

**UNPUBLISHED LEGAL ETHICS INQUIRY 78-5**

\_\_\_\_\_ asked for an opinion on the following: An attorney and his partner have an office building in the city in which they live. They have hired a court reporter who also practices in the county. Apparently using their offices and equipment, this court reporter transcribes her material on partnership letterhead as well as sending out billing statements and all correspondence on a partnership billing head. The court reporter has no other office except in the office in the building owned and occupied by the partnership. In addition, it seems that the lawyer and his partner and the court reporter use the same secretary and the same telephone system.

This apparently involves the question of a partnership associating with a court reporter.

The Committee decided that the situation described in \_\_\_\_\_ letter was improper and that the court reporter's business operation and the operation of the law firm must be completely separate in view of the prohibition in the Code of Professional Responsibility concerning laypersons and lawyers associating in the practice of law. The Committee further stated that if the law firm wanted to employ a court reporter, it would not be improper for the court reporter to free lance in addition to working for the law firm, but she could not have a partnership interest in the law firm.