

**GUIDELINE 23:
FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

General

Rule Reference: 8.01

1. Rule 8.01 establishes a professional duty (apart from any legal liability) regarding financial obligations incurred in the course of providing legal services on behalf of a client.
2. The business of providing legal services often requires that a paralegal incur financial obligations to others on behalf of clients. Such obligations include charges for medical reports, disbursements payable to government registries, fees charged by expert witnesses, sheriffs, special examiners, registrars, court reporters and public officials and the accounts of agents retained in other jurisdictions.
3. To assist in avoiding disputes about payment of accounts, where a paralegal retains a person on behalf of a client, the paralegal should clarify the terms of the retainer in writing. This includes specifying the fees, the nature of the services to be provided, and the person responsible for payment. If the paralegal is not responsible for the payment of the fees, the paralegal should help in making satisfactory arrangements for payment if it is reasonably possible to do so.
4. If there is a change of representative, the paralegal who originally retained the person to whom the financial obligation will be owed should advise him or her about the change and provide the name, address, telephone number, fax number and e-mail address of the new paralegal or lawyer.