



## **Beirut Bar Association**

**Regulations of Lawyers' websites**

The Council of the Beirut Bar Association,

After reviewing the provisions of articles 85 and 86 of the Law Organizing the Profession of Law, as well as the provisions of Article 6 of the Regulation on the Ethics of the Profession and the Virtues of Lawyers;

And in light of the development of the profession's conditions and the openness of world markets to one another;

In light of the many developments going on for many years in several Arab countries, and the necessity of distinguishing between promotional means aimed at attracting clients and which are banned to a lawyer and the introductory means aimed at providing the public with necessary information;

To enable Lebanese lawyers to introduce themselves, particularly to non-Lebanese clients or the Lebanese abroad, and to ensure the obligation of information towards those clients,

Decides the following:

**First:** Lawyers registered in the General Roll of the Beirut Bar Association are entitled to have their own websites or webpage on the internet in order to introduce themselves, in accordance with the special regulation enclosed with this decision, which constitutes an integral part of it.

**Second:** The lawyers mentioned in the previous paragraph may introduce themselves and their offices via any specialized professional directory or a brochure, provided that it do not contain any publicity or incorrect information, or mentioning of clients names, or any identification of the cases and transactions assigned to them, as per the relevant provisions of the special regulation on websites, which was mentioned in the above paragraph.

#### **Regarding the establishment of websites:**

Every lawyer duly registered in the General Roll of the Beirut Bar Association is entitled to establish a professional website or a webpage of his office in order to introduce himself and/or his office, or the registered associate lawyers or others assisting him in his office, as well as the legal services he provides. The ability to establish websites or web pages are restricted to the lawyers duly registered in the General Roll and does not include intern lawyers throughout their internship.

#### **Regarding the form of the website:**

The main purpose behind establishing a website or webpage is limited to introducing a lawyer and/or his office or the associate lawyers or those assisting him and providing the public with the necessary information in this regard.

Therefore, the website or webpage should be marked by balance, tactfulness and high professionalism, in terms of the design used or the color or the font or the drawings or pictures used, in a way that is adequate with the nature, prestige and mission of the profession.

### **Regarding the website's content:**

The content of the website or webpage should be in harmony with the provisions of the Law Organizing the Profession of Law, regulations of the bar, as well as the bar's norms that are enforced. Hence, publishing any content or information on any website or webpage is the lawyer's or his office responsibility. It should also contain mandatory information and optional information; whereas, some information should not be published according to what is mentioned hereafter.

#### **1- What should be mentioned**

- Lawyer's full name and name of his office
- Date of his enrollment in the General Roll of the Beirut Bar Association
- Address of his office
- Members of the office or partners therein in case it was a civil firm or composed of several lawyers according to the official constraints of the bar.
- Link to the official website of the bar.

#### **2- What may be mentioned**

- Full address with telephone, fax and mobile numbers, mail box and email.
- A logo of the office
- Passport photos of the lawyer who owns the office and/or the partner lawyers or the lawyers assisting him, mentioning the university law degrees, and their titles, such as "Lawyer" or "President" or "former president" as per Article 86 of the bar's by-laws.
- A brief profile of the lawyer who owns the office and the partner lawyers (as per a partnership contract duly registered in the bar) and/or the interns and/or the lawyers assisting him in accordance with the bar's constraints, as well as the date of participation in case the office is a civil law firm.
- A brief history (who we are) about the establishment of the office or the date of participation in case the office is a civil law firm.
- A brief overview of the areas of practice of the office and the type of the different legal services provided by the office, provided that objectivity and credibility be adopted when listing the areas of specialty, and any misleading or confusion to the public be avoided in this regard.

Moreover, the areas of specialty of every registered lawyer should not exceed four, in accordance with the chart of areas of specialty enclosed.

- Any cooperation with a foreign office outside Lebanon.
- Legal studies or publications issued by the lawyer who owns the office or the partner lawyers or the lawyers assisting him, taking into account the literary and artistic property law.

**3- What should not be mentioned:**

- The purpose behind establishing a website or webpage is purely professional. Hence, it should not include any information or issues outside the lawyer's scope of professional practice.
- Non-adoption of any slogan.
- The website shall not include any phrases or expressions that imply comparison or competition with other offices.
- The website shall not mention any distinguishing phrases that might mislead the public, such as pointing out that the office is "the first", or "the only", or "one of the best law offices in Lebanon," etc...
- It should not announce any lawyers' services in a way that might harm their colleagues or any particular judicial authority.
- It should not tamper with anything that has to do with professional confidentiality, such as publishing information on the clients' identities, or the office or any details of the lawsuits which the lawyer or the office took and/or the transactions he had undertaken or delegated to him, or even boast the results of his efforts, such as mentioning the results of the lawsuit, its parties or the verdicts reached, etc...
- It should not mention the fees or compare them with those of any other offices.
- The name of the bar association or its official logo and slogan should not be used in any form on the lawyer's/office's website or webpage.
- The website should advertise for providing consulting online services or remote or real-time services.
- The website should not send spam mail to the public for any reason.
- There shall be no advertisement or promotion for the office via any publicity means or promotions on the internet.

- The website or the webpage should not include links to any other websites or webpages, except for the website of the Beirut Bar Association and/or other bas associations in Lebanon and abroad.
- The website should not include any spaces or squares or advertisement links for any product or service, regardless of its type, including the need for practicing lawyers or interns, or an administrative job opportunity at the office.
- It should not mention any certificates or categorization degrees regarding the office management, such as ISO or BVQ, etc....

### **Procedures-Approval of the website's content**

- 1- Any lawyer duly registered in the General Roll of the Beirut Bar Association who wishes to establish a website or webpage for his office has to notify the Beirut Bar Association about his wish in writing, at least 15 days before the launch of his website or webpage. The announcement letter should be enclosed with the domain name, a printed copy of the Home page and a Site Map, as well as a written signed letter that confirms his review of this regulation, his compliance with all its provisions and his explicit commitment to perform any modification the bar might request immediately. He should also pledge to abolish the website and remove it completely from the internet in case he stops practicing law, or in case his name is cancelled out of the list of lawyers registered in the General Roll.
- 2- Any lawyer duly registered in the General Roll of the Beirut Bar Association should notify the bar in writing about every major modification or update or addition to the content of the website, and he is exempt from the obligation of reporting formal or simple modifications or additions. In any case, he has to continuously verify the compliance of the amended or updated or modernized website or webpage with all the provisions of this regulation.
- 3- The provisions in this regulation are binding to the lawyers while using other internet services, such as email, forums, mailing lists and news groups, etc...
- 4- The obligation of notification and establishment of the website mentioned above are the personal responsibility of the lawyer who owns the website or the office. The bar may at any time check the websites or webpages, review their content and take the necessary measures in their regard, including disciplinary and behavioral procedures against violators. In all cases, the lawyer or the office incur the consequences of personal and professional responsibility due to the content or the information published by the website or the webpage.

- 5- Lawyers or offices who established websites or webpage before the issuance of this circular have a deadline of three months maximum following its issuance to abide by the content of this regulation.

### **Some technical terms widely used in websites**

Website

Webpage

Blog

Profile

Partners

Associates

References

Clients

Area of concentration

Products

Services

Contact us

Publications

Links

Web counter

Web designer

Web master

Careers

Join us

Our team

Discussion Group

Forum of discussion

Chat rooms

Mass email

Spam mail

Deactivation

Subscribe

Unsubscribe

Logo

Slogan

#### Areas of concentration

- 1- Civil Code (obligations and contracts)
- 2- Real Estate Law
- 3- Civil (Personal) Status Law
- 4- Companies Law
- 5- Bankruptcy Law
- 6- Maritime and Air Commerce Code
- 7- Intellectual Property Law
- 8- Banks and Financial Transactions Law
- 9- Insurance Law
- 10- Arbitration Law
- 11- Labor and Social Security Law
- 12- Administrative Law
- 13- Penal Code
- 14- Fiscal Law

15- General International Law

16- Construction and Urban Planning Law

17- Law on International Commerce and International Contracts

18- Communication and IT Law

19- Lease Law

20- Private International Law

21- Privatization Law

22- Information Law

**The Council of the Beirut Bar Association endorsed this regulation in its session held on 20/2/2009.**

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