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ETHICS ADVISORY PANEL  
OPINION #93-74 REQUEST #414  
Issued September 14, 1993

Attorneys A and B are partners of a law firm. Attorney A serves as legal counsel to the water supply board of a municipality. The water supply board is an agency of the municipality. Attorney A asks whether he/she or Attorney B may represent clients before the municipality's zoning board of review.

Rule 1.7 entitled "Conflict of Interest: General Rule" provides in pertinent part as follows:

(a) A lawyer shall not represent a client if the representation of that client will be directly adverse to another client, unless:

- (1) the lawyer reasonably believes the representation will not adversely affect the relationship with the other client; and
- (2) each client consents after consultation.

In this case, the inquiring attorney has a client/lawyer relationship with the water supply board. The inquiring attorney does not have such a relationship with the zoning board of review or the municipality. Further, there is no interconnection between the agencies or overlap of their functions. The inquiring attorney's representation of the water supply board will not adversely affect the representation of potential clients before the zoning board of review. The Panel therefore concludes that Attorneys A and B may represent clients before the municipality's zoning board of review.

The Panel's guidance is restricted to interpretations of the Rules of Professional Conduct and does not extend to issues under the State Ethics Code or any other rules, regulations or laws that may have bearing on the issue raised by this inquiry.