

**ETHICS OPINION NUMBER 93
OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAR
RENDERED JUNE 7, 1984
AMENDED APRIL 6, 2013**

ADVERTISING – FIRM NAME – LETTERHEAD - Permissible for an attorney to list the name of a paralegal or other non-lawyer on the attorney's letterhead. (However, the listing of the names of the paralegals and other non-lawyer personnel should be accompanied by language stating that such persons are not lawyers.)

The Ethics Committee of The Mississippi Bar has been requested to render an opinion with regard to the practice of placing the name of a paralegal associate on a letterhead of an attorney. The proposal is to identify the paralegal associate in small print at the top left hand corner of the letterhead stationery.

Rule 7.1 of the Mississippi Rules of Professional Conduct (MRPC) provides that “[a] lawyer should not make or permit to be made a false, misleading, deceptive or unfair communication about the lawyer or lawyer’s services.” Rule 7.7(a), MRPC, provides that “[a] lawyer shall not use a firm name, letterhead, or other professional designation that violates Rule 7.1.”

The practice of placing the name of a paralegal on the letterhead of an attorney would not appear to fall within the prohibitions of these Rules.

The term "associate" would be misleading in regard to non-lawyers. Since in common usage the term "associate" carries a connotation of being a lawyer in the firm, though not a partner, the use of the term "associate" is not permissible.

Therefore, it is the opinion of this Committee that the practice of placing the name of a paralegal on the letterhead of an attorney is permissible. However, the listing of the names of the paralegals and other non-lawyer personnel should be accompanied by language stating that such persons are not lawyers in order to comply with Rule 7.1 and 7.7(a), MRPC.