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THE ALLIANCE
for Equal Justice
MEMBER

October 9, 2020

Justice Charles Johnson
Washington State Supreme Court
415 12th Ave SW W
Olympia, WA 98504
Sent Via Email: supreme@courts.wa.gov

Re: Pro Bono Council's Proposed Changes to RPC 6.5

Dear Justice Johnson,

I write on behalf of the Access to Justice Board in support of changes to RPC 6.5 intended to ensure that attorneys appropriately screen conflicts among clients in the provision of short-term limited legal services, while also protecting particularly vulnerable clients.

The Access to Justice Board has been following efforts to make changes to RPC 6.5 for some time, and has heard multiple presentation on the topic. The Board supports effective screening for client conflicts and recognizes the tension current screening requirements present in instances where notice of a conflict to one client may compromise the safety of another client.

As the new proposed comment to RPC 6.5 reflects, where a perpetrator of domestic violence receives short-term limited legal services and the victim seeks services from the same provider, notice at the time the potential conflict arises could put the victim in further jeopardy.

We know from the 2015 Civil Legal Needs Study that low-income domestic violence victims experience on average nearly twenty civil legal needs each year. Consequently, the ATJ Board supports this important change to RPC 6.5, which will allow attorneys providing short-term limited legal services to manage conflicts while also providing legal aid to especially vulnerable clients.

Sincerely,

Francis Adewale, Chair
Access to Justice Board

Cc: Terra Nevitt, Executive Director, WSBA
Michael Terasaki, Manager, Pro Bono Council

From: [OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK](#)
To: [Linford, Tera](#)
Cc: [Tracy, Mary](#)
Subject: FW: ATJ Board Comment Regarding Changes to RPC 6.5
Date: Friday, October 9, 2020 2:55:19 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[2020.8.10.RPC 6.5.ATJ Board.pdf](#)

From: Bonnie Sterken [mailto:bonnies@wsba.org]
Sent: Friday, October 9, 2020 2:51 PM
To: OFFICE RECEPTIONIST, CLERK <SUPREME@COURTS.WA.GOV>
Cc: Adewale, Francis <fadewale@spokanecity.org>; Terra Nevitt <terran@wsba.org>; Diana Singleton <dianas@wsba.org>; michael@probonocouncil.org; David.Keenan@kingcounty.gov
Subject: ATJ Board Comment Regarding Changes to RPC 6.5

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Good afternoon,

Attached, please find a letter from the Access to Justice Board regarding the Pro Bono Council's proposed changes to RPC 6.5.

Take care,



Bonnie Middleton Sterken | Equity and Justice Specialist

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Pronouns: She/Her

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Thank you for your patience and understanding.*