MODEL STANDARDS FOR LEGAL ADVICE HOTLINES OPERATING IN WASHINGTON STATE

Adopted by the Washington State Bar Association Board of Governors March 27, 1999

The Washington State Bar Association establishes the following model standards for for-profit legal advice hotlines operating in Washington State. The purpose of these model standards is to provide guidelines for lawyers referral services, CLEAR and any other attorneys who wish to refer clients to a for-profit hotline.

- 1. All hotline lawyers must be in good standing with the Washington State Bar Association.
- 2. All hotline lawyers must be covered by a minimum of \$1,000,000 malpractice insurance.
- 3. Each hotline lawyer must be identified to the caller by name and WSBA number.
- 4. All hotlines must maintain records of all calls and advice given to each caller, subject to criterion in #11.
- 5. All calls must be screened for income levels. Callers whose incomes fall within guidelines provided by CLEAR shall be informed of the availability of no-fee advice from CLEAR.
- 6. All calls must be screened for conflicts.
- 7. All calls must be screened for subject matter to ensure the client gets to the appropriate qualified hotline attorney.
- 8. Each call must receive advance notice of how much the caller will be charged for the call. Clients will not be charged for time spent on the screening, conflict check and/or referral.
- 9. All hotlines will pay a percentage of the revenue derived from each call referred by a county bar association lawyer referral service to the lawyer referral service that referred the call (this fee sharing is allowed by RPC 1.5(e)(1)).
- 10. All hotlines will periodically survey callers for client satisfaction and shall investigate and take appropriate action with respect to client complaints against a panelist, the hotline and/or its employees.
- 11. Disclosure of information to and by the hotline's agents shall be deemed a privileged lawyer/client communication.
- 12. Any hotline meeting these standards will be permitted to advertise or publicize that it follows WSBA standards.