Question: May a lawyer advertise or otherwise promote the fact that he or she will donate a percentage of his or her fees to charities designated by the lawyer’s clients?

Answer: No.


OPINION

This practice would result in a violation of Rule 5.4(a). It would also result in violations of Rule 7.20(2), as it would encourage and condone referrals from charities in return for contributions. Lawyers are encouraged to make charitable contributions. But a majority of the Committee believes that making contributions part and parcel of advertising and business-getting is a negative development.

Note to Reader

This ethics opinion has been formally adopted by the Board of Governors of the Kentucky Bar Association under the provisions of Kentucky Supreme Court Rule 3.530 (or its predecessor rule). The Rule provides that formal opinions are advisory only.