

**Supreme Court**  
State of Tennessee

CHIEF JUSTICE  
JANICE M. HOLDER

JUSTICES

CORNELIA A. CLARK  
GARY R. WADE  
WILLIAM C. KOCH, JR.  
SHARON G. LEE

December 15, 2008

SUPREME COURT BUILDING  
401 7TH AVENUE NORTH  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37219-1407  
TELEPHONE: (615-741-2038  
TELEFAX: (615) 741-5809

Dear Tennessee Attorney:

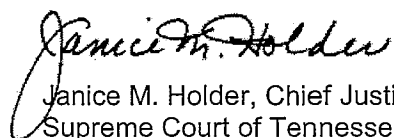
In 1976, the Tennessee Supreme Court created disciplinary rules and established the Board of Professional Responsibility to enforce those rules. Since its creation, the Board has provided increased access to the information it offers and the services it provides, including the creation of a website, (<http://tbpr.org>), an ethics hotline, ethics seminars, an attorney trust account overdraft notification program, professional enhancement instruction, a consumer assistance program, and publication of ethics opinions.

By paying the annual registration fee prescribed by Supreme Court Rule 9, section 20.1, Tennessee attorneys and judges fund the Board of Professional Responsibility. The Board has been a good steward of these funds. A performance audit conducted by the Comptroller of the Treasury, Division of State Audit, in May 2000 concluded that "the operations of the Board of Professional Responsibility are efficient, effective, and are achieving the results desired by the Tennessee Supreme Court." As a result of its cost-containment efforts the annual registration fee has remained constant since 2003 when the annual fee was increased by the minimal amount of five dollars.

Since 2003, however, the caseload of the Board of Professional Responsibility has increased dramatically. The number of open investigative files has nearly doubled, and the number of formal proceedings has increased by more than 25%. An increase in the annual registration fee has become necessary to provide the Board with sufficient funds to continue the work it has been performing capably since 1976. Therefore, effective January 1, 2009, the annual registration fee each Tennessee attorney and judge pays pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 9, section 20.1 to fund the Board of Professional Responsibility will increase to \$140. As you are aware, the Supreme Court has previously assessed twenty dollars annually to fund the Tennessee Lawyer Assistance Program pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 33.01(C)(1) and ten dollars annually to fund the Tennessee Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 25, section 2(a). The combined total of the three component fees is \$170.

I am happy to join with you in doing my part to provide the funding necessary to improve ethical conduct to increase public confidence in lawyers.

Very truly yours,

  
Janice M. Holder, Chief Justice  
Supreme Court of Tennessee