

Practice Standards

December, 2012

Section VI, Qualifications and Duties of Counsel

1. General Duties of Defense Counsel:

A. Before agreeing to act as counsel, counsel has an obligation to make sure that counsel has available sufficient time, resources, knowledge, and experience to offer effective representation to a defendant in a particular matter. If it later appears that counsel is unable to offer effective representation in the case, counsel should move to withdraw.

B. Counsel must be alert to all potential and actual conflicts of interest that would impair counsel's ability to represent a client. When appropriate, counsel may be obliged to seek an advisory opinion on any potential conflicts.

C. Counsel has the obligation to keep the client informed of the progress of the case.

D. If a conflict develops during the course of representation, counsel has a duty to notify the client and the court in accordance with the Rules of Professional Conduct and in accordance with the Disciplinary Rules of the State Bar of Montana.