

WORK LIFE TASK FORCE CANONS
(as approved by the Board of Governors 11/16/06)

PREAMBLE

The New Hampshire Bar Association supports efforts of organizations and individuals to align work/life priorities in order to improve productivity, enhance a sense of commitment to the practice of law, sustain professional satisfaction, and achieve better health. An appropriate balance of work/life issues is in everyone's interest. Success in one area fuels success in the other. These Canons are aspirational in nature and are intended to assist New Hampshire lawyers in achieving their personal and professional goals.

CANON No. 1

1. **Assume Responsibility for Individual Priorities.** A New Hampshire lawyer has the responsibility to achieve work/life balance based upon individual priorities. A lawyer should, consistent with the Rules of Professional Conduct, balance a client's need for timely access to counsel with the lawyer's own need for personal time.

CANON No. 2

2. **Set Priorities and Communicate Them.** A New Hampshire lawyer should take responsibility for setting personal and professional priorities and should communicate clearly with colleagues and clients what can be accomplished given the circumstances. For example, this may include setting limits on client contact outside of normal business hours or a normal business week; scheduling time for personal activities; recognizing that work/life balance is dynamic, not static, requiring constant adjustment; and saying "no" when the lawyer cannot complete an additional task because of other commitments.

CANON No. 3

3. **Respect Personal Needs.** A New Hampshire lawyer, while fulfilling his or her professional responsibilities, should value the personal needs of colleagues and adversaries by respecting family commitments, religious obligations, and other important personal duties.

CANON No. 4

4. **Prevent Undue Burden.** A New Hampshire lawyer in a supervisory position respects and supports the work/life demands of subordinates, including both associate attorneys and staff. Absent extraordinary circumstances, a supervisory attorney should not impose burdens on subordinates that cannot be reasonably accomplished during agreed upon or otherwise defined work hours.

CANON No. 5

5. **Promote Collegial Professional Relationships.** A New Hampshire lawyer should recognize the value of collegial professional relationships in serving the interests of the profession and ultimately the public; respect colleagues' professional and personal obligations; and exchange advice regarding professional issues with colleagues, to the extent permitted by the Rules of Professional Conduct.

CANON No. 6

6. **Protect Health and Well-Being.** A New Hampshire lawyer should protect his or her health and well-being in order to balance the stress and demands of career and personal life.