

Legal ethics in singapore

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Legal Ethics Laws, regulations and codes of conduct attempts to define standards of behaviour for lawyers in society. They form an important part of the jurisdiction's regulatory process. These laws and codes of conduct demand a certain standard in which legal professionals should adhere to in their professional and private lives. It also represents a standard of ethical behaviour defined by legislators and professional bodies. In Singapore, there are a number of primary sources of legal ethics. The following are the main sources of legal ethics: * The Legal Profession Act Subsidiary legislation * Practice directions from the courts * Practice directions from the Law Society * Judicial decisions and opinions on legal ethics Lawyers are bound to these laws and regulation and must adhere to them diligently so as to not stray away from ethical behaviour or to a harsher extent of being banned from practising law in Singapore. In essence, a lawyer's duty can be categorized into two main groups. They are the lawyers (i) duty to the court and (ii) duty to the client. The tables below explain briefly, the various duties lawyers have to the court and to their clients.

Lawyer's duty to the Court Duty | Explanation| Truthfulness in Court| - Rule 2(2) A Professional Conduct Rules- Must not mislead the court| Responsibility to Client's Conduct| - Responsible for client's conduct and representation of the case| Honoring Undertaking to the Court| - A Lawyer's word must be his bond| Respect for the Court| - Lawyer' conduct must be consistent with standing, dignity & authority of the court | Responsibility in Assisting Administrative Justice| - Lawyers are officers of the court| Lawyer's duty to the Client

Duty | Explanation| Honesty| - Honesty in all dealings with the client| Diligence & Competence| - Lawyer is expected to exercise necessary skills and diligently apply himself to the case| Confidentiality| - Obligation to maintain confidentiality of all communication between him and client| Conflict of Interest| - Lawyer's conduct must not be influenced by personal or private interests| A lawyer's challenge is to balance his responsibilities to assist the court with his duty to look after the best interest of his client.

In essence, his duty to the administration of justice is weighed higher than the duty he has to his client. However, it brings about a concern for lawyers when defending their clients. This can be seen in situations in where a lawyer has to exercise his judgement in introducing evidence to the court. If the lawyer does not exercise his judgement in the favour of the court, he is putting his client at a disadvantage. Therefore it is extremely important that a lawyer does adhere to his duty to the court without compromising the position or case of his in any way for it to be advantageous for all parties.