Opinion No. 90-16
January 29, 1991

Topic: Dual Profession

Digest: Lawyer may operate business of providing economic analyses in conjunction with law practice from existing law office.

Ref.: ISBA Opinion No. 85-3
Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct: 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 5.4, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4

FACTS
The inquiring lawyer is considering the establishment of a business, separate from the lawyer's legal practice, which would involve providing to other lawyers analysis, by means of a computer program, of the present cash values of structured settlement offers. If the lawyer starts such a business, the business would operate from the lawyer's existing office. The lawyer plans to advertise the address and telephone number of the law office as the address and telephone number of the business providing the analysis of structured settlement offers.

QUESTION
The inquiring lawyer asks whether it would be proper to operate the business of providing analyses of structured settlement offers from the lawyer's existing law office.
OPINION
Prior to July 1984, the Illinois Code of Professional Responsibility prohibited a lawyer from practicing law and conducting another business or profession from the same office under Rule 2-102(c). Nor could a lawyer utilize stationery, office signs or professional cards indicating a dual profession. As noted in the Committee's Opinion No. 85-3, however, the repeal of Rule 2-102(c) in July 1984 in effect sanctions the practice of dual professions from the same office.

The Committee believes that the same result applies under the 1990 Rules of Professional Conduct. As before, the Committee cautions lawyers involved in dual professions from the same office that the Rules of Professional Conduct governs the lawyer's legal practice. Among the relevant rules are Rule 1.6 concerning confidentiality of client information; Rules 1.7, 1.8 and 1.9 concerning conflicts of interest; Rule 5.4 concerning the professional independence of a lawyer; and Rules 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 governing advertising and communications with respect to a lawyer's services.