

Digest of Ethics Advisory Panel  
Opinion #91-17.1, Request #146  
Issued May 23, 1991

An attorney seeks Panel advice as to whether the attorney's sharing of office space with other lawyers is considered a "law firm" as described in Panel opinion 90-36. The attorney advises the Panel that it is the attorney's intention upon relocation, as is the case currently, to share space and expenses. The attorney states that he/she plans to continue to have an independent and separate law practice from the other attorneys in the office. The attorney states he/she will maintain a separate client trust account, business checking account, files, stationery and business cards. The attorney informs the Panel that he/she does not and will not share a common salary fund with the other attorneys.

The Panel takes the position that the office sharing arrangement described above does not constitute a "law firm." The Panel bases its position upon the attorney's representations that the signs, stationery and business cards will not confuse or mislead the public.

Ethics Advisory Panel advice is protective in nature. There is no requirement that an attorney abide by a Panel opinion, but if he or she does, he or she is fully protected from any charge of impropriety.