

Ethics Opinion No. 86-1

Propriety of Law Firm Charging Client for Intra-Office Conference.

The Alaska Bar Association, and the Ethics Committee, have received various inquiries regarding the decision of the fee arbitration panel in file No. FA-83-58, which was reported in Volume 9, No. 3, The Alaska Bar Rag, at page 3 (November, 1985). The summary of this decision stated that clients should not be charged for both attorneys' time in intra-office discussions.

The decision of the fee arbitration panel in File No. FA-83-58 was made based on the facts and circumstances of that particular case. There is no per se rule regarding billing practices that clients should not be charged for both attorneys' time in intra-office conferences. The propriety of such charges depends upon the facts and circumstances of each particular case. In fact, in most cases where two or more attorneys in a single office perform work on a single case, the client is benefited from the work of all attorneys, which necessarily includes certain intra-office conferences. Under such circumstances, it would not be improper to charge for both attorneys' time. (See DR 2-106 for standards applicable to fees for legal services.)

Adopted by the Alaska Bar Association Ethics Committee on December 10, 1985.

Approved by the Board of Governors on January 10, 1986.