

GUIDELINE 2: OUTSIDE INTERESTS

General

Rule Reference: Rule 2.01(4) & (5)

1. The term “outside interest” covers the widest range of activities. It includes activities that may overlap or be connected with provision of legal services, for example, acting as a director of a corporation or writing on legal subjects, as well as activities less connected such as, for example, a career in business, politics, broadcasting or the performing arts.
2. It is the paralegal’s responsibility to consider whether the outside interest may impair his or her ability to act in the best interest of his or her client(s). If so, the paralegal must withdraw, either from representation of the client or from the outside interest.
3. When acting in another role, the paralegal must continue to fulfill his or her obligations under the *Rules*, for example, to
 - act with integrity,
 - be civil and courteous,
 - be competent in providing legal services,
 - avoid conflicts of interest, and
 - maintain confidentiality.

Acting as a Mediator

Rule Reference: Rule 2.01(5)

4. A mediator works with disputing parties to help them resolve their dispute. A paralegal acting as a mediator is not providing legal services to either party – the relationship is not a paralegal-client relationship.
5. When acting as a mediator, the paralegal should guard against potential conflicts of interest. For example, neither the paralegal nor the paralegal’s partners or associates should provide legal services to the parties. Further, a paralegal-mediator should suggest and encourage the parties to seek the advice of a qualified paralegal or a lawyer before and during the mediation process if they have not already done so. Refer to Guideline 9: Conflicts of Interest for more information on how a paralegal’s outside interests may conflict with the paralegal’s duty to his or her clients.