

Attorney-Judge Relationship, Gifts, Hospitality and Legal Ethics Examined by Hinderks in *Bloomberg*

In the News

05.12.2023

Stinson LLP's [Mark Hinderks](#) authored an article for *Bloomberg*, "Lawyers Walk Ethical Tightrope With Gifts, Hospitality to Judges." The article outlines the ethical parameters surrounding relationships attorneys have with state and federal judges.

"What rules framework is applicable to these judges, especially for gifts and hospitality from lawyers who appear before them?" Hinderks asks.

He examines the Judicial Conference Gift Regulations and ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct from both the perspective of the judge and the attorney, the standards they must abide by to ensure an ethically sound practice, and instances that can result in professional discipline.

"At federal and state levels, apart from litigant motions to disqualify judicial officers in particular cases, the rules are largely aspirational, with uneven and infrequent enforcement beyond peer pressure," Hinderks writes. "In contrast, the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct concerning lawyers, adopted in various versions in all states, are more frequently enforced and carry significant penalties for lawyers, including suspension and disbarment."

To avoid being the subject of professional discipline, thus staying on the right side of the ethical line, Hinderks states "an attorney must examine the codes applicable to both judges and lawyers, and the interplay between them."

Hinderks leads the firm's Legal Ethics & Professional Responsibility practice. He is the author of *Dear Ethics Lawyer*, a twice-monthly newsletter with questions and answers concerning legal ethics, and a co-founder and presenter of "Ethics for Good," a twice-annual stage show which uses humor, skits and real-world scenarios to teach legal ethics to lawyers. Hinderks has presented more than 125 programs on legal

Attorney-Judge Relationship, Gifts, Hospitality and Legal Ethics Examined by Hinderks in *Bloomberg*

ethics over the past 30 years, has authored many articles and handbook chapters on legal ethics, and has been deeply involved in professional organizations with legal ethics and professional responsibility as their focus.

[Read](#) the full article.

CONTACT

Mark D. Hinderks

RELATED CAPABILITIES

Legal Ethics & Professional Responsibility

STINSON

STINSON LLP \ STINSON.COM