from participating clients; and

(6) is subject to Rule 1.16A only if the lawyer creates a client file. Program administrative information is not part of "a client's file" for purposes of Rule 1.16A.

(b) Except as provided in paragraph (a)(2) of this Rule, Rule 1.10 is inapplicable to a representation governed by this Rule.

(c) A lawyer who provides short-term limited legal services pursuant to this Rule must secure the client's informed consent to the limited scope of the representation, pursuant to Rule 1.2(c).

COMMENT

[1] Legal services organizations, courts and various nonprofit organizations have established programs through which lawyers provide short-term limited legal services--such as legal advice or the completion of legal forms that will assist persons to address their legal problems without further representation by a lawyer. In these programs, such as legal-advice hotlines, advice-only clinics or pro se counseling programs, a client-lawyer relationship is established, but there is no expectation that the lawyer's representation of the client will continue beyond the limited consultation. In many such programs, the representation may terminate under the terms of the program after a single meeting, phone call, or other interactive communication. Such programs typically do not charge for their services, and do not collect and retain money, documents, or property from the clients they serve. Likewise, Ssuch programs are normally operated under circumstances in which it is not feasible for a lawyer to systematically screen

for conflicts of interest as is generally required before undertaking a representation. See, e.g., Rules 1.7, 1.9 and 1.10.

[2] ~~A lawyer who provides short-term limited legal services pursuant to this Rule must secure the client's informed consent to the limited scope of the representation. See Rule 1.2(c). If a short-term limited representation would not be reasonable under the circumstances, the lawyer may offer advice to the client but must also advise the client of the need for further assistance of counsel. Except as provided in this Rule, the Rules of Professional Conduct, including Rules 1.6 and 1.9(c), are applicable to the limited representation.~~ The communication necessary to obtain the informed consent of a client participating in a short-term limited legal services program will vary according to the circumstances. See Rule 1.0(e) and Comments [6] and [7]. The communication may include a statement that a full-scope representation might be advisable but is not being offered. Rule 1.2(c) requires that the limited scope of the legal services provided be reasonable under the circumstances. Rule 1.2(c) does not require that the client's informed consent be given in writing or signed by the client. Programs offering short-term limited legal services may obtain the informed consent of the client prior to a client's interaction with a participating lawyer. If such programs make the client's participation in the program contingent on the client giving informed consent, a participating lawyer may rely on that program's communications and procedures to meet the requirement imposed by Rule 1.2(c).

[3] to [5] [NO CHANGE]

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(4) is subject to the provisions of Rule 1.16 regarding termination of the representation only if the lawyer's representation of the client continues beyond the short-term limited legal services as established and defined by the program pursuant to the program's terms and conditions for participating clients;

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[3] to [5] [NO CHANGE]

Amended and Adopted by the Court, En Banc, September 10, 2026, effective October 1, 2026.

By the Court:

**William W. Hood, III
Justice, Colorado Supreme Court**