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**Regulations Governing the
Practice of Attorneys,
Certified Public Accountants,
Enrolled Agents,
Enrolled Actuaries,
Enrolled Retirement Plan Agents, and
Appraisers before the
Internal Revenue Service**

Department
of the
Treasury
**Internal
Revenue
Service**

**Title 31 Code of Federal Regulations,
Subtitle A, Part 10, revised as of September
26, 2007**

**PART 10 -- PRACTICE BEFORE
THE INTERNAL REVENUE
SERVICE**

	Sec.
10.0 Scope of part.....	3

**Subpart A -- Rules Governing
Authority to Practice**

10.1 Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility.....	3
10.2 Definitions.....	4
10.3 Who may practice.....	4
10.4 Eligibility for enrollment.....	6
10.5 Application for enrollment.....	8
10.6 Enrollment.....	9
10.7 Representing oneself; participating in rulemaking; limited practice; special appearances; and return preparation.....	16
10.8 Customhouse brokers.....	17

**Subpart B -- Duties and Restrictions
Relating to Practice Before the
Internal Revenue Service**

10.20 Information to be furnished.....	18
10.21 Knowledge of client's omission.....	18
10.22 Diligence as to accuracy.....	19
10.23 Prompt disposition of pending matters.....	19
10.24 Assistance from or to disbarred or suspended persons and former Internal Revenue Service employees.....	19
10.25 Practice by former government employees, their partners and their associates.....	19
10.26 Notaries.....	21
10.27 Fees.....	21
10.28 Return of client's records.....	22
10.29 Conflicting interests.....	22

10.30 Solicitation.....	23
10.31 Negotiation of taxpayer checks.....	24
10.32 Practice of law.....	24
10.33 Best practices for tax advisors.....	24
10.34 Standards with respect to tax returns and documents, affidavits, and other papers.....	25
10.35 Requirements for covered opinions.....	26
10.36 Procedures to ensure compliance.....	32
10.37 Requirements for other written advice.....	33
10.38 Establishment of advisory committees.....	33

**Subpart C -- Sanctions for Violation
of the Regulations**

10.50 Sanctions.....	34
10.51 Incompetence and disreputable conduct.....	35
10.52 Violations subject to sanctions.....	36
10.53 Receipt of information concerning practitioner.....	37

**Subpart D -- Rules Applicable to
Disciplinary Proceedings**

10.60 Institution of proceeding.....	37
10.61 Conferences.....	38
10.62 Contents of complaint.....	38
10.63 Service of complaint; service of other papers; service of evidence in support of complaint; filing of papers.....	39
10.64 Answer; default.....	40
10.65 Supplemental Charges.....	41

10.66 Reply to answer.....	41
10.67 Proof; variance; amendment of pleadings.....	41
10.68 Motions and requests.....	42
10.69 Representation; ex parte communication.....	42
10.70 Administrative Law Judge.....	43
10.71 Discovery	43
10.72 Hearings.....	44
10.73 Evidence.....	47
10.74 Transcript.....	47
10.75 Proposed findings and conclusions.....	48
10.76 Decision of Administrative Law Judge.....	48
10.77 Appeal of decision of Administrative Law Judge.....	49
10.78 Decision on review.....	49
10.79 Effect of disbarment, suspension, or censure.....	49
10.80 Notice of disbarment, suspension, censure or disqualification.....	50
10.81 Petition for reinstatement.....	50
10.82 Expedited suspension upon criminal conviction or loss of license for cause.....	51

Subpart E -- General Provisions

10.90 Records.....	52
10.91 Saving provision.....	53
10.92 Special orders.....	53
10.93 Effective date.....	53
Addendum.....	53

Paragraph 1. The authority citation for 31 CFR part 10 continues to read as follows:

Authority: Sec.3, 23 Stat. 258, secs. 2-12, 60 Stat. 237 et seq.; 5 U.S.C. 301, 500, 551-559; 31 U.S.C. 321; 31 U.S.C. 330; Reorg. Plan No. 26 of 1950, 15 FR 4935, 64 Stat. 1280, 3 CFR, 1949-1953 Comp., p. 1017.

§ 10.0 Scope of part.

This part contains rules governing the recognition of attorneys, certified public accountants, enrolled agents, and other persons representing taxpayers before the Internal Revenue Service. Subpart A of this part sets forth rules relating to the authority to practice before the Internal Revenue Service; Subpart B of this part prescribes the duties and restrictions relating to such practice; Subpart C of this part prescribes the sanctions for violating the regulations; Subpart D of this part contains the rules applicable to disciplinary proceedings; and Subpart E of this part contains general provisions including provisions relating to the availability of official records.

Subpart A -- Rules Governing Authority to Practice

§ 10.1 Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility.

(a) *Establishment of office.* The Office of Professional Responsibility is established in the Internal Revenue Service. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility is appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate.

(b) *Duties.* The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility acts on applications for enrollment to practice before the Internal Revenue Service; makes inquiries with respect to matters under the Director’s jurisdiction; institutes and provides for the conduct of disciplinary proceedings relating to practitioners (and employers, firms or other entities, if applicable) and appraisers; and performs other duties as

are necessary or appropriate to carry out the functions under this part or as are otherwise prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate.

(c) Acting Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility. The Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, will designate an officer or employee of the Treasury Department to act as Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility in the absence of the Director or during a vacancy in that office.

(d) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.2 Definitions.

(a) As used in this part, except where the text provides otherwise --

(1) Attorney means any person who is a member in good standing of the bar of the highest court of any state, territory, or possession of the United States, including a Commonwealth, or the District of Columbia.

(2) Certified public accountant means any person who is duly qualified to practice as a certified public accountant in any state, territory, or possession of the United States, including a Commonwealth, or the District of Columbia.

(3) Commissioner refers to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

(4) Practice before the Internal Revenue Service comprehends all matters connected with a presentation to the Internal Revenue Service or any of its officers or employees relating to a taxpayer's rights, privileges, or liabilities under laws or regulations administered by the Internal Revenue Service. Such presentations include, but are not limited to, preparing and filing documents,

corresponding and communicating with the Internal Revenue Service, rendering written advice with respect to any entity, transaction, plan or arrangement, or other plan or arrangement having a potential for tax avoidance or evasion, and representing a client at conferences, hearings and meetings.

(5) Practitioner means any individual described in paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d) or (e) of §10.3.

(6) A tax return includes an amended tax return and a claim for refund.

(7) Service means the Internal Revenue Service.

(b) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.3 Who may practice.

(a) Attorneys. Any attorney who is not currently under suspension or disbarment from practice before the Internal Revenue Service may practice before the Internal Revenue Service by filing with the Internal Revenue Service a written declaration that the attorney is currently qualified as an attorney and is authorized to represent the party or parties. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, attorneys who are not currently under suspension or disbarment from practice before the Internal Revenue Service are not required to file a written declaration with the IRS before rendering written advice covered under §10.35 or §10.37, but their rendering of this advice is practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(b) Certified public accountants. Any certified public accountant who is not currently under suspension or disbarment from practice before the Internal Revenue Service may practice before the Internal Revenue Service by

filing with the Internal Revenue Service a written declaration that the certified public accountant is currently qualified as a certified public accountant and is authorized to represent the party or parties. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, certified public accountants who are not currently under suspension or disbarment from practice before the Internal Revenue Service are not required to file a written declaration with the IRS before rendering written advice covered under §10.35 or §10.37, but their rendering of this advice is practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(c) *Enrolled agents.* Any individual enrolled as an agent pursuant to this part who is not currently under suspension or disbarment from practice before the Internal Revenue Service may practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(d) *Enrolled actuaries.* (1) Any individual who is enrolled as an actuary by the Joint Board for the Enrollment of Actuaries pursuant to 29 U.S.C. 1242 who is not currently under suspension or disbarment from practice before the Internal Revenue Service may practice before the Internal Revenue Service by filing with the Internal Revenue Service a written declaration stating that he or she is currently qualified as an enrolled actuary and is authorized to represent the party or parties on whose behalf he or she acts.

(2) Practice as an enrolled actuary is limited to representation with respect to issues involving the following statutory provisions in title 26 of the United States Code: sections 401 (relating to qualification of employee plans), 403(a) (relating to whether an annuity plan meets the requirements of section 404(a)(2)), 404 (relating to deductibility of employer contributions), 405 (relating to qualification of bond purchase plans),

412 (relating to funding requirements for certain employee plans), 413 (relating to application of qualification requirements to collectively bargained plans and to plans maintained by more than one employer), 414 (relating to definitions and special rules with respect to the employee plan area), 419 (relating to treatment of funded welfare benefits), 419A (relating to qualified asset accounts), 420 (relating to transfers of excess pension assets to retiree health accounts), 4971 (relating to excise taxes payable as a result of an accumulated funding deficiency under section 412), 4972 (relating to tax on nondeductible contributions to qualified employer plans), 4976 (relating to taxes with respect to funded welfare benefit plans), 4980 (relating to tax on reversion of qualified plan assets to employer), 6057 (relating to annual registration of plans), 6058 (relating to information required in connection with certain plans of deferred compensation), 6059 (relating to periodic report of actuary), 6652(e) (relating to the failure to file annual registration and other notifications by pension plan), 6652(f) (relating to the failure to file information required in connection with certain plans of deferred compensation), 6692 (relating to the failure to file actuarial report), 7805(b) (relating to the extent to which an Internal Revenue Service ruling or determination letter coming under the statutory provisions listed here will be applied without retroactive effect); and 29 U.S.C. § 1083 (relating to the waiver of funding for nonqualified plans).

(3) An individual who practices before the Internal Revenue Service pursuant to paragraph (d)(1) of this section is subject to the provisions of this part in the same manner as

attorneys, certified public accountants and enrolled agents.

(e) Enrolled retirement plan agents.

(1) Any individual enrolled as a retirement plan agent pursuant to this part who is not currently under suspension or disbarment from practice before the Internal Revenue Service may practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(2) Practice as an enrolled retirement plan agent is limited to representation with respect to issues involving the following programs: Employee Plans Determination Letter program; Employee Plans Compliance Resolution System; and Employee Plans Master and Prototype and Volume Submitter program. In addition, enrolled retirement plan agents are generally permitted to represent taxpayers with respect to IRS forms under the 5300 and 5500 series which are filed by retirement plans and plan sponsors, but not with respect to actuarial forms or schedules.

(3) An individual who practices before the Internal Revenue Service pursuant to paragraph (e)(1) of this section is subject to the provisions of this part in the same manner as attorneys, certified public accountants and enrolled agents.

(f) Others. Any individual qualifying under paragraph §10.5(d) or §10.7 is eligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service to the extent provided in those sections.

(g) Government officers and employees, and others. An individual, who is an officer or employee of the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of the United States Government; an officer or employee of the District of Columbia; a Member of Congress; or a Resident Commissioner may not practice before the Internal Revenue Service if

such practice violates 18 U.S.C. §§ 203 or 205.

(h) State officers and employees. No officer or employee of any State, or subdivision of any State, whose duties require him or her to pass upon, investigate, or deal with tax matters for such State or subdivision, may practice before the Internal Revenue Service, if such employment may disclose facts or information applicable to Federal tax matters.

(i) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.4 Eligibility for enrollment as an enrolled agent or enrolled retirement plan agent.

(a) Enrollment as an enrolled agent upon examination. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may grant enrollment as an enrolled agent to an applicant who demonstrates special competence in tax matters by written examination administered by, or administered under the oversight of, the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility and who has not engaged in any conduct that would justify the censure, suspension or disbarment of any practitioner under the provisions of this part.

(b) Enrollment as a retirement plan agent upon examination. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may grant enrollment as an enrolled retirement plan agent to an applicant who demonstrates special competence in qualified retirement plan matters by written examination administered by, or administered under the oversight of, the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility and who has not engaged in any conduct

that would justify the censure, suspension, or disbarment of any practitioner under the provisions of this part.

(c) Enrollment of former Internal Revenue Service employees. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may grant enrollment as an enrolled agent or enrolled retirement plan agent to an applicant who, by virtue of past service and technical experience in the Internal Revenue Service, has qualified for such enrollment and who has not engaged in any conduct that would justify the censure, suspension, or disbarment of any practitioner under the provisions of this part, under the following circumstances--

(1) The former employee applies for enrollment to the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility on a form supplied by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility and supplies the information requested on the form and such other information regarding the experience and training of the applicant as may be relevant.

(2) An appropriate office of the Internal Revenue Service, at the request of the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, will provide the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility with a detailed report of the nature and rating of the applicant's work while employed by the Internal Revenue Service and a recommendation whether such employment qualifies the applicant technically or otherwise for the desired authorization.

(3) Enrollment as an enrolled agent based on an applicant's former employment with the Internal Revenue Service may be of unlimited scope or it may be limited to permit the presentation of matters only of the particular class or only before the particular unit or division

of the Internal Revenue Service for which the applicant's former employment has qualified the applicant. Enrollment as an enrolled retirement plan agent based on an applicant's former employment with the Internal Revenue Service will be limited to permit the presentation of matters only with respect to qualified retirement plan matters.

(4) Application for enrollment as an enrolled agent or enrolled retirement plan agent based on an applicant's former employment with the Internal Revenue Service must be made within 3 years from the date of separation from such employment.

(5) An applicant for enrollment as an enrolled agent who is requesting such enrollment based on former employment with the Internal Revenue Service must have had a minimum of 5 years continuous employment with the Internal Revenue Service during which the applicant must have been regularly engaged in applying and interpreting the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations relating to income, estate, gift, employment, or excise taxes.

(6) An applicant for enrollment as an enrolled retirement plan agent who is requesting such enrollment based on former employment with the Internal Revenue Service must have had a minimum of 5 years continuous employment with the Internal Revenue Service during which the applicant must have been regularly engaged in applying and interpreting the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations relating to qualified retirement plan matters.

(7) For the purposes of paragraphs (b)(5) and (b)(6) of this section, an aggregate of 10 or more years of employment in positions involving the

application and interpretation of the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code, at least 3 of which occurred within the 5 years preceding the date of application, is the equivalent of 5 years continuous employment.

(d) *Natural persons.* Enrollment to practice may be granted only to natural persons.

(e) *Effective/applicability date.* This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.5 Application for enrollment as an enrolled agent or enrolled retirement plan agent.

(a) *Form; address.* An applicant for enrollment as an enrolled agent or enrolled retirement plan agent must apply as required by forms or procedures established and published by the Office of Professional Responsibility, including proper execution of required forms under oath or affirmation. The address on the application will be the address under which a successful applicant is enrolled and is the address to which all correspondence concerning enrollment will be sent.

(b) *Fee.* A reasonable nonrefundable fee will be charged for each application for enrollment as an enrolled agent filed with the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility in accordance with 26 CFR 300.5. A reasonable nonrefundable fee will be charged for each application for enrollment as an enrolled retirement plan agent filed with the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility.

(c) *Additional information; examination.* The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, as a condition to consideration of an application for enrollment, may require

the applicant to file additional information and to submit to any written or oral examination under oath or otherwise. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility will, on written request filed by an applicant, afford such applicant the opportunity to be heard with respect to his or her application for enrollment.

(d) *Temporary recognition.* On receipt of a properly executed application, the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may grant the applicant temporary recognition to practice pending a determination as to whether enrollment to practice should be granted. Temporary recognition will be granted only in unusual circumstances and it will not be granted, in any circumstance, if the application is not regular on its face, if the information stated in the application, if true, is not sufficient to warrant enrollment to practice, or if there is any information before the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility indicating that the statements in the application are untrue or that the applicant would not otherwise qualify for enrollment. Issuance of temporary recognition does not constitute enrollment to practice or a finding of eligibility for enrollment, and the temporary recognition may be withdrawn at any time by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility.

(e) *Appeal from denial of application.* The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility must inform the applicant as to the reason(s) for any denial of an application for enrollment. The applicant may, within 30 days after receipt of the notice of denial of enrollment, file a written appeal of the denial of enrollment with the Secretary of the Treasury or his or her delegate. A

decision on the appeal will be rendered by the Secretary of the Treasury, or his or her delegate, as soon as practicable.

(f) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable to enrollment applications received on or after September 26, 2007.

§ 10.6 Enrollment as an enrolled agent or enrolled retirement plan agent.

(a) Term of enrollment. Each individual enrolled to practice before the Internal Revenue Service will be accorded active enrollment status subject to his or her renewal of enrollment as provided in this part.

(b) Enrollment card. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility will issue an enrollment card to each individual whose application for enrollment to practice before the Internal Revenue Service is approved after July 26, 2002. Each enrollment card will be valid for the period stated on the enrollment card. An individual is not eligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service if his or her enrollment card is not valid.

(c) Change of address. An enrolled agent or enrolled retirement plan agent must send notification of any change of address to the address specified by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility. This notification must include the enrolled agent's or enrolled retirement plan agent's name, prior address, new address, social security number or tax identification number and the date.

(d) Renewal of enrollment. To maintain active enrollment to practice before the Internal Revenue Service, each individual is required to have the enrollment renewed. Failure to receive notification from the Director of the

Office of Professional Responsibility of the renewal requirement will not be justification for the individual's failure to satisfy this requirement.

(1) All individuals licensed to practice before the Internal Revenue Service who have a social security number or tax identification number that ends with the numbers 0, 1, 2, or 3, except for those individuals who received their initial enrollment after November 1, 2003, must apply for renewal between November 1, 2003, and January 31, 2004. The renewal will be effective April 1, 2004.

(2) All individuals licensed to practice before the Internal Revenue Service who have a social security number or tax identification number that ends with the numbers 4, 5, or 6, except for those individuals who received their initial enrollment after November 1, 2004, must apply for renewal between November 1, 2004, and January 31, 2005. The renewal will be effective April 1, 2005.

(3) All individuals licensed to practice before the Internal Revenue Service who have a social security number or tax identification number that ends with the numbers 7, 8, or 9, except for those individuals who received their initial enrollment after November 1, 2005, must apply for renewal between November 1, 2005, and January 31, 2006. The renewal will be effective April 1, 2006.

(4) Thereafter, applications for renewal as an enrolled agent will be required between November 1 and January 31 of every subsequent third year as specified in paragraphs (d)(1),(2) or (3) of this section according to the last number of the individual's social security number or tax identification number. Those individuals who receive

initial enrollment as an enrolled agent after November 1 and before April 2 of the applicable renewal period will not be required to renew their enrollment before the first full renewal period following the receipt of their initial enrollment. Applications for renewal as an enrolled retirement plan agent will be required of all enrolled plan agents between April 1 and June 30 of every third year period subsequent to their initial enrollment.

(5) The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility will notify the individual of the renewal of enrollment and will issue the individual a card evidencing enrollment.

(6) A reasonable nonrefundable fee will be charged for each application for renewal of enrollment as an enrolled agent filed with the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility in accordance with 26 CFR 300.6. A reasonable nonrefundable fee will be charged for each application for renewal of enrollment as an enrolled retirement plan agent filed with the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility.

(7) Forms required for renewal may be obtained by sending a written request to the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, Internal Revenue Service, 1111 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20224 or from such other source as the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility will publish in the Internal Revenue Bulletin (see 26 CFR 601.601(d)(2)(ii)(b)) and on the Internal Revenue Service Web page (www.irs.gov).

(e) Condition for renewal: Continuing professional education. In order to qualify for renewal of enrollment, an individual enrolled to practice before the Internal Revenue Service must certify,

on the application for renewal form prescribed by the Director Office of Professional Responsibility, that he or she has satisfied the following continuing professional education requirements.

(1) Definitions. For purposes of this section--

(i) Enrollment year means January 1 to December 31 of each year of an enrollment cycle.

(ii) Enrollment cycle means the three successive enrollment years preceding the effective date of renewal.

(iii) The effective date of renewal is the first day of the fourth month following the close of the period for renewal described in paragraph (d) of this section.

(2) For renewed enrollment effective after December 31, 2006-- (i) Requirements for enrollment cycle.

A minimum of 72 hours of continuing education credit must be completed during each enrollment cycle.

(ii) Requirements for enrollment year. A minimum of 16 hours of continuing education credit, including 2 hours of ethics or professional conduct, must be completed during each enrollment year of an enrollment cycle.

(iii) Enrollment during enrollment cycle. --

(A) In general. Subject to paragraph (e)(2)(iii)(B) of this section, an individual who receives initial enrollment during an enrollment cycle must complete 2 hours of qualifying continuing education credit for each month enrolled during the enrollment cycle. Enrollment for any part of a month is considered enrollment for the entire month.

(B) Ethics. An individual who receives initial enrollment during an enrollment cycle must complete 2 hours

of ethics or professional conduct for each enrollment year during the enrollment cycle. Enrollment for any part of an enrollment year is considered enrollment for the entire year.

(f) Qualifying continuing education--

(1) General -- (i) Enrolled agents. To qualify for continuing education credit for an enrolled agent, a course of learning must --

(A) Be a qualifying program designed to enhance professional knowledge in Federal taxation or Federal tax related matters (programs comprised of current subject matter in Federal taxation or Federal tax related matters, including accounting, tax preparation software and taxation or ethics);

(B) Be a qualifying program consistent with the Internal Revenue Code and effective tax administration; and

(C) Be sponsored by a qualifying sponsor.

(ii) Enrolled retirement plan agents. To qualify for continuing education credit for an enrolled retirement plan agent, a course of learning must--

(A) Be a qualifying program designed to enhance professional knowledge in qualified retirement plan matters;

(B) Be a qualifying program consistent with the Internal Revenue Code and effective tax administration; and

(C) Be sponsored by a qualifying sponsor.

(2) Qualifying programs--

(i) Formal programs. A formal program qualifies as continuing education programs if it--

(A) Requires attendance. Additionally, the program sponsor must provide each attendee with a certificate of attendance; and

(B) Requires that the program be conducted by a qualified instructor, discussion leader, or speaker, i.e., a person whose background, training, education and experience is appropriate for instructing or leading a discussion on the subject matter of the particular program; and

(C) Provides or requires a written outline, textbook, or suitable electronic educational materials.

(ii) Correspondence or individual study programs (including taped programs). Qualifying continuing education programs include correspondence or individual study programs that are conducted by qualifying sponsors and completed on an individual basis by the enrolled individual. The allowable credit hours for such programs will be measured on a basis comparable to the measurement of a seminar or course for credit in an accredited educational institution. Such programs qualify as continuing education programs if they--

(A) Require registration of the participants by the sponsor;

(B) Provide a means for measuring completion by the participants (e.g., a written examination), including the issuance of a certificate of completion by the sponsor; and

(C) Provide a written outline, textbook, or suitable electronic educational materials.

(iii) Serving as an instructor, discussion leader or speaker.

(A) One hour of continuing education credit will be awarded for each contact hour completed as an instructor, discussion leader, or speaker at an educational program that meets the continuing education requirements of paragraph (f) of this section.

(B) Two hours of continuing education credit will be awarded for actual subject preparation time for each contact hour completed as an instructor, discussion leader, or speaker at such programs. It is the responsibility of the individual claiming such credit to maintain records to verify preparation time.

(C) The maximum credit for instruction and preparation may not exceed 50 percent of the continuing education requirement for an enrollment cycle.

(D) An instructor, discussion leader, or speaker who makes more than one presentation on the same subject matter during an enrollment cycle, will receive continuing education credit for only one such presentation for the enrollment cycle.

(iv) Credit for published articles, books, etc.

(A) For enrolled agents, continuing education credit will be awarded for publications on Federal taxation or Federal tax related matters, including accounting, tax preparation software, and taxation or ethics, provided the content of such publications is current and designed for the enhancement of the professional knowledge of an individual enrolled to practice before the Internal Revenue Service. The publication must be consistent with the Internal Revenue Code and effective tax administration. For enrolled retirement plan agents, continuing education credit will be awarded for publications on qualified retirement plan matters, provided the content of such publications is current and designed for the enhancement of the professional knowledge of an individual enrolled to practice as an enrolled retirement plan agent before the Internal Revenue Service. The publication must

be consistent with the Internal Revenue Code and effective tax administration.

(B) The credit allowed will be on the basis of one hour credit for each hour of preparation time for the material. It is the responsibility of the person claiming the credit to maintain records to verify preparation time.

(C) The maximum credit for publications may not exceed 25 percent of the continuing education requirement of any enrollment cycle.

(3) Periodic examination.

(i) Individuals may establish eligibility for renewal of enrollment for any enrollment cycle by--

(A) Achieving a passing score on each part of the Special Enrollment Examination administered under this part during the three year period prior to renewal; and

(B) Completing a minimum of 16 hours of qualifying continuing education during the last year of an enrollment cycle.

(ii) Courses designed to help an applicant prepare for the examination specified in paragraph (a) of §10.4 are considered basic in nature and are not qualifying continuing education.

(g) Sponsors.

(1) Sponsors are those responsible for presenting programs.

(2) To qualify as a sponsor, a program presenter must--

(i) Be an accredited educational institution;

(ii) Be recognized for continuing education purposes by the licensing body of any State, territory, or possession of the United States, including a Commonwealth, or the District of Columbia.

(iii) Be recognized by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility as a professional organization or society

whose programs include offering continuing professional education opportunities in subject matters within the scope of paragraph (f)(1)(i) of this section; or

(iv) File a sponsor agreement with the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility and obtain approval of the program as a qualified continuing education program.

(3) A qualifying sponsor must ensure the program complies with the following requirements--

(i) Programs must be developed by individual(s) qualified in the subject matter;

(ii) Program subject matter must be current;

(iii) Instructors, discussion leaders, and speakers must be qualified with respect to program content;

(iv) Programs must include some means for evaluation of technical content and presentation;

(v) Certificates of completion must be provided to the participants who successfully complete the program; and

(vi) Records must be maintained by the sponsor to verify the participants who attended and completed the program for a period of three years following completion of the program. In the case of continuous conferences, conventions, and the like, records must be maintained to verify completion of the program and attendance by each participant at each segment of the program.

(4) Professional organizations or societies wishing to be considered as qualified sponsors must request this status from the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility and furnish information in support of the request together with any further information

deemed necessary by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility.

(5) Sponsor renewal. (i) In general. A sponsor maintains its status as a qualified sponsor during the sponsor enrollment cycle.

(ii) Renewal Period. Each sponsor must file an application to renew its status as a qualified sponsor between May 1 and July 31, 2008. Thereafter, applications for renewal will be required between May 1 and July 31 of every subsequent third year.

(iii) Effective date of renewal. The effective date of renewal is the first day of the third month following the close of the renewal period.

(iv) Sponsor enrollment cycle. The sponsor enrollment cycle is the three successive calendar years preceding the effective date of renewal.

(h) Measurement of continuing education coursework.

(1) All continuing education programs will be measured in terms of contact hours. The shortest recognized program will be one contact hour.

(2) A contact hour is 50 minutes of continuous participation in a program. Credit is granted only for a full contact hour, i.e., 50 minutes or multiples thereof. For example, a program lasting more than 50 minutes but less than 100 minutes will count as one contact hour.

(3) Individual segments at continuous conferences, conventions and the like will be considered one total program. For example, two 90-minute segments (180 minutes) at a continuous conference will count as three contact hours.

(4) For university or college courses, each semester hour credit will equal 15 contact hours and a quarter hour credit will equal 10 contact hours.

(i) Recordkeeping requirements.

(1) Each individual applying for renewal must retain for a period of three years following the date of renewal of enrollment the information required with regard to qualifying continuing professional education credit hours. Such information includes--

- (i) The name of the sponsoring organization;
- (ii) The location of the program;
- (iii) The title of the program and description of its content;
- (iv) Written outlines, course syllabi, textbook, and/or electronic materials provided or required for the course;
- (v) The dates attended;
- (vi) The credit hours claimed;
- (vii) The name(s) of the instructor(s), discussion leader(s), or speaker(s), if appropriate; and
- (viii) The certificate of completion and/or signed statement of the hours of attendance obtained from the sponsor.

(2) To receive continuing education credit for service completed as an instructor, discussion leader, or speaker, the following information must be maintained for a period of three years following the date of renewal of enrollment--

- (i) The name of the sponsoring organization;
- (ii) The location of the program;
- (iii) The title of the program and description of its content;
- (iv) The dates of the program; and
- (v) The credit hours claimed.

(3) To receive continuing education credit for publications, the following information must be maintained for a period of three years following the date of renewal of enrollment--

- (i) The publisher;
- (ii) The title of the publication;
- (iii) A copy of the publication;
- (iv) The date of publication; and

(v) Records that substantiate the hours worked on the publication.

(j) Waivers. (1) Waiver from the continuing education requirements for a given period may be granted by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility for the following reasons--

- (i) Health, which prevented compliance with the continuing education requirements;
- (ii) Extended active military duty;
- (iii) Absence from the United States for an extended period of time due to employment or other reasons, provided the individual does not practice before the Internal Revenue Service during such absence; and
- (iv) Other compelling reasons, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

(2) A request for waiver must be accompanied by appropriate documentation. The individual is required to furnish any additional documentation or explanation deemed necessary by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility. Examples of appropriate documentation could be a medical certificate or military orders.

(3) A request for waiver must be filed no later than the last day of the renewal application period.

(4) If a request for waiver is not approved, the individual will be placed in inactive status, so notified by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, and placed on a roster of inactive enrolled individuals.

(5) If a request for waiver is approved, the individual will be notified and issued a card evidencing renewal.

(6) Those who are granted waivers are required to file timely applications for renewal of enrollment.

(k) Failure to comply. (1) Compliance by an individual with the requirements of this part is determined by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility. An individual who fails to meet the requirements of eligibility for renewal of enrollment will be notified by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility at his or her enrollment address by first class mail. The notice will state the basis for the determination of noncompliance and will provide the individual an opportunity to furnish information in writing relating to the matter within 60 days of the date of the notice. Such information will be considered by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility in making a final determination as to eligibility for renewal of enrollment.

(2) The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may require any individual, by notice sent by first class mail to his or her enrollment address, to provide copies of any records required to be maintained under this part. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may disallow any continuing professional education hours claimed if the individual fails to comply with this requirement.

(3) An individual who has not filed a timely application for renewal of enrollment, who has not made a timely response to the notice of noncompliance with the renewal requirements, or who has not satisfied the requirements of eligibility for renewal will be placed on a roster of inactive enrolled individuals. During this time, the individual will be ineligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(4) Individuals placed in inactive enrollment status and individuals ineligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service may not state or imply

that they are enrolled to practice before the Internal Revenue Service, or use the terms enrolled agent or enrolled retirement plan agent, the designations "EA" or "ERPA" or other form of reference to eligibility to practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(5) An individual placed in an inactive status may be reinstated to an active enrollment status by filing an application for renewal of enrollment and providing evidence of the completion of all required continuing professional education hours for the enrollment cycle. Continuing education credit under this paragraph (k)(5) may not be used to satisfy the requirements of the enrollment cycle in which the individual has been placed back on the active roster.

(6) An individual placed in an inactive status must file an application for renewal of enrollment and satisfy the requirements for renewal as set forth in this section within three years of being placed in an inactive status. The name of such individual otherwise will be removed from the inactive enrollment roster and his or her enrollment will terminate. Eligibility for enrollment must then be reestablished by the individual as provided in this section.

(7) Inactive enrollment status is not available to an individual who is the subject of a disciplinary matter in the Office of Professional Responsibility.

(l) Inactive retirement status. An individual who no longer practices before the Internal Revenue Service may request being placed in an inactive retirement status at any time and such individual will be placed in an inactive retirement status. The individual will be ineligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service. Such individual must file a timely application for renewal of

enrollment at each applicable renewal or enrollment period as provided in this section. An individual who is placed in an inactive retirement status may be reinstated to an active enrollment status by filing an application for renewal of enrollment and providing evidence of the completion of the required continuing professional education hours for the enrollment cycle. Inactive retirement status is not available to an individual who is subject of a disciplinary matter in the Office of Professional Responsibility.

(m) Renewal while under suspension or disbarment. An individual who is ineligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service by virtue of disciplinary action is required to be in conformance with the requirements for renewal of enrollment before his or her eligibility is restored.

(n) Verification. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may review the continuing education records of an enrolled individual and/or qualified sponsor in a manner deemed appropriate to determine compliance with the requirements and standards for renewal of enrollment as provided in paragraph (f) of this section.

(o) Enrolled Actuaries. The enrollment and the renewal of enrollment of actuaries authorized to practice under paragraph (d) of §10.3 are governed by the regulations of the Joint Board for the Enrollment of Actuaries at 20 CFR 901.1 through 901.71.

(p) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable to enrollment effective on or after September 26, 2007.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under Control No. 1545-0946 and 1545-1726)

§ 10.7 Representing oneself; participating in rulemaking; limited practice; special appearances; and return preparation.

(a) Representing oneself. Individuals may appear on their own behalf before the Internal Revenue Service provided they present satisfactory identification.

(b) Participating in rulemaking. Individuals may participate in rulemaking as provided by the Administrative Procedure Act. See 5 U.S.C. § 553.

(c) Limited practice--(1) In general. Subject to the limitations in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, an individual who is not a practitioner may represent a taxpayer before the Internal Revenue Service in the circumstances described in this paragraph (c)(1), even if the taxpayer is not present, provided the individual presents satisfactory identification and proof of his or her authority to represent the taxpayer. The circumstances described in this paragraph (c)(1) are as follows:

(i) An individual may represent a member of his or her immediate family.

(ii) A regular full-time employee of an individual employer may represent the employer.

(iii) A general partner or a regular full-time employee of a partnership may represent the partnership.

(iv) A bona fide officer or a regular full-time employee of a corporation (including a parent, subsidiary, or other affiliated corporation), association, or organized group may represent the corporation, association, or organized group.

(v) A regular full-time employee of a trust, receivership, guardianship, or estate may represent the trust, receivership, guardianship, or estate.

(vi) An officer or a regular employee of a governmental unit, agency, or authority may represent the governmental unit, agency, or authority in the course of his or her official duties.

(vii) An individual may represent any individual or entity, who is outside the United States, before personnel of the Internal Revenue Service when such representation takes place outside the United States.

(viii) An individual who prepares and signs a taxpayer's tax return as the preparer, or who prepares a tax return but is not required (by the instructions to the tax return or regulations) to sign the tax return, may represent the taxpayer before revenue agents, customer service representatives or similar officers and employees of the Internal Revenue Service during an examination of the taxable year or period covered by that tax return, but, unless otherwise prescribed by regulation or notice, this right does not permit such individual to represent the taxpayer, regardless of the circumstances requiring representation, before appeals officers, revenue officers, Counsel or similar officers or employees of the Internal Revenue Service or the Department of Treasury.

(2) Limitations. (i) An individual who is under suspension or disbarment from practice before the Internal Revenue Service may not engage in limited practice before the Internal Revenue Service under paragraph (c)(1) of this section.

(ii) The Director, after notice and opportunity for a conference, may deny eligibility to engage in limited practice before the Internal Revenue Service under paragraph (c)(1) of this section to any individual who has engaged in conduct that would justify a sanction under §10.50.

(iii) An individual who represents a taxpayer under the authority of paragraph (c)(1) of this section is subject, to the extent of his or her authority, to such rules of general applicability regarding standards of conduct and other matters as the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility prescribes.

(d) Special appearances. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may, subject to such conditions as he or she deems appropriate, authorize an individual who is not otherwise eligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service to represent another person in a particular matter.

(e) Preparing tax returns and furnishing information. Any individual may prepare a tax return, appear as a witness for the taxpayer before the Internal Revenue Service, or furnish information at the request of the Internal Revenue Service or any of its officers or employees.

(f) Fiduciaries. For purposes of this part, a fiduciary (i.e., a trustee, receiver, guardian, personal representative, administrator, or executor) is considered to be the taxpayer and not a representative of the taxpayer.

(g) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.8 Customhouse brokers.

Nothing contained in the regulations in this part will affect or limit the right of a customhouse broker, licensed as such by the Commissioner of Customs in accordance with the regulations prescribed therefore, in any customs district in which he or she is so licensed, at a relevant local office of the Internal

Revenue Service or before the National Office of the Internal Revenue Service, to act as a representative in respect to any matters relating specifically to the importation or exportation of merchandise under the customs or internal revenue laws, for any person for whom he or she has acted as a customhouse broker.

(g) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

Subpart B -- Duties and Restrictions Relating to Practice Before the Internal Revenue Service

§ 10.20 Information to be furnished.

(a) *To the Internal Revenue Service.*

(1) A practitioner must, on a proper and lawful request by a duly authorized officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service, promptly submit records or information in any matter before the Internal Revenue Service unless the practitioner believes in good faith and on reasonable grounds that the records or information are privileged.

(2) Where the requested records or information are not in the possession of, or subject to the control of, the practitioner or the practitioner's client, the practitioner must promptly notify the requesting Internal Revenue Service officer or employee and the practitioner must provide any information that the practitioner has regarding the identity of any person who the practitioner believes may have possession or control of the requested records or information. The practitioner must make reasonable inquiry of his or her client regarding the identity of any person who may have possession or control of the requested records or information, but the

practitioner is not required to make inquiry of any other person or independently verify any information provided by the practitioner's client regarding the identity of such persons.

(b) *To the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility.* When a proper and lawful request is made by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, a practitioner must provide the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility with any information the practitioner has concerning an inquiry by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility into an alleged violation of the regulations in this part by any person, and to testify regarding this information in any proceeding instituted under this part, unless the practitioner believes in good faith and on reasonable grounds that the information is privileged.

(c) *Interference with a proper and lawful request for records or information.* A practitioner may not interfere, or attempt to interfere, with any proper and lawful effort by the Internal Revenue Service, its officers or employees, or the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, or his or her employees, to obtain any record or information unless the practitioner believes in good faith and on reasonable grounds that the record or information is privileged.

§ 10.21 Knowledge of client's omission.

A practitioner who, having been retained by a client with respect to a matter administered by the Internal Revenue Service, knows that the client has not complied with the revenue laws of the United States or has made an error in or omission from any return,

document, affidavit, or other paper which the client submitted or executed under the revenue laws of the United States, must advise the client promptly of the fact of such noncompliance, error, or omission. The practitioner must advise the client of the consequences as provided under the Code and regulations of such noncompliance, error, or omission.

§ 10.22 Diligence as to accuracy.

(a) *In general.* A practitioner must exercise due diligence--

(1) In preparing or assisting in the preparation of, approving, and filing tax returns, documents, affidavits, and other papers relating to Internal Revenue Service matters;

(2) In determining the correctness of oral or written representations made by the practitioner to the Department of the Treasury; and

(3) In determining the correctness of oral or written representations made by the practitioner to clients with reference to any matter administered by the Internal Revenue Service.

(b) *Reliance on others.* Except as provided in §§ 10.34, 10.35 and 10.37, a practitioner will be presumed to have exercised due diligence for purposes of this section if the practitioner relies on the work product of another person and the practitioner used reasonable care in engaging, supervising, training, and evaluating the person, taking proper account of the nature of the relationship between the practitioner and the person.

(c) *Effective/applicability date.* This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.23 Prompt disposition of pending matters.

A practitioner may not unreasonably delay the prompt disposition of any matter before the Internal Revenue Service.

§ 10.24 Assistance from or to disbarred or suspended persons and former Internal Revenue Service employees.

A practitioner may not, knowingly and directly or indirectly:

(a) Accept assistance from or assist any person who is under disbarment or suspension from practice before the Internal Revenue Service if the assistance relates to a matter or matters constituting practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(b) Accept assistance from any former government employee where the provisions of § 10.25 or any Federal law would be violated.

(c) *Effective/applicability date.* This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.25 Practice by former government employees, their partners and their associates.

(a) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section--

(1) *Assist* means to act in such a way as to advise, furnish information to, or otherwise aid another person, directly or indirectly.

(2) *Government employee* is an officer or employee of the United States or any agency of the United States, including a special Government employee as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 202(a), or of the District of Columbia, or of any State, or a member of Congress or of any State legislature.

(3) Member of a firm is a sole practitioner or an employee or associate thereof, or a partner, stockholder, associate, affiliate or employee of a partnership, joint venture, corporation, professional association or other affiliation of two or more practitioners who represent nongovernmental parties.

(4) Particular matter involving specific parties is defined at 5 CFR 2637.201(c), or superseding post-employment regulations issued by the U.S. Office of Government Ethics.

(5) Rule includes Treasury regulations, whether issued or under preparation for issuance as notices of proposed rulemaking or as Treasury decisions, revenue rulings, and revenue procedures published in the Internal Revenue Bulletin (see 26 CFR 601.601(d)(2)(ii)(b)).

(b) General rules -- (1) No former Government employee may, subsequent to Government employment, represent anyone in any matter administered by the Internal Revenue Service if the representation would violate 18 U.S.C. § 207 or any other laws of the United States.

(2) No former Government employee who personally and substantially participated in a particular matter involving specific parties may, subsequent to Government employment, represent or knowingly assist, in that particular matter, any person who is or was a specific party to that particular matter.

(3) A former Government employee who within a period of one year prior to the termination of Government employment had official responsibility for that particular matter involving specific parties may not, within two years after Government employment is ended, represent in that particular matter

any person who is or was a specific party to that particular matter.

(4) No former Government employee may, within one year after Government employment is ended, communicate with or appear before, with the intent to influence, any employee of the Treasury Department in connection with the publication, withdrawal, amendment, modification, or interpretation of a rule the development of which the former Government employee participated in, or for which, within a period of one year prior to the termination of Government employment, the former government employee had official responsibility. This paragraph (b)(4) does not, however, preclude any former employee from appearing on one's own behalf or from representing a taxpayer before the Internal Revenue Service in connection with a particular matter involving specific parties involving the application or interpretation of a rule with respect to that particular matter, provided that the representation is otherwise consistent with the other provisions of this section and the former employee does not utilize or disclose any confidential information acquired by the former employee in the development of the rule.

(c) Firm representation -- (1) No member of a firm of which a former Government employee is a member may represent or knowingly assist a person who was or is a specific party in any particular matter with respect to which the restrictions of paragraph (b)(2) of this section apply to the former Government employee, in that particular matter, unless the firm isolates the former Government employee in such a way to ensure that the former Government employee cannot assist in the representation.

(2) When isolation of a former Government employee is required under paragraph (c)(1) of this section, a statement affirming the fact of such isolation must be executed under oath by the former Government employee and by another member of the firm acting on behalf of the firm. The statement must clearly identify the firm, the former Government employee, and the particular matter(s) requiring isolation. The statement must be retained by the firm and, upon request, provided to the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility.

(d) *Pending representation.* The provisions of this regulation will govern practice by former Government employees, their partners and associates with respect to representation in particular matters involving specific parties where actual representation commenced before the effective date of this regulation.

(e) *Effective/applicability Date.* This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.26 Notaries.

A practitioner may not take acknowledgments, administer oaths, certify papers, or perform any official act as a notary public with respect to any matter administered by the Internal Revenue Service and for which he or she is employed as counsel, attorney, or agent, or in which he or she may be in any way interested.

§ 10.27 Fees.

(a) *In general.* A practitioner may not charge an unconscionable fee in connection with any matter before the Internal Revenue Service.

(b) *Contingent fees.* (1) Except as provided in paragraphs (b)(2), (3), and (4) of this section, a practitioner may not charge a contingent fee for services rendered in connection with any matter before the Internal Revenue Service.

(2) A practitioner may charge a contingent fee for services rendered in connection with the Service's examination of, or challenge to--

(i) An original tax return; or

(ii) An amended return or claim for refund or credit where the amended return or claim for refund or credit was filed within 120 days of the taxpayer receiving a written notice of the examination of, or a written challenge to the original tax return.

(3) A practitioner may charge a contingent fee for services rendered in connection with a claim for credit or refund filed solely in connection with the determination of statutory interest or penalties assessed by the Internal Revenue Service.

(4) A practitioner may charge a contingent fee for services rendered in connection with any judicial proceeding arising under the Internal Revenue Code.

(c) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section--

(1) *Contingent fee* is any fee that is based, in whole or in part, on whether or not a position taken on a tax return or other filing avoids challenge by the Internal Revenue Service or is sustained either by the Internal Revenue Service or in litigation. A contingent fee includes a fee that is based on a percentage of the refund reported on a return, that is based on a percentage of the taxes saved, or that otherwise depends on the specific result attained. A contingent fee also includes any fee arrangement in which the practitioner will reimburse the client for all or a portion of the client's fee in

the event that a position taken on a tax return or other filing is challenged by the Internal Revenue Service or is not sustained, whether pursuant to an indemnity agreement, a guarantee, rescission rights, or any other arrangement with a similar effect.

(2) Matter before the Internal Revenue Service includes tax planning and advice, preparing or filing or assisting in preparing or filing returns or claims for refund or credit, and all matters connected with a presentation to the Internal Revenue Service or any of its officers or employees relating to a taxpayer's rights, privileges, or liabilities under laws or regulations administered by the Internal Revenue Service. Such presentations include, but are not limited to, preparing and filing documents, corresponding and communicating with the Internal Revenue Service, rendering written advice with respect to any entity, transaction, plan or arrangement, and representing a client at conferences, hearings, and meetings.

(d) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable for fee arrangements entered into after March 26, 2008.

§ 10.28 Return of client's records.

(a) In general, a practitioner must, at the request of a client, promptly return any and all records of the client that are necessary for the client to comply with his or her Federal tax obligations. The practitioner may retain copies of the records returned to a client. The existence of a dispute over fees generally does not relieve the practitioner of his or her responsibility under this section. Nevertheless, if applicable state law allows or permits the retention of a client's records by a practitioner in the

case of a dispute over fees for services rendered, the practitioner need only return those records that must be attached to the taxpayer's return. The practitioner, however, must provide the client with reasonable access to review and copy any additional records of the client retained by the practitioner under state law that are necessary for the client to comply with his or her Federal tax obligations.

(b) For purposes of this section--
Records of the client include all documents or written or electronic materials provided to the practitioner, or obtained by the practitioner in the course of the practitioner's representation of the client, that preexisted the retention of the practitioner by the client. The term also includes materials that were prepared by the client or a third party (not including an employee or agent of the practitioner) at any time and provided to the practitioner with respect to the subject matter of the representation. The term also includes any return, claim for refund, schedule, affidavit, appraisal or any other document prepared by the practitioner, or his or her employee or agent, that was presented to the client with respect to a prior representation if such document is necessary for the taxpayer to comply with his or her current Federal tax obligations. The term does not include any return, claim for refund, schedule, affidavit, appraisal or any other document prepared by the practitioner or the practitioner's firm, employees or agents if the practitioner is withholding such document pending the client's performance of its contractual obligation to pay fees with respect to such document.

§ 10.29 Conflicting interests.

(a) Except as provided by paragraph (b) of this section, a practitioner shall not represent a client before the Internal Revenue Service if the representation involves a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest exists if --

(1) The representation of one client will be directly adverse to another client; or

(2) There is a significant risk that the representation of one or more clients will be materially limited by the practitioner's responsibilities to another client, a former client or a third person or by a personal interest of the practitioner.

(b) Notwithstanding the existence of a conflict of interest under paragraph (a) of this section, the practitioner may represent a client if --

(1) The practitioner reasonably believes that the practitioner will be able to provide competent and diligent representation to each affected client;

(2) The representation is not prohibited by law;

(3) Each affected client waives the conflict of interest and gives informed consent, confirmed in writing by each affected client, at the time the existence of the conflict of interest is known by the practitioner. The confirmation may be made within a reasonable period after the informed consent, but in no event later than 30 days.

(c) Copies of the written consents must be retained by the practitioner for at least 36 months from the date of the conclusion of the representation of the affected clients, and the written consents must be provided to any officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service on request.

(d) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.30 Solicitation.

(a) Advertising and solicitation restrictions.

(1) A practitioner may not, with respect to any Internal Revenue Service matter, in any way use or participate in the use of any form of public communication or private solicitation containing a false, fraudulent, or coercive statement or claim; or a misleading or deceptive statement or claim. Enrolled agents or enrolled retirement plan agents, in describing their professional designation, may not utilize the term of art "certified" or imply an employer/employee relationship with the Internal Revenue Service. Examples of acceptable descriptions for enrolled agents are "enrolled to represent taxpayers before the Internal Revenue Service," "enrolled to practice before the Internal Revenue Service," and "admitted to practice before the Internal Revenue Service." Similarly, examples of acceptable descriptions for enrolled retirement plan agents are "enrolled to represent taxpayers before the Internal Revenue Service as a retirement plan agent" and "enrolled to practice before the Internal Revenue Service as a retirement plan agent."

(2) A practitioner may not make, directly or indirectly, an uninvited written or oral solicitation of employment in matters related to the Internal Revenue Service if the solicitation violates Federal or State law or other applicable rule, e.g., attorneys are precluded from making a solicitation that is prohibited by conduct rules applicable to all attorneys in their State(s) of licensure. Any lawful

solicitation made by or on behalf of a practitioner eligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service must, nevertheless, clearly identify the solicitation as such and, if applicable, identify the source of the information used in choosing the recipient.

(b) Fee information.

(1)(i) A practitioner may publish the availability of a written schedule of fees and disseminate the following fee information--

(A) Fixed fees for specific routine services.

(B) Hourly rates.

(C) Range of fees for particular services.

(D) Fee charged for an initial consultation.

(ii) Any statement of fee information concerning matters in which costs may be incurred must include a statement disclosing whether clients will be responsible for such costs.

(2) A practitioner may charge no more than the rate(s) published under paragraph (b)(1) of this section for at least 30 calendar days after the last date on which the schedule of fees was published.

(c) Communication of fee information.

Fee information may be communicated in professional lists, telephone directories, print media, mailings, and electronic mail, facsimile, hand delivered flyers, radio, television, and any other method. The method chosen, however, must not cause the communication to become untruthful, deceptive, or otherwise in violation of this part. A practitioner may not persist in attempting to contact a prospective client if the prospective client has made it known to the practitioner that he or she does not desire to be solicited. In the case of radio and television

broadcasting, the broadcast must be recorded and the practitioner must retain a recording of the actual transmission. In the case of direct mail and e-commerce communications, the practitioner must retain a copy of the actual communication, along with a list or other description of persons to whom the communication was mailed or otherwise distributed. The copy must be retained by the practitioner for a period of at least 36 months from the date of the last transmission or use.

(d) Improper associations. A practitioner may not, in matters related to the Internal Revenue Service, assist, or accept assistance from, any person or entity who, to the knowledge of the practitioner, obtains clients or otherwise practices in a manner forbidden under this section.

(e) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under Control No. 1545-1726)

§ 10.31 Negotiation of taxpayer checks.

A practitioner who prepares tax returns may not endorse or otherwise negotiate any check issued to a client by the government in respect of a Federal tax liability.

§ 10.32 Practice of law.

Nothing in the regulations in this part may be construed as authorizing persons not members of the bar to practice law.

§ 10.33 Best practices for tax advisors.

(a) Best practices. Tax advisors should provide clients with the highest quality representation concerning Federal tax issues by adhering to best practices in providing advice and in preparing or assisting in the preparation of a submission to the Internal Revenue Service. In addition to compliance with the standards of practice provided elsewhere in this part, best practices include the following:

(1) Communicating clearly with the client regarding the terms of the engagement. For example, the advisor should determine the client's expected purpose for and use of the advice and should have a clear understanding with the client regarding the form and scope of the advice or assistance to be rendered.

(2) Establishing the facts, determining which facts are relevant, evaluating the reasonableness of any assumptions or representations, relating the applicable law (including potentially applicable judicial doctrines) to the relevant facts, and arriving at a conclusion supported by the law and the facts.

(3) Advising the client regarding the import of the conclusions reached, including, for example, whether a taxpayer may avoid accuracy-related penalties under the Internal Revenue Code if a taxpayer acts in reliance on the advice.

(4) Acting fairly and with integrity in practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(b) Procedures to ensure best practices for tax advisors. Tax advisors with responsibility for overseeing a firm's practice of providing advice concerning Federal tax issues or of preparing or assisting in the preparation of submissions to the Internal Revenue

Service should take reasonable steps to ensure that the firm's procedures for all members, associates, and employees are consistent with the best practices set forth in paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) Applicability date. This section is effective after June 20, 2005.

§ 10.34 Standards with respect to tax returns and documents, affidavits and other papers.

(a) *[Reserved]*

(b) Documents, affidavits and other papers -- (1) A practitioner may not advise a client to take a position on a document, affidavit or other paper submitted to the Internal Revenue Service unless the position is not frivolous.

(2) A practitioner may not advise a client to submit a document, affidavit or other paper to the Internal Revenue Service--

(i) The purpose of which is to delay or impede the administration of the Federal tax laws;

(ii) That is frivolous; or

(iii) That contains or omits information in a manner that demonstrates an intentional disregard of a rule or regulation unless the practitioner also advises the client to submit a document that evidences a good faith challenge to the rule or regulation.

(c) Advising clients on potential penalties -- (1) A practitioner must inform a client of any penalties that are reasonably likely to apply to the client with respect to--

(i) A position taken on a tax return if--

(A) The practitioner advised the client with respect to the position; or

(B) The practitioner prepared or signed the tax return; and

(ii) Any document, affidavit or other paper submitted to the Internal Revenue Service.

(2) The practitioner also must inform the client of any opportunity to avoid any such penalties by disclosure, if relevant, and of the requirements for adequate disclosure.

(3) This paragraph (c) applies even if the practitioner is not subject to a penalty under the Internal Revenue Code with respect to the position or with respect to the document, affidavit or other paper submitted.

(d) Relying on information furnished by clients. A practitioner advising a client to take a position on a tax return, document, affidavit or other paper submitted to the Internal Revenue Service, or preparing or signing a tax return as a preparer, generally may rely in good faith without verification upon information furnished by the client. The practitioner may not, however, ignore the implications of information furnished to, or actually known by, the practitioner, and must make reasonable inquiries if the information as furnished appears to be incorrect, inconsistent with an important fact or another factual assumption, or incomplete.

(e) [Reserved]

(f) Effective/applicability date. Section 10.34 is applicable to tax returns, documents, affidavits, and other papers filed on or after September 26, 2007.

§ 10.35 Requirements for covered opinions.

(a) A practitioner who provides a covered opinion shall comply with the standards of practice in this section.

(b) Definitions. For purposes of this subpart--

(1) A practitioner includes any individual described in §10.2(a)(5).

(2) Covered opinion -- (i) In general. A covered opinion is written advice (including electronic communications) by a practitioner concerning one or more Federal tax issues arising from --

(A) A transaction that is the same as or substantially similar to a transaction that, at the time the advice is rendered, the Internal Revenue Service has determined to be a tax avoidance transaction and identified by published guidance as a listed transaction under 26 CFR 1.6011-4(b)(2);

(B) Any partnership or other entity, any investment plan or arrangement, or any other plan or arrangement, the principal purpose of which is the avoidance or evasion of any tax imposed by the Internal Revenue Code; or

(C) Any partnership or other entity, any investment plan or arrangement, or any other plan or arrangement, a significant purpose of which is the avoidance or evasion of any tax imposed by the Internal Revenue Code if the written advice--

(1) Is a *reliance opinion*;

(2) Is a *marketed opinion*;

(3) Is subject to *conditions of confidentiality*; or

(4) Is subject to *contractual protection*.

(ii) Excluded advice. A covered opinion does not include--

(A) Written advice provided to a client during the course of an engagement if a practitioner is reasonably expected to provide subsequent written advice to the client that satisfies the requirements of this section;

(B) Written advice, other than advice described in paragraph (b)(2)(i) (A) of this section (concerning listed

transactions) or paragraph (b)(2)(i)(B) of this section (concerning the principal purpose of avoidance or evasion) that--

(1) Concerns the qualification of a qualified plan;

(2) Is a *State or local bond opinion*;
or

(3) Is included in documents required to be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

(C) Written advice prepared for and provided to a taxpayer, solely for use by that taxpayer, after the taxpayer has filed a tax return with the Internal Revenue Service reflecting the tax benefits of the transaction. The preceding sentence does not apply if the practitioner knows or has reason to know that the written advice will be relied upon by the taxpayer to take a position on a tax return (including for these purposes an amended return that claims tax benefits not reported on a previously filed return) filed after the date on which the advice is provided to the taxpayer;

(D) Written advice provided to an employer by a practitioner in that practitioner's capacity as an employee of that employer solely for purposes of determining the tax liability of the employer; or

(E) Written advice that does not resolve a Federal tax issue in the taxpayer's favor, unless the advice reaches a conclusion favorable to the taxpayer at any confidence level (e.g., not frivolous, realistic possibility of success, reasonable basis or substantial authority) with respect to that issue. If written advice concerns more than one Federal tax issue, the advice must comply with the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section with respect to any Federal tax issue not described in the preceding sentence.

(3) *A Federal tax issue* is a question concerning the Federal tax treatment of an item of income, gain, loss, deduction, or credit, the existence or absence of a taxable transfer of property, or the value of property for Federal tax purposes. For purposes of this subpart, a *Federal tax issue* is significant if the Internal Revenue Service has a reasonable basis for a successful challenge and its resolution could have a significant impact, whether beneficial or adverse and under any reasonably foreseeable circumstance, on the overall Federal tax treatment of the transaction(s) or matter(s) addressed in the opinion.

(4) *Reliance opinion*--(i) Written advice is a *reliance opinion* if the advice concludes at a confidence level of at least more likely than not a greater than 50 percent likelihood) that one or more significant Federal tax issues would be resolved in the taxpayer's favor.

(ii) For purposes of this section, written advice, other than advice described in paragraph (b)(2)(i)(A) of this section (concerning listed transactions) or paragraph (b)(2)(i)(B) of this section (concerning the principal purpose of avoidance or evasion), is not treated as a *reliance opinion* if the practitioner prominently discloses in the written advice that it was not intended or written by the practitioner to be used, and that it cannot be used by the taxpayer, for the purpose of avoiding penalties that may be imposed on the taxpayer.

(5) *Marketed opinion*--(i) Written advice is a *marketed opinion* if the practitioner knows or has reason to know that the written advice will be used or referred to by a person other than the practitioner (or a person who is a member of, associated with, or employed by the practitioner's firm) in

promoting, marketing or recommending a partnership or other entity, investment plan or arrangement to one or more taxpayer(s).

(ii) For purposes of this section, written advice, other than advice described in paragraph (b)(2)(i)(A) of this section (concerning listed transactions) or paragraph (b)(2)(i)(B) of this section (concerning the principal purpose of avoidance or evasion), is not treated as a *marketed opinion* if the practitioner prominently discloses in the written advice that--

(A) The advice was not intended or written by the practitioner to be used, and that it cannot be used by any taxpayer, for the purpose of avoiding penalties that may be imposed on the taxpayer;

(B) The advice was written to support the promotion or marketing of the transaction(s) or matter(s) addressed by the written advice; and

(C) The taxpayer should seek advice based on the taxpayer's particular circumstances from an independent tax advisor.

(6) Conditions of confidentiality. Written advice is subject to *conditions of confidentiality* if the practitioner imposes on one or more recipients of the written advice a limitation on disclosure of the tax treatment or tax structure of the transaction and the limitation on disclosure protects the confidentiality of that practitioner's tax strategies, regardless of whether the limitation on disclosure is legally binding. A claim that a transaction is proprietary or exclusive is not a limitation on disclosure if the practitioner confirms to all recipients of the written advice that there is no limitation on disclosure of the tax treatment or tax structure of the

transaction that is the subject of the written advice.

(7) Contractual protection. Written advice is subject to *contractual protection* if the taxpayer has the right to a full or partial refund of fees paid to the practitioner (or a person who is a member of, associated with, or employed by the practitioner's firm) if all or a part of the intended tax consequences from the matters addressed in the written advice are not sustained, or if the fees paid to the practitioner (or a person who is a member of, associated with, or employed by the practitioner's firm) are contingent on the taxpayer's realization of tax benefits from the transaction. All the facts and circumstances relating to the matters addressed in the written advice will be considered when determining whether a fee is refundable or contingent, including the right to reimbursements of amounts that the parties to a transaction have not designated as fees or any agreement to provide services without reasonable compensation.

(8) Prominently disclosed. An item is *prominently disclosed* if it is readily apparent to a reader of the written advice. Whether an item is readily apparent will depend on the facts and circumstances surrounding the written advice including, but not limited to, the sophistication of the taxpayer and the length of the written advice. At a minimum, to be prominently disclosed an item must be set forth in a separate section (and not in a footnote) in a typeface that is the same size or larger than the typeface of any discussion of the facts or law in the written advice.

(9) State or local bond opinion. A *State or local bond opinion* is written advice with respect to a *Federal tax*

issue included in any materials delivered to a purchaser of a State or local bond in connection with the issuance of the bond in a public or private offering, including an official statement (if one is prepared), that concerns only the excludability of interest on a State or local bond from gross income under section 103 of the Internal Revenue Code, the application of section 55 of the Internal Revenue Code to a State or local bond, the status of a State or local bond as a qualified tax-exempt obligation under section 265 (b)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, the status of a State or local bond as a qualified zone academy bond under section 1397E of the Internal Revenue Code, or any combination of the above.

(10) *The principal purpose.* For purposes of this section, the principal purpose of a partnership or other entity, investment plan or arrangement, or other plan or arrangement is the avoidance or evasion of any tax imposed by the Internal Revenue Code if that purpose exceeds any other purpose. The principal purpose of a partnership or other entity, investment plan or arrangement, or other plan or arrangement is not to avoid or evade Federal tax if that partnership, entity, plan or arrangement has as its purpose the claiming of tax benefits in a manner consistent with the statute and Congressional purpose. A partnership, entity, plan or arrangement may have a significant purpose of avoidance or evasion even though it does not have the principal purpose of avoidance or evasion under this paragraph (b)(10).

(c) *Requirements for covered opinions.* A practitioner providing a covered opinion must comply with each of the following requirements.

(1) *Factual matters.* (i) The practitioner must use reasonable efforts

to identify and ascertain the facts, which may relate to future events if a transaction is prospective or proposed, and to determine which facts are relevant. The opinion must identify and consider all facts that the practitioner determines to be relevant.

(ii) The practitioner must not base the opinion on any unreasonable factual assumptions (including assumptions as to future events). An unreasonable factual assumption includes a factual assumption that the practitioner knows or should know is incorrect or incomplete. For example, it is unreasonable to assume that a transaction has a business purpose or that a transaction is potentially profitable apart from tax benefits. A factual assumption includes reliance on a projection, financial forecast or appraisal. It is unreasonable for a practitioner to rely on a projection, financial forecast or appraisal if the practitioner knows or should know that the projection, financial forecast or appraisal is incorrect or incomplete or was prepared by a person lacking the skills or qualifications necessary to prepare such projection, financial forecast or appraisal. The opinion must identify in a separate section all factual assumptions relied upon by the practitioner.

(iii) The practitioner must not base the opinion on any unreasonable factual representations, statements or findings or of the taxpayer or any other person. An unreasonable factual representation includes a factual representation that the practitioner knows or should know is incorrect or incomplete. For example, a practitioner may not rely on a factual representation that a transaction has a business purpose if the representation does not include a specific description of

the business purpose or the practitioner knows or should know that the representation is incorrect or incomplete. The opinion must identify in a separate section all factual representations, statements or finds of the taxpayer relied upon by the practitioner.

(2) Relate law to facts. (i) The opinion must relate the applicable law (including potentially applicable judicial doctrines) to the relevant facts.

(ii) The practitioner must not assume the favorable resolution of any significant Federal tax issue except as provided in paragraphs (c)(3)(v) and (d) of this section, or otherwise base an opinion on any unreasonable legal assumptions, representations, or conclusions.

(iii) The opinion must not contain internally inconsistent legal analyses or conclusions.

(3) Evaluation of significant Federal tax issues--(i) *In general.* The opinion must consider all significant Federal tax issues except as provided in paragraphs (c)(3)(v) and (d) of this section.

(ii) Conclusion as to each significant Federal tax issues. The opinion must provide the practitioner's conclusion as to the likelihood that the taxpayer will prevail on the merits with respect to each significant Federal tax issue considered in the opinion. If the practitioner is unable to reach a conclusion with respect to one or more of those issues, the opinion must state that the practitioner is unable to reach a conclusion with respect to those issues. The opinion must describe the reasons for the conclusions, including the facts and analysis supporting the conclusions, or describe the reasons that the practitioner is unable to reach a conclusion as to one or more issues. If the practitioner fails to reach a conclusion at the confidence level of at

least more likely than not with respect to one or more significant Federal tax issues considered, the opinion must include the appropriate disclosure(s) required under paragraph (e) of this section.

(iii) Evaluation based on chances of success on the merits. In evaluating the significant Federal tax issues addressed in the opinion, the practitioner must not take into account the possibility that a tax return will not be audited, that an issue will not be raised on audit, or that an issue will be resolved through settlement if raised.

(iv) Marketed opinions. In the case of a *marketed opinion*, the opinion must provide the practitioner's conclusion that the taxpayer will prevail on the merits at a confidence level of at least more likely than not with respect to each significant Federal tax issue. If the practitioner is unable to reach a more likely than not conclusion with respect to each significant Federal tax issue, the practitioner must not provide the marketed opinion, but may provide written advice that satisfies the requirements in paragraph (b)(5)(ii) of this section.

(v) Limited scope opinions. (A) The practitioner may provide an opinion that considers less than all of the significant Federal tax issues if--

(1) The practitioner and the taxpayer agree that the scope of the opinion and the taxpayer's potential reliance on the opinion for purposes of avoiding penalties that may be imposed on the taxpayer are limited to the Federal tax issue(s) addressed in the opinion;

(2) The opinion is not advice described in paragraph (b)(2)(i)(A) of this section (concerning listed transactions), paragraph (b)(2)(i)(B) of this section (concerning the principal

purpose of avoidance or evasion) or paragraph (b)(5) of this section (a *marketed opinion*); and

(3) The opinion includes the appropriate disclosure(s) required under paragraph (e) of this section.

(B) A practitioner may make reasonable assumptions regarding the favorable resolution of a Federal tax issue (as assumed issue) for purposes of providing an opinion on less than all of the significant Federal tax issues as provided in this paragraph (c)(3)(v). The opinion must identify in a separate section all issues for which the practitioner assumed a favorable resolution.

(4) Overall conclusion. (i) The opinion must provide the practitioner's overall conclusion as to the likelihood that the Federal tax treatment of the transaction or matter that is the subject of the opinion is the proper treatment and the reasons for that conclusion. If the practitioner is unable to reach an overall conclusion, the opinion must state that the practitioner is unable to reach an overall conclusion and describe the reasons for the practitioner's inability to reach a conclusion.

(ii) In the case of a *marketed opinion*, the opinion must provide the practitioner's overall conclusion that the Federal tax treatment of the transaction or matter that is the subject of the opinion is the proper treatment at a confidence level of at least more likely than not.

(d) Competence to provide opinion; reliance on opinions of others. (1) The practitioner must be knowledgeable in all of the aspects of Federal tax law relevant to the opinion being rendered, except that the practitioner may rely on the opinion of another practitioner with

respect to one or more significant Federal tax issues, unless the practitioner knows or should know that the opinion of the other practitioner should not be relied on. If a practitioner relies on the opinion of another practitioner, the relying practitioner's opinion must identify the other opinion and set forth the conclusions reached in the other opinion.

(2) The practitioner must be satisfied that the combined analysis of the opinions, taken as a whole, and the overall conclusion, if any, satisfy the requirements of this section.

(e) Required disclosures. A covered opinion must contain all of the following disclosures that apply--

(1) Relationship between promoter and practitioner. An opinion must prominently disclose the existence of--

(i) Any compensation arrangement, such as a referral fee or a fee-sharing arrangement, between the practitioner (or the practitioner's firm or any person who is a member of, associated with, or employed by the practitioner's firm) and any person (other than the client for whom the opinion is prepared) with respect to promoting, marketing or recommending the entity, plan, or arrangement (or a substantially similar arrangement) that is the subject of the opinion; or

(ii) Any referral agreement between the practitioner (or the practitioner's firm or any person who is a member of, associated with, or employed by the practitioner's firm) and a person (other than the client for whom the opinion is prepared) engaged in promoting, marketing or recommending the entity, plan, or arrangement (or a substantially similar arrangement) that is the subject of the opinion.

(2) Marketed opinions. A marketed opinion must prominently disclose that--

(i) The opinion was written to support the promotion or marketing of the transaction(s) or matter(s) addressed in the opinion; and

(ii) The taxpayer should seek advice based on the taxpayer's particular circumstances from an independent tax advisor.

(3) Limited scope opinions. A limited scope opinion must prominently disclose that--

(i) The opinion is limited to the one or more Federal tax issues addressed in the opinion;

(ii) Additional issues may exist that could affect the Federal tax treatment of the transaction or matter that is the subject of the opinion and the opinion does not consider or provide a conclusion with respect to any additional issues; and

(iii) With respect to any significant Federal tax issues outside the limited scope of the opinion, the opinion was not written, and cannot be used by the taxpayer, for the purpose of avoiding penalties that may be imposed on the taxpayer.

(4) Opinions that fail to reach a more likely than not conclusion. An opinion that does not reach a conclusion at a confidence level of at least more likely than not with respect to a significant Federal tax issue must prominently disclose that --

(i) The opinion does not reach a conclusion at a confidence level of at least more likely than not with respect to one or more significant Federal tax issues addressed by the opinion; and

(ii) With respect to those significant Federal tax issues, the opinion was not written, and cannot be used by the taxpayer, for the purpose of avoiding

penalties that may be imposed on the taxpayer.

(5) Advice regarding required disclosures. In the case of any disclosure required under this section, the practitioner may not provide advice to any person that is contrary to or inconsistent with the required disclosure.

(f) Effect of opinion that meets these standards--(1) In general. An opinion that meets the requirements of this section satisfies the practitioner's responsibilities under this section, but the persuasiveness of the opinion with regard to the tax issues in question and the taxpayer's good faith reliance on the opinion will be determined separately under applicable provisions of the law and regulations.

(2) Standards for other written advice. A practitioner who provides written advice that is not a covered opinion for purposes of this section is subject to the requirements of §10.37.

(g) Effective date. This section applies to written advice that is rendered after June 20, 2005.

§ 10.36 Procedures to ensure compliance.

(a) Requirements for covered opinions. Any practitioner who has (or practitioners who have or share) principal authority and responsibility for overseeing a firm's practice of providing advice concerning Federal tax issues must take reasonable steps to ensure that the firm has adequate procedures in effect for all members, associates, and employees for purposes of complying with §10.35. Any such practitioner will be subject to discipline for failing to comply with the requirements of this paragraph if--

(1) The practitioner through willfulness, recklessness, or gross incompetence does not take reasonable steps to ensure that the firm has adequate procedures to comply with §10.35, and one or more individuals who are members of, associated with, or employed by, the firm are, or have engaged in a pattern or practice, in connection with their practice with the firm, of failing to comply with §10.35; or

(2) The practitioner knows or should know that one or more individuals who are members of, associated with, or employed by, the firm are, or have, engaged in a pattern or practice, in connection with their practice with the firm, that does not comply with §10.35 and the practitioner, through willfulness, recklessness, or gross incompetence, fails to take prompt action to correct the noncompliance.

(b) *Effective date.* This section is applicable after June 20, 2005.

§ 10.37 Requirements for other written advice.

(a) *Requirements.* A practitioner must not give written advice (including electronic communications) concerning one or more Federal tax issues if the practitioner bases the written advice on unreasonable factual or legal assumptions (including assumptions as to future events), unreasonably relies upon representations, statements, findings or agreements of the taxpayer or any other person, does not consider all relevant facts that the practitioner knows or should know, or, in evaluating a Federal tax issue, takes into account the possibility that a tax return will not be audited, that an issue will not be raised on audit, or that an issue will be resolved

through settlement if raised. All facts and circumstances, including the scope of the engagement and the type and specificity of the advice sought by the client will be considered in determining whether a practitioner has failed to comply with this section. In the case of an opinion the practitioner knows or has reason to know will be used or referred to by a person other than the practitioner (or a person who is a member of, associated with, or employed by the practitioner's firm) in promoting, marketing or recommending to one or more taxpayers a partnership or other entity, investment plan or arrangement a significant purpose of which is the avoidance or evasion of any tax imposed by the Internal Revenue Code, the determination of whether a practitioner has failed to comply with this section will be made on the basis of a heightened standard of care because of the greater risk caused by the practitioner's lack of knowledge of the taxpayer's particular circumstances.

(b) *Effective date.* This section applies to written advice that is rendered after June 20, 2005.

§ 10.38 Establishment of advisory committees.

(a) *Advisory committees.* To promote and maintain the public's confidence in tax advisors, the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility is authorized to establish one or more advisory committees composed of at least five individuals authorized to practice before the Internal Revenue Service. The Director should ensure that membership of an advisory committee is balanced among those who practice as attorneys, accountants, and enrolled agents. Under procedures

prescribed by the Director, an advisory committee may review and make general recommendations regarding professional standards or best practices for tax advisors, including whether hypothetical conduct would give rise to a violation of §§10.35 or 10.36.

(b) *Effective date.* This section applies after December 20, 2004.

Subpart C--Sanctions for Violation of the Regulations

§ 10.50 Sanctions.

(a) *Authority to censure, suspend, or disbar.* The Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, after notice and an opportunity for a proceeding, may censure, suspend, or disbar any practitioner from practice before the Internal Revenue Service if the practitioner is shown to be incompetent or disreputable (within the meaning of §10.51), fails to comply with any regulation in this part (under the prohibited conduct standards of §10.52), or with intent to defraud, willfully and knowingly misleads or threatens a client or prospective client. Censure is a public reprimand.

(b) *Authority to disqualify.* The Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, after due notice and opportunity for hearing, may disqualify any appraiser for a violation of these rules as applicable to appraisers.

(1) If any appraiser is disqualified pursuant to this subpart C, the appraiser is barred from presenting evidence or testimony in any administrative proceeding before the Department of Treasury or the Internal Revenue Service, unless and until authorized to do so by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility pursuant to §10.81, regardless of whether the

evidence or testimony would pertain to an appraisal made prior to or after the effective date of disqualification.

(2) Any appraisal made by a disqualified appraiser after the effective date of disqualification will not have any probative effect in any administrative proceeding before the Department of the Treasury or the Internal Revenue Service. An appraisal otherwise barred from admission into evidence pursuant to this section may be admitted into evidence solely for the purpose of determining the taxpayer's reliance in good faith on such appraisal.

(c) *Authority to impose monetary penalty--*(1) In general. (i) The Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, after notice and an opportunity for a proceeding, may impose a monetary penalty on any practitioner who engages in conduct subject to sanction under paragraph (a) of this section.

(ii) If the practitioner described in paragraph (c)(1)(i) of this section was acting on behalf of an employer or any firm or other entity in connection with the conduct giving rise to the penalty, the Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, may impose a monetary penalty on the employer, firm, or entity if it knew, or reasonably should have known of such conduct.

(2) Amount of penalty. The amount of the penalty shall not exceed the gross income derived (or to be derived) from the conduct giving rise to the penalty.

(3) Coordination with other sanctions. Subject to paragraph (c)(2) of this section--

(i) Any monetary penalty imposed on a practitioner under this paragraph (c) may be in addition to or in lieu of any suspension, disbarment or censure and may be in addition to a penalty imposed

on an employer, firm or other entity under paragraph (c)(1)(ii) of this section.

(ii) Any monetary penalty imposed on an employer, firm or other entity may be in addition to or in lieu of penalties imposed under paragraph (c)(1)(i) of this section.

(d) Sanctions to be imposed. The sanctions imposed by this section shall take into account all relevant facts and circumstances.

(e) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable to conduct occurring on or after September 26, 2007, except paragraph (c) which applies to prohibited conduct that occurs after October 22, 2004.

§ 10.51 Incompetence and disreputable conduct.

(a) Incompetence and disreputable conduct. Incompetence and disreputable conduct for which a practitioner may be sanctioned under §10.50 includes, but is not limited to--

(1) Conviction of any criminal offense under the Federal tax laws.

(2) Conviction of any criminal offense involving dishonesty or breach of trust.

(3) Conviction of any felony under Federal or State law for which the conduct involved renders the practitioner unfit to practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(4) Giving false or misleading information, or participating in any way in the giving of false or misleading information to the Department of the Treasury or any officer or employee thereof, or to any tribunal authorized to pass upon Federal tax matters, in connection with any matter pending or likely to be pending before them, knowing the information to be false or misleading. Facts or other matters

contained in testimony, Federal tax returns, financial statements, applications for enrollment, affidavits, declarations, and any other document or statement, written or oral, are included in the term "information."

(5) Solicitation of employment as prohibited under §10.30, the use of false or misleading representations with intent to deceive a client or prospective client in order to procure employment, or intimating that the practitioner is able improperly to obtain special consideration or action from the Internal Revenue Service or any officer or employee thereof.

(6) Willfully failing to make a Federal tax return in violation of the Federal tax laws, or willfully evading, attempting to evade, or participating in any way in evading or attempting to evade any assessment or payment of any Federal tax.

(7) Willfully assisting, counseling, encouraging a client or prospective client in violating, or suggesting to a client or prospective client to violate, any Federal tax law, or knowingly counseling or suggesting to a client or prospective client an illegal plan to evade Federal taxes or payment thereof.

(8) Misappropriation of, or failure properly and promptly to remit, funds received from a client for the purpose of payment of taxes or other obligations due the United States.

(9) Directly or indirectly attempting to influence, or offering or agreeing to attempt to influence, the official action of any officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service by the use of threats, false accusations, duress or coercion, by the offer of any special inducement or promise of advantage or by the bestowing of any gift, favor or thing of value.

(10) Disbarment or suspension from practice as an attorney, certified public accountant, public accountant, or actuary by any duly constituted authority of any State, territory or possession of the United States, including a Commonwealth, or the District of Columbia, any Federal court of record or any Federal agency, body or board.

(11) Knowingly aiding and abetting another person to practice before the Internal Revenue Service during a period of suspension, disbarment, or ineligibility of such other person.

(12) Contemptuous conduct in connection with practice before the Internal Revenue Service, including the use of abusive language, making false accusations or statements, knowing them to be false, or circulating or publishing malicious or libelous matter.

(13) Giving a false opinion, knowingly, recklessly, or through gross incompetence, including an opinion which is intentionally or recklessly misleading, or engaging in a pattern of providing incompetent opinions on questions arising under the Federal tax laws. False opinions described in this paragraph (a)(13) include those which reflect or result from a knowing misstatement of fact or law, from an assertion of a position known to be unwarranted under existing law, from counseling or assisting in conduct known to be illegal or fraudulent, from concealing matters required by law to be revealed, or from consciously disregarding information indicating that material facts expressed in the tax opinion or offering material are false or misleading. For purposes of this paragraph (a)(13), reckless conduct is a highly unreasonable omission or misrepresentation involving an extreme departure from the standards of ordinary

care that a practitioner should observe under the circumstances. A pattern of conduct is a factor that will be taken into account in determining whether a practitioner acted knowingly, recklessly, or through gross incompetence. Gross incompetence includes conduct that reflects gross indifference, preparation which is grossly inadequate under the circumstances, and a consistent failure to perform obligations to the client.

(14) Willfully failing to sign a tax return prepared by the practitioner when the practitioner's signature is required by Federal tax laws unless the failure is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect.

(15) Willfully disclosing or otherwise using a tax return or tax return information in a manner not authorized by the Internal Revenue Code, contrary to the order of a court of competent jurisdiction, or contrary to the order of an administrative law judge in a proceeding instituted under §10.60.

(b) *Effective/applicability date.* This section is applicable to conduct occurring on or after September 26, 2007.

§ 10.52 Violations subject to sanction.

(a) A practitioner may be sanctioned under §10.50 if the practitioner--

(1) Willfully violates any of the regulations (other than §10.33) contained in this part; or

(2) Recklessly or through gross incompetence (within the meaning of §10.51(a)(13)) violates §§ 10.34, 10.35, 10.36 or 10.37.

(b) *Effective/applicability date.* This section is applicable to conduct occurring on or after September 26, 2007.

§ 10.53 Receipt of information concerning practitioner.

(a) Officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service. If an officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service has reason to believe that a practitioner has violated any provision of this part, the officer or employee will promptly make a written report to the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility of the suspected violation. The report will explain the facts and reasons upon which the officer's or employee's belief rests.

(b) Other persons. Any person other than an officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service having information of a violation of any provision of this part may make an oral or written report of the alleged violation to the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility or any officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service. If the report is made to an officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service, the officer or employee will make a written report of the suspected violation to the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility.

(c) Destruction of report. No report made under paragraph (a) or (b) of this section shall be maintained by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility unless retention of the report is permissible under the applicable records control schedule as approved by the National Archives and Records Administration and designated in the Internal Revenue Manual. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility must destroy

the reports as soon as permissible under the applicable records control schedule.

(d) Effect on proceedings under subpart D. The destruction of any report will not bar any proceeding under subpart D of this part, but will preclude the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility's use of a copy of the report in a proceeding under subpart D of this part.

(e) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

Subpart D -- Rules Applicable to Disciplinary Proceedings

§ 10.60 Institution of proceeding.

(a) Whenever the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility determines that a practitioner (or employer, firm or other entity, if applicable) violated any provision of the laws governing practice before the Internal Revenue Service or the regulations in this part, the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may reprimand the practitioner or, in accordance with §10.62, institute a proceeding for a sanction described in §10.50. A proceeding is instituted by the filing of a complaint, the contents of which are more fully described in §10.62.

(b) Whenever the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility is advised or becomes aware that a penalty has been assessed against an appraiser under section 6701(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may reprimand the appraiser or, in accordance with §10.62, institute a proceeding for disqualification of the appraiser. A proceeding for

disqualification of an appraiser is instituted by the filing of a complaint, the contents of which are more fully described in §10.62.

(c) Except as provided in §10.82, a proceeding will not be instituted under this section unless the proposed respondent previously has been advised in writing of the law, facts and conduct warranting such action and has been accorded an opportunity to dispute facts, assert additional facts, and make arguments (including an explanation or description of mitigating circumstances).

(d) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.61 Conferences.

(a) In general. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may confer with a practitioner, employer, firm or other entity, or an appraiser concerning allegations of misconduct irrespective of whether a proceeding has been instituted. If the conference results in a stipulation in connection with an ongoing proceeding in which the practitioner, employer, firm or other entity, or appraiser is the respondent, the stipulation may be entered in the record by either party to the proceeding.

(b) Voluntary sanction --(1) In general. In lieu of a proceeding being instituted or continued under §10.60(a), a practitioner or appraiser (or employer, firm or other entity, if applicable) may offer a consent to be sanctioned under §10.50.

(2) Discretion; acceptance or declination. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may, in his or her discretion, accept or decline the offer described in paragraph (b)(1) of

this section. In any declination, the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may state that he or she would accept the offer described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section if it contained different terms. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may, in his or her discretion, accept or reject a revised offer submitted in response to the declination or may counteroffer and act upon any accepted counteroffer.

(c) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.62 Contents of complaint.

(a) Charges. A complaint must name the respondent, provide a clear and concise description of the facts and law that constitute the basis for the proceeding, and be signed by the Director of Office of Professional Responsibility or a person representing the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility under §10.69(a)(1). A complaint is sufficient if it fairly informs the respondent of the charges brought so that the respondent is able to prepare a defense.

(b) Specification of sanction. The complaint must specify the sanction sought by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility against the practitioner or appraiser. If the sanction sought is a suspension, the duration of the suspension sought must be specified.

(c) Demand for answer. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility must, in the complaint or in a separate paper attached to the complaint, notify the respondent of the time for answering the complaint, the time for which may not be less than 30 days from the date of service of the

complaint, the name and address of the Administrative Law Judge with whom the answer must be filed, the name and address of the person representing the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility to whom a copy of the answer must be served, and that a decision by default may be rendered against the respondent in the event an answer is not filed as required.

(d) Effective/ applicability date. This section is applicable to complaints brought on or after September 26, 2007.

§ 10.63 Service of complaint; service of other papers; service of evidence in support of complaint; filing of papers.

(a) Service of complaint.

(1) In general. The complaint or a copy of the complaint must be served on the respondent by any manner described in paragraphs (a) (2) or (3) of this section.

(2) Service by certified or first class mail. (i) Service of the complaint may be made on the respondent by mailing the complaint by certified mail to the last known address (as determined under section 6212 of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations thereunder) of the respondent. Where service is by certified mail, the returned post office receipt duly signed by the respondent will be proof of service.

(ii) If the certified mail is not claimed or accepted by the respondent, or is returned undelivered, service may be made on the respondent, by mailing the complaint to the respondent by first class mail. Service by this method will be considered complete upon mailing, provided the complaint is addressed to the respondent at the respondent's last known address as determined under

section 6212 of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations thereunder.

(3) Service by other than certified or first class mail. (i) Service of the complaint may be made on the respondent by delivery by a private delivery service designated pursuant to section 7502(f) of the Internal Revenue Code to the last known address (as determined under section 6212 of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations there under) of the respondent. Service by this method will be considered complete, provided the complaint is addressed to the respondent at the respondent's last known address as determined under section 6212 of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations thereunder.

(ii) Service of the complaint may be made in person on, or by leaving the complaint at the office or place of business of, the respondent. Service by this method will be considered complete and proof of service will be a written statement, sworn or affirmed by the person who served the complaint, identifying the manner of service, including the recipient, relationship of recipient to respondent, place, date and time of service.

(iii) Service may be made by any other means agreed to by the respondent. Proof of service will be a written statement, sworn or affirmed by the person who served the complaint, identifying the manner of service, including the recipient, relationship of recipient to respondent, place, date and time of service.

(4) For purposes of this section, respondent means the practitioner, employer, firm or other entity, or appraiser named in the complaint or any other person having the authority to accept mail on behalf of the practitioner,

employer, firm or other entity or appraiser.

(b) Service of papers other than complaint. Any paper other than the complaint may be served on the respondent, or his or her authorized representative under §10.69(a)(2) by:

(1) mailing the paper by first class mail to the last known address (as determined under section 6212 of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations thereunder) of the respondent or the respondent's authorized representative,

(2) delivery by a private delivery service designated pursuant to section 7502(f) of the Internal Revenue Code to the last known address (as determined under section 6212 of the Internal Revenue Code and the regulations thereunder) of the respondent or the respondent's authorized representative, or

(3) as provided in paragraphs (a)(3)(ii) and (a)(3)(iii) of this section.

(c) Service of papers on the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility. Whenever a paper is required or permitted to be served on the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility in connection with a proceeding under this part, the paper will be served on the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility's authorized representative under §10.69(a)(1) at the address designated in the complaint, or at an address provided in a notice of appearance. If no address is designated in the complaint or provided in a notice of appearance, service will be made on the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, Internal Revenue Service, 1111 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20224.

(d) Service of evidence in support of complaint. Within 10 days of serving the complaint, copies of the evidence in support of the complaint must be served on the respondent in any manner described in paragraphs (a)(2) and (3) of this section.

(e) Filing of papers. Whenever the filing of a paper is required or permitted in connection with a proceeding under this part, the original paper, plus one additional copy, must be filed with the Administrative Law Judge at the address specified in the complaint or at an address otherwise specified by the Administrative Law Judge. All papers filed in connection with a proceeding under this part must be served on the other party, unless the Administrative Law Judge directs otherwise. A certificate evidencing such must be attached to the original paper filed with the Administrative Law Judge.

(f) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable to complaints brought on or after September 26, 2007.

§ 10.64 Answer; default.

(a) Filing. The respondent's answer must be filed with the Administrative Law Judge, and served on the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, within the time specified in the complaint unless, on request or application of the respondent, the time is extended by the Administrative Law Judge.

(b) Contents. The answer must be written and contain a statement of facts that constitute the respondent's grounds of defense. General denials are not permitted. The respondent must specifically admit or deny each allegation set forth in the complaint, except that the respondent may state that

the respondent is without sufficient information to admit or deny a specific allegation. The respondent, nevertheless, may not deny a material allegation in the complaint that the respondent knows to be true, or state that the respondent is without sufficient information to form a belief, when the respondent possesses the required information. The respondent also must state affirmatively any special matters of defense on which he or she relies.

(c) Failure to deny or answer allegations in the complaint. Every allegation in the complaint that is not denied in the answer is deemed admitted and will be considered proved; no further evidence in respect of such allegation need be adduced at a hearing.

(d) Default. Failure to file an answer within the time prescribed (or within the time for answer as extended by the Administrative Law Judge), constitutes an admission of the allegations of the complaint and a waiver of hearing, and the Administrative Law Judge may make the decision by default without a hearing or further procedure. A decision by default constitutes a decision under §10.76.

(e) Signature. The answer must be signed by the respondent or the respondent's authorized representative under §10.69(a)(2) and must include a statement directly above the signature acknowledging that the statements made in the answer are true and correct and that knowing and willful false statements may be punishable under 18 U.S.C. §1001.

§ 10.65 Supplemental charges.

(a) In general. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may file supplemental charges, by

amending the complaint with the permission of the Administrative Law Judge, against the respondent, if, for example--

(1) It appears that the respondent, in the answer, falsely and in bad faith, denies a material allegation of fact in the complaint or states that the respondent has insufficient knowledge to form a belief, when the respondent possesses such information, or

(2) It appears that the respondent has knowingly introduced false testimony during proceedings against the respondent.

(b) Hearing. The supplemental charges may be heard with other charges in the case, provided the respondent is given due notice of the charges and is afforded a reasonable opportunity to prepare a defense to the supplemental charges.

(c) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.66 Reply to answer.

The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may file a reply to the respondent's answer, but unless otherwise ordered by the Administrative Law Judge, no reply to the respondent's answer is required. If a reply is not filed, new matter in the answer is deemed denied.

§ 10.67 Proof; variance; amendment of pleadings.

In the case of a variance between the allegations in pleadings and the evidence adduced in support of the pleadings, the Administrative Law Judge, at any time before decision, may order or authorize amendment of the pleadings to conform

to the evidence. The party who would otherwise be prejudiced by the amendment must be given a reasonable opportunity to address the allegations of the pleadings as amended and the Administrative Law Judge must make findings on any issue presented by the pleadings as amended.

§ 10.68 Motions and requests.

(a) Motions--(1) In general. At any time after the filing of the complaint, any party may file a motion with the Administrative Law Judge. Unless otherwise ordered by the Administrative Law Judge, motions must be in writing and must be served on the opposing party as provided in §10.63(b). A motion must concisely specify its grounds and the relief sought, and, if appropriate, must contain a memorandum of facts and law in support.

(2) Summary adjudication. Either party may move for a summary adjudication upon all or any part of the legal issues in controversy. If the non-moving party opposes summary adjudication in the moving party's favor, the non-moving party must file a written response within 30 days unless ordered otherwise by the Administrative Law Judge.

(3) Good Faith. A party filing a motion for extension of time, a motion for postponement of a hearing, or any other non-dispositive or procedural motion must first contact the other party to determine whether there is any objection to the motion, and must state in the motion whether the other party has an objection.

(b) Response. Unless otherwise ordered by the Administrative Law Judge, the non-moving party is not required to file a response to a motion. If

the Administrative Law Judge does not order the non-moving party to file a response, and the non-moving party files no response, the non-moving party is deemed to oppose the motion. If a non-moving party does not respond within 30 days of the filing of a motion for decision by default for failure to file a timely answer or for failure to prosecute, the non-moving party is deemed not to oppose the motion.

(c) Oral motions; oral argument-- (1) The Administrative Law Judge may, for good cause and with notice to the parties, permit oral motions and oral opposition to motions.

(2) The Administrative Law Judge may, within his or her discretion, permit oral argument on any motion.

(d) Orders. The Administrative Law Judge should issue written orders disposing of any motion or request and any response thereto.

(e) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.69 Representation; ex parte communication.

(a) Representation.

(1) The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may be represented in proceedings under this part by an attorney or other employee of the Internal Revenue Service. An attorney or an employee of the Internal Revenue Service representing the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility in a proceeding under this part may sign the complaint or any document required to be filed in the proceeding on behalf of the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility.

(2) A respondent may appear in person, be represented by a practitioner, or be represented by an attorney who has not filed a declaration with the Internal Revenue Service pursuant to §10.3. A practitioner or an attorney representing a respondent or proposed respondent may sign the answer or any document required to be filed in the proceeding on behalf of the respondent.

(b) Ex parte communication.

The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, the respondent, and any representatives of either party, may not attempt to initiate or participate in ex parte discussions concerning a proceeding or potential proceeding with the Administrative Law Judge (or any person who is likely to advise the Administrative Law Judge on a ruling or decision) in the proceeding before or during the pendency of the proceeding. Any memorandum, letter or other communication concerning the merits of the proceeding, addressed to the Administrative Law Judge, by or on behalf of any party shall be regarded as an argument in the proceeding and shall be served on the other party.

§ 10.70 Administrative Law Judge.

(a) Appointment. Proceedings on complaints for the sanction (as described in §10.50) of a practitioner, employer, firm or other entity, or appraiser will be conducted by an Administrative Law Judge appointed as provided by 5 U.S.C. § 3105.

(b) Powers of the Administrative Law Judge. The Administrative Law Judge, among other powers, has the authority, in connection with any proceeding under §10.60 assigned or referred to him or her, to do the following:

(1) Administer oaths and affirmations;

(2) Make rulings on motions and requests, which rulings may not be appealed prior to the close of a hearing except in extraordinary circumstances and at the discretion of the Administrative Law Judge;

(3) Determine the time and place of hearing and regulate its course and conduct;

(4) Adopt rules of procedure and modify the same from time to time as needed for the orderly disposition of proceedings;

(5) Rule on offers of proof, receive relevant evidence, and examine witnesses;

(6) Take or authorize the taking of depositions or answers to requests for admission;

(7) Receive and consider oral or written argument on facts or law;

(8) Hold or provide for the holding of conferences for the settlement or simplification of the issues with the consent of the parties;

(9) Perform such acts and take such measures as are necessary or appropriate to the efficient conduct of any proceeding; and

(10) Make decisions.

(c) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.71 Discovery.

(a) In general. Discovery may be permitted, at the discretion of the Administrative Law Judge, only upon written motion demonstrating the relevance, materiality and reasonableness of the requested discovery and subject to the requirements of §10.72(d)(2) and (3). Within 10 days of receipt of the answer, the Administrative Law Judge will

notify the parties of the right to request discovery and the timeframe for filing a request. A request for discovery, and objections, must be filed in accordance with §10.68. In response to a request for discovery, the Administrative Law Judge may order--

(1) Depositions upon oral examination; or

(2) Answers to requests for admission.

(b) Depositions upon oral examination -- (1) A deposition must be taken before an officer duly authorized to administer an oath for general purposes or before an officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service who is authorized to administer an oath in Federal tax law matters.

(2) In ordering a deposition, the Administrative Law Judge will require reasonable notice to the opposing party as to the time and place of the deposition. The opposing party, if attending, will be provided the opportunity for full examination and cross-examination of any witness.

(3) Expenses in the reporting of depositions shall be borne by the party at whose instance the deposition is taken. Travel expenses of the deponent shall be borne by the party requesting the deposition, unless otherwise authorized by Federal law or regulation.

(c) Requests for admission. Any party may serve on any other party a written request for admission of the truth of any matters which are not privileged and are relevant to the subject matter of this proceeding. Requests for admission shall not exceed a total of 30 (including any subparts within a specific request) without the approval from the Administrative Law Judge.

(d) Limitations. Discovery shall not be authorized if--

(1) The request fails to meet any requirement set forth in paragraph (a) of this section;

(2) It will unduly delay the proceeding;

(3) It will place an undue burden on the party required to produce the discovery sought;

(4) It is frivolous or abusive;

(5) It is cumulative or duplicative;

(6) The material sought is privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure by law;

(7) The material sought relates to mental impressions, conclusions, or legal theories of any party, attorney, or other representative, or a party prepared in the anticipation of a proceeding; or

(8) The material sought is available generally to the public, equally to the parties, or to the party seeking the discovery through another source.

(e) Failure to comply. Where a party fails to comply with an order of the Administrative Law Judge under this section, the Administrative Law Judge may, among other things, infer that the information would be adverse to the party failing to provide it, exclude the information from evidence or issue a decision by default.

(f) Other discovery. No discovery other than that specifically provided for in this section is permitted.

(g) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable to proceedings initiated on or after September 26, 2007.

§ 10.72 Hearings.

(a) In general --(1) Presiding officer. An Administrative Law Judge will preside at the hearing on a complaint filed under §10.60 for the sanction of a practitioner, employer, firm or other entity, or appraiser.

(2) Time for hearing. Absent a determination by the Administrative Law Judge that, in the interest of justice, a hearing must be held at a later time, the Administrative Law Judge should, on notice sufficient to allow proper preparation, schedule the hearing to occur no later than 180 days after the time for filing the answer.

(3) Procedural requirements. (i) Hearings will be stenographically recorded and transcribed and the testimony of witnesses will be taken under oath or affirmation.

(ii) Hearings will be conducted pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 556.

(iii) A hearing in a proceeding requested under §10.82(g) will be conducted de novo.

(iv) An evidentiary hearing must be held in all proceedings prior to the issuance of a decision by the Administrative Law Judge unless--

(A) The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility withdraws the complaint;

(B) A decision is issued by default pursuant to §10.64(d);

(C) A decision is issued under §10.82 (e);

(D) The respondent requests a decision on the written record without a hearing; or

(E) The Administrative Law Judge issues a decision under §10.68(d) or rules on another motion that disposes of the case prior to the hearing.

(b) Cross-examination. A party is entitled to present his or her case or defense by oral or documentary evidence, to submit rebuttal evidence, and to conduct cross-examination, in the presence of the Administrative Law Judge, as may be required for a full and true disclosure of the facts. This paragraph (b) does not limit a party from

presenting evidence contained within a deposition when the Administrative Law Judge determines that the deposition has been obtained in compliance with the rules of this subpart D.

(c) Prehearing memorandum. Unless otherwise ordered by the Administrative Law Judge, each party shall file, and serve on the opposing party or the opposing party's representative, prior to any hearing, a prehearing memorandum containing--

(1) A list (together with a copy) of all proposed exhibits to be used in the party's case in chief;

(2) A list of proposed witnesses, including a synopsis of their expected testimony, or a statement that no witnesses will be called;

(3) Identification of any proposed expert witnesses, including a synopsis of their expected testimony and a copy of any report prepared by the expert or at his or her direction; and

(4) A list of undisputed facts.

(d) Publicity -- (1) In general. All reports and decisions of the Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, including any reports and decisions of the Administrative Law Judge, under Subpart D are, subject to the protective measures in paragraph (d)(4) of this section, public and open to inspection within 30 days after the agency's decision becomes final.

(2) Request for additional publicity. The Administrative Law Judge may grant a request by a practitioner or appraiser that all the pleadings and evidence of the disciplinary proceeding be made available for inspection where the parties stipulate in advance to adopt the protective measures in paragraph (d)(4) of this section.

(3) Returns and return information--

(i) Disclosure to practitioner or appraiser. Pursuant to section 6103(l)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code, the Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, may disclose returns and return information to any practitioner or appraiser, or to the authorized representative of the practitioner or appraiser, whose rights are or may be affected by an administrative action or proceeding under this subpart D, but solely for use in the action or proceeding and only to the extent that the Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, determines that the returns or return information are or may be relevant and material to the action or proceeding.

(ii) Disclosure to officers and employees of the Department of Treasury. Pursuant to section 6103(l)(4)(B) of the Internal Revenue code the Secretary of the Treasury or delegate, may disclose returns and return information to officers and employees of the Department of the Treasury for use in any action or proceeding under subpart D, to the extent necessary to advance or protect the interests of the United States.

(iii) Use of returns and return information. Recipients of returns and return information under this paragraph (d)(3) may use the returns or return information solely in the action or proceeding, or in preparation for the action or proceeding, with respect to which the disclosure was made.

(iv) Procedures for disclosure of returns and return information.--When providing returns or return information to the practitioner or appraiser, or authorized representative, the Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, will --

(A) Redact identifying information of any third party taxpayers and replace it with a code;

(B) Provide a key to the coded information; and

(C) Notify the practitioner or appraiser, or authorized representative, of the restrictions on the use and disclosure of the returns and return information, the applicable damages remedy under §7431 of the Internal Revenue Code, and that unauthorized disclosure of information provided by the Internal Revenue Service under this paragraph (d)(3) is also a violation of this part.

(4) Protective measures --(i) Mandatory protection order. If redaction of names, addresses, and other identifying information of third party taxpayers may still permit indirect identification of any third party taxpayer, the Administrative Law Judge will issue a protective order to ensure that the identifying information is available to the parties and the Administrative Law Judge for purposes of the proceeding, but is not disclosed to, or open to inspection by, the public.

(ii) Authorized orders. (A) Upon motion by a party or any other affected person, and for good cause shown, the Administrative Law Judge may make any order which justice requires to protect any person in the event disclosure of information is prohibited by law, privileged, confidential, or sensitive in some other way, including, but not limited to, one or more of the following--

(1) That disclosure of information be made only on specified terms and conditions, including a designation of the time or place.

(2) That a trade secret or other information not be disclosed, or be disclosed only in a designated way.

(iii) Denials. If a motion for a protective order is denied in whole or in

part, the Administrative Law Judge may, on such terms or conditions as the Administrative Law Judge deems just, order any party or person to comply with, or respond in accordance with, the procedure involved.

(iv) Public inspection of documents. The Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, shall ensure that all names, addresses or other identifying details of third party taxpayers are redacted and replaced with the code assigned to the corresponding taxpayer in all documents prior to public inspection of such documents.

(g) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.73 Evidence.

(a) In general. The rules of evidence prevailing in courts of law and equity are not controlling in hearings or proceedings conducted under this part. The Administrative Law Judge may, however, exclude evidence that is irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious.

(b) Depositions. The deposition of any witness taken pursuant to §10.71 may be admitted into evidence in any proceeding instituted under §10.60.

(c) Requests for admission. Any matter admitted in response to a request for admission §10.71 is conclusively established under the Administrative Law Judge on motion permits withdrawal or modification of the admission. Any admission made by a party is for the purposes of the pending action only and is not an admission by a party for any other purpose, nor may it be used against a party in any other proceeding.

(d) Proof of documents. Official documents, records, and papers of the Internal Revenue Service and the Office of Professional Responsibility are admissible in evidence without the production of an officer or employee to authenticate them. Any documents, records, and papers may be evidenced by a copy attested or identified by an officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service or the Treasury Department, as the case may be.

(e) Withdrawal of exhibits. If any document, record, or other paper is introduced in evidence as an exhibit, the Administrative Law Judge may authorize the withdrawal of the exhibit subject to any conditions that he or she deems proper.

(f) Objections. Objections to evidence are to be made in short form, stating the grounds for the objection. Except as ordered by the Administrative Law Judge, argument on objections will not be recorded or transcribed. Rulings on objections are to be a part of the record, but no exception to a ruling is necessary to preserve the rights of the parties.

(g) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.74 Transcript.

In cases where the hearing is stenographically reported by a Government contract reporter, copies of the transcript may be obtained from the reporter at rates not to exceed the maximum rates fixed by contract between the Government and the reporter. Where the hearing is stenographically reported by a regular employee of the Internal Revenue Service, a copy will be supplied to the respondent either without charge or upon

the payment of a reasonable fee. Copies of exhibits introduced at the hearing or at the taking of depositions will be supplied to the parties upon the payment of a reasonable fee (Sec. 501, Public Law 82-137)(65 Stat. 290)(31 U.S.C. § 483a).

§ 10.75 Proposed findings and conclusions.

Except in cases where the respondent has failed to answer the complaint or where a party has failed to appear at the hearing, the parties must be afforded a reasonable opportunity to submit proposed findings and conclusions and their supporting reasons to the Administrative Law Judge.

§ 10.76 Decision of Administrative Law Judge.

(a) *In general* --(1) Hearings. Within 180 days after the conclusion of a hearing and the receipt of any proposed findings and conclusions timely submitted by the parties, the Administrative Law Judge should enter a decision in the case. The decision must include a statement of findings and conclusions, as well as the reasons or basis for making such findings and conclusions, and an order of censure, suspension, disbarment, monetary penalty, disqualification, or dismissal of the complaint.

(2) Summary adjudication. In the event that a motion for summary adjudication is filed, the Administrative Law Judge should rule on the motion for summary adjudication within 60 days after the party in opposition files a written response, or if not written response if filed, within 90 days after the motion for summary adjudication is

filed. A decision shall thereafter be rendered if the pleadings, depositions, admissions, and any other admissible evidence show that there is no genuine issue of material fact and that a decision may be rendered as a matter of law. The decision must include a statement of conclusions, as well as the reasons or basis for making such conclusions, and an order of censure, suspension, disbarment, monetary penalty, disqualification or dismissal of the complaint.

(3) Returns and return information. In the decision, the Administrative Law Judge should use the code assigned to third party taxpayers (described in §10.72(d)).

(b) Standard of proof. If the sanction is censure or a suspension of less than six months' duration, the Administrative Law Judge, in rendering findings and conclusions, will consider an allegation of fact to be proven if it is established by the party who is alleging the fact by a preponderance of the evidence in the record. If the sanction is a monetary penalty, disbarment or a suspension of six months or longer duration, an allegation of fact that is necessary for a finding against the practitioner must be proven by clear and convincing evidence in the record. An allegation of fact that is necessary for a finding of disqualification against an appraiser must be proved by clear and convincing evidence in the record.

(c) Copy of decision. The Administrative Law Judge will provide the decision to the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, with a copy to the Director's authorized representative, and a copy of the decision to the respondent or the respondent's authorized representative.

(d) When final. In the absence of an appeal to the Secretary of the Treasury or delegate, the decision of the Administrative Law Judge will, without further proceedings, become the decision of the agency 30 days after the date of the Administrative Law Judge's decision.

(e) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable to proceedings initiated on or after September 26, 2007.

§ 10.77 Appeal of decision of Administrative Law Judge.

(a) Appeal. Any party to the proceeding under this subpart D may file an appeal of the decision of the Administrative Law Judge with the Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate. The appeal must include a brief that states exceptions to the decision of the Administrative Law Judge and supporting reasons for such exceptions.

(b) Time and place for filing of appeal. The appeal and brief must be filed, in duplicate, with the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility within 30 days of the date that the decision of the Administrative Law Judge is served on the parties. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility will immediately furnish a copy of the appeal to the Secretary of the Treasury or delegate who decides appeals. A copy of the appeal for review must be sent to any non-appealing party. If the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility files an appeal, he or she will provide a copy of the appeal and certify to the respondent that the appeal has been filed.

(c) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.78 Decision on review.

(a) Decision on review. On appeal from or review of the decision of the Administrative Law Judge, the Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, will make the agency decision. The Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, should make the agency decision within 180 days after receipt of the appeal

(b) Standard of review. The decision of the Administrative Law Judge will not be reversed unless the appellant establishes that the decision is clearly erroneous in light of the evidence in the record and applicable law. Issues that are exclusively matters of law will be reviewed de novo. In the event that the Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, determines that there are unresolved issues raised by the record, the case may be remanded to the Administrative Law Judge to elicit additional testimony or evidence.

(c) Copy of decision on review. The Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate, will provide copies of the agency decision to the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility and the respondent or the respondent's authorized representative.

(d) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§ 10.79 Effect of disbarment, suspension, or censure.

(a) Disbarment. When the final decision in a case is against the respondent (or the respondent has offered his or her consent and such consent has been accepted by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility) and such decision is for disbarment, the respondent will not be

permitted to practice before the Internal Revenue Service unless and until authorized to do so by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility pursuant to §10.81.

(b) Suspension. When the final decision in a case is against the respondent (or the respondent has offered his or her consent and such consent has been accepted by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility) and such decision is for suspension, the respondent will not be permitted to practice before the Internal Revenue Service during the period of suspension. For periods after the suspension, the practitioner's future representations may be subject to conditions as authorized by paragraph (d) of this section.

(c) Censure. When the final decision in the case is against the respondent (or the respondent has offered his or her consent and such consent has been accepted by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility) and such decision is for censure, the respondent will be permitted to practice before the Internal Revenue Service, but the respondent's future representations may be subject to conditions as authorized by paragraph (d) of this section.

(d) Conditions. After being subject to the sanction of either suspension or censure, the future representations of a practitioner so sanctioned shall be subject to conditions prescribed by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility designed to promote high standards of conduct. These conditions can be imposed for a reasonable period in light of the gravity of the practitioner's violations. For example, where a practitioner is censured because he or she failed to advise his or her clients about a potential conflict of

interest or failed to obtain the clients' written consents, the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may require the practitioner to provide the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility or another Internal Revenue Service official with a copy of all consents obtained by the practitioner for an appropriate period following censure, whether or not such consents are specifically requested.

§ 10.80 Notice of disbarment, suspension, censure, or disqualification.

On the issuance of a final order censuring, suspending, or disbaring a practitioner or a final order disqualifying an appraiser, the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may give notice of the censure, suspension, disbarment, or disqualification to appropriate officers and employees of the Internal Revenue Service and to interested departments and agencies of the Federal government. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may determine the manner of giving notice to the proper authorities of the State by which the censured, suspended, or disbarred person was licensed to practice.

§ 10.81 Petition for reinstatement.

The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may entertain a petition for reinstatement from any person disbarred from practice before the Internal Revenue Service or any disqualified appraiser after the expiration of 5 years following such disbarment or disqualification. Reinstatement may not be granted unless the Director of the Office of Professional

Responsibility is satisfied that the petitioner, thereafter, is not likely to conduct himself contrary to the regulations in this part, and that granting such reinstatement would not be contrary to the public interest.

§ 10.82 Expedited suspension upon criminal conviction or loss of license for cause.

(a) *When applicable.* Whenever the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility determines that a practitioner is described in paragraph (b) of this section, the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may institute a proceeding under this section to suspend the practitioner from practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(b) *To whom applicable.* This section applies to any practitioner who, within 5 years of the date a complaint instituting a proceeding under this section is served:

(1) Has had a license to practice as an attorney, certified public accountant, or actuary suspended or revoked for cause (not including a failure to pay a professional licensing fee) by any authority or court, agency, body, or board described in §10.51(a)(10).

(2) Has, irrespective of whether an appeal has been taken, been convicted of any crime under title 26 of the United States Code, any crime involving dishonesty or breach of trust, or any felony for which the conduct involved renders the practitioner unfit to practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(3) Has violated conditions imposed on the practitioner pursuant to §10.79(d).

(4) Has been sanctioned by a court of competent jurisdiction, whether in a civil or criminal proceeding (including suits for injunctive relief), relating to any

taxpayer's tax liability or relating to the practitioner's own tax liability, for--

(i) Instituting or maintaining proceedings primarily for delay;

(ii) Advancing frivolous or groundless arguments; or

(iii) Failing to pursue available administrative remedies.

(c) *Instituting a proceeding.* A proceeding under this section will be instituted by a complaint that names the respondent, is signed by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility or a person representing the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility under §10.69(a)(1), is filed in the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility's office, and is served according to the rules set forth in paragraph (a) of §10.63. The complaint must give a plain and concise description of the allegations that constitute the basis for the proceeding. The complaint must notify the respondent--

(1) Of the place and due date for filing an answer;

(2) That a decision by default may be rendered if the respondent fails to file an answer as required;

(3) That the respondent may request a conference with the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility to address the merits of the complaint and that any such request must be made in the answer; and

(4) That the respondent may be suspended either immediately following the expiration of the period within which an answer must be filed or, if a conference is requested, immediately following the conference.

(d) *Answer.* The answer to a complaint described in this section must be filed no later than 30 calendar days following the date the complaint is served, unless the Director of the Office

of Professional Responsibility extends the time for filing. The answer must be filed in accordance with the rules set forth in §10.64, except as otherwise provided in this section. A respondent is entitled to a conference with the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility only if the conference is requested in a timely filed answer. If a request for a conference is not made in the answer or the answer is not timely filed, the respondent will be deemed to have waived his or her right to a conference and the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may suspend such respondent at any time following the date on which the answer was due.

(e) Conference. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility or his or her designee will preside at a conference described in this section. The conference will be held at a place and time selected by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, but no sooner than 14 calendar days after the date by which the answer must be filed with the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility, unless the respondent agrees to an earlier date. An authorized representative may represent the respondent at the conference. Following the conference, upon a finding that the respondent is described in paragraph (b) of this section, or upon the respondent's failure to appear at the conference either personally or through an authorized representative, the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may immediately suspend the respondent from practice before the Internal Revenue Service.

(f) Duration of suspension. A suspension under this section will commence on the date that written notice of the suspension is issued. A

practitioner's suspension will remain effective until the earlier of the following--

(1) The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility lifts the suspension after determining that the practitioner is no longer described in paragraph (b) of this section or for any other reason; or

(2) The suspension is lifted by an Administrative Law Judge or the Secretary of the Treasury in a proceeding referred to in paragraph (g) of this section and instituted under §10.60.

(g) Proceeding instituted under §10.60. If the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility suspends a practitioner under this section, the practitioner may ask the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility to issue a complaint under §10.60. The request must be made in writing within 2 years from the date on which the practitioner's suspension commences. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility must issue a complaint requested under this paragraph within 30 calendar days of receiving the request.

(h) Effective/applicability date. This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

Subpart E--General Provisions

§ 10.90 Records

(a) Roster. The Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility will maintain, and may make available for public inspection in the time and manner prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, or delegate rosters of--

(1) Enrolled agents, including individuals--

- (i) Granted active enrollment to practice;
- (ii) Whose enrollment has been placed in inactive status for failure to meet the requirements for renewal of enrollment;
- (iii) Whose enrollment has been placed in inactive retirement status; and
- (iv) Whose offer of consent to resign from enrollment has been accepted by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility under §10.61;

(2) Individuals (and employers, firms or other entities, if applicable) censured, suspended or disbarred from practice before the Internal Revenue Service or upon whom a monetary penalty was imposed; and

(3) Disqualified appraisers; and

(4) Enrolled retirement plan agents, including individuals--

- (i) Granted active enrollment to practice;
- (ii) Whose enrollment has been placed in inactive status for failure to meet the requirements for renewal of enrollment;
- (iii) Whose enrollment has been placed in inactive retirement status; and
- (iv) Whose offer of consent to resign from enrollment has been accepted by the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility under §10.61;

(b) *Other records.* Other records of the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility may be disclosed upon specific request, in accordance with the applicable law.

(c) *Effective/applicability date.* This section is applicable on September 26, 2007.

§10.91 Saving provision.

Any proceeding instituted under regulations in prior to July 26, 2002, for which a final decision has not been reached or for which judicial review is

still available will not be affected by these revisions. Any proceeding under this part based on conduct engaged in prior to September 26, 2007, which is instituted after that date, will apply subpart D and E or this part as revised, but the conduct engaged in prior to the effective date of these revisions will be judged by the regulations in effect at the time the conduct occurred.

§ 10.92 Special orders.

The Secretary of the Treasury reserves the power to issue such special orders as he or she deems proper in any cases within the purview of this part.

§ 10.93 Effective date.

Except as otherwise provided in each section and Subject to §10.91, Part 10 is applicable on July 26, 2002.

Mark E. Matthews,
Deputy Commissioner for Services and Enforcement, Internal Revenue Service.
Approved: December 8, 2004.

Arnold I. Havens,
General Counsel, Department of Treasury.
[FR Doc. 04-27678 Filed 12-17-04; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4830-01-P

***Addendum to Treasury
Department Circular No. 230
(Rev. 7-2002)***

Any proceeding under this part based on conduct engaged in prior to July 26, 2002, which is instituted after that date, shall apply Subparts D and E of this part, but the conduct engaged in prior to July 26, 2002, shall be judged by the regulations in effect at the time the

conduct occurred. 31 CFR 10.91. In light of this, we are providing, as an addendum, the earlier version of Subparts B and C.

**Subpart B — Duties and Restrictions
Relating to Practice Before the
Internal Revenue Service**

§10.20 Information to be furnished.

(a) To the Internal Revenue Service.

No attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary shall neglect or refuse promptly to submit records or information in any matter before the Internal Revenue Service, upon proper and lawful request by a duly authorized officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service, or shall interfere, or attempt to interfere, with any proper and lawful effort by the Internal Revenue Service or its officers or employees to obtain any such record or information, unless he believes in good faith and on reasonable grounds that such record or information is privileged or that the request for, or effort to obtain, such record or information is of doubtful legality,

(b) To the Director of the Office of Professional Responsibility. It shall be the duty of an attorney or certified public accountant, who practices before the Internal Revenue Service, or enrolled agent, when requested by the Director of Practice, to provide the Director with any information he may have concerning violation of the regulations in this part by any person, and to testify thereto in any proceeding instituted under this part for the disbarment or suspension of an attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary, unless he believes in good faith and on

reasonable grounds that such information is privileged or that the request therefore is of doubtful legality.

[31 FR 10773, Aug. 13, 1966, as amended at 57 FR 41095, Sept. 9, 1992]

§10.21 Knowledge of client's omission.

Each attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary who, having been retained by a client with respect to a matter administered by the Internal Revenue Service knows that the client has not complied with the revenue laws of the United States or has made an error in or omission from any return, document, affidavit, or other paper which the client is required by the revenue laws of the United States to execute, shall advise the client promptly of the fact of such noncompliance, error, or omission.

[42 FR 38352, July 28, 1977, as amended at 57 FR 41095, Sept. 9, 1992]

§10.22 Diligence as to accuracy.

Each attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary shall exercise due diligence:

(a) In preparing or assisting in the preparation of, approving, and filing returns, documents, affidavits, and other papers relating to Internal Revenue Service matters;

(b) In determining the correctness of oral or written representations made by him to the Department of the Treasury; and

(c) In determining the correctness of oral or written representations made by him to clients with reference to any matter administered by the Internal Revenue Service.

[35 FR 13205, Aug. 19, 1970, as amended at 42 FR 38352, July 28, 1977; 57 FR 41095, Sept. 9, 1992]

§10.23 Prompt disposition of pending matters.

No attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary shall unreasonably delay the prompt disposition of any matter before the Internal Revenue Service.

§10.24 Assistance from disbarred or suspended persons and former Internal Revenue Service employees.

No attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary shall, in practice before the Internal Revenue Service, knowingly and directly or indirectly:

- (a) Employ or accept assistance from any person who is under disbarment or suspension from practice before the Internal Revenue Service.
- (b) Accept employment as associate, correspondent, or subagent from, or share fees with any such person.
- (c) Accept assistance from any former government employee where the provisions of §10.26 of these regulations or any Federal law would be violated.

[44 FR 4943, Jan. 24, 1979, as amended at 57 FR 41095, Sept. 9; 1992]

§10.25 Practice by partners of Government employees.

No partner of an officer or employee of the executive branch of the U.S. Government, of any independent agency of the United States, or of the District of Columbia, shall represent anyone in any

matter administered by the Internal Revenue Service in which such officer or employee of the Government participates or has participated personally and substantially as a Government employee or which is the subject of his official responsibility.

[31 FR 10773; Aug. 13, 1966, as amended at 35 FR 13205, Aug. 19, 1970]

§10.26 Practice by former Government employees, their partners and their associates.

(a) *Definitions.* For purposes of §10.26:

(1) *Assist* means to act in such a way as to advise, furnish information to, or otherwise aid another person, directly or indirectly.

(2) *Government employee* is an officer or employee of the United States or any agency of the United States, including a *special government employee* as defined in 18 U.S.C. 202(a), or of the District of Columbia, or of any State, or a member of Congress or of any State legislature.

(3) *Member of a firm* is a sole practitioner or an employee or associate thereof, or a partner, stockholder, associate, affiliate or employee of a partnership, joint venture, corporation, professional association or other affiliation of two or more practitioners who represent non-Government parties.

(4) *Practitioner* includes any individual described in §10.3(e).

(5) *Official responsibility* means the direct administrative or operating authority, whether intermediate or final, and either exercisable alone or with others, and either personally or through subordinates, to approve, disapprove, or

otherwise direct Government action, with or without knowledge of the action.

(6) *Participate* or *participation* means substantial involvement as a Government employee by making decisions, or preparing or reviewing documents with or without the right to exercise a judgment of approval or disapproval, or participating in conferences or investigations, or rendering advice of a substantial nature.

(7) *Rule* includes Treasury Regulations, whether issued or under preparation for issuance as Notices of Proposed Rule Making or as Treasury Decisions, and revenue rulings and revenue procedures published in the Internal Revenue Bulletin. *Rule* shall not include a *transaction* as defined in paragraph (a)(9) of this section.

(8) *Transaction* means any decision, determination, finding, letter ruling, technical advice, contract or approval or disapproval thereof, relating to a particular factual situation or situations involving a specific party or parties whose rights, privileges, or liabilities under laws or regulations administered by the Internal Revenue Service, or other legal rights, are determined or immediately affected therein and to which the United States is a party or in which it has a direct and substantial interest, whether or not the same taxable periods are involved. *Transaction* does not include *rule* as defined in paragraph (a)(7) of this section.

(b) *General rules.* (1) No former Government employee shall, subsequent to his Government employment, represent anyone in any matter administered by the Internal Revenue Service if the representation would violate 18 U.S.C. 207 (a) or (b) or any other laws of the United States.

(2) No former Government employee who participated in a transaction shall, subsequent to his Government employment, represent or knowingly assist, in that transaction, any person who is or was a specific party to that transaction.

(3) No former Government employee who within a period of one year prior to the termination of his Government employment had official responsibility for a transaction shall, within one year after his Government employment is ended, represent or knowingly assist in that transaction any person who is or was a specific party to that transaction.

(4) No former Government employee shall, within one year after his Government employment, is ended, appear before any employee of the Treasury Department in connection with the publication, withdrawal, amendment, modification, or interpretation of a rule in the development of which the former Government employee participated or for which, within a period of one year prior to the termination of his Government employment, he had official responsibility. However, this subparagraph does not preclude such former employee for appearing on his own behalf or from representing a taxpayer before the Internal Revenue Service in connection with a transaction involving the application or interpretation of such a rule with respect to that transaction: *Provided*, that such former employee shall not utilize or disclose any confidential information acquired by the former employee in the development of the rule, and shall not contend that the rule is invalid or illegal. In addition, this subparagraph does not preclude such former employee from otherwise advising or acting for any person.

(c) *Firm representation.*

(1) No member of a firm of which a former Government employee is a member may represent or knowingly assist a person who was or is a specific party in any transaction with respect to which the restrictions of paragraph (b)(1) (other than 18 U.S.C. 207 (b)) or (b)(2) of this section apply to the former Government employee, in that transaction unless:

(i) No member of the firm who had knowledge of the participation by the Government employee in the transaction initiated discussions with the Government employee concerning his becoming a member of the firm until his Government employment is ended or six months after the termination of his participation in the transaction, whichever is earlier;

(ii) The former Government employee did not initiate any discussions concerning becoming a member of the firm while participating in the transaction or, if such discussions were initiated, they conformed with the requirements of 18 U.S.C. 208(b); and

(iii) The firm isolates the former Government employee in such a way that he does not assist in the representation.

(2) No member of a firm of which a former Government employee is a member may represent or knowingly assist a person who was or is a specific party in any transaction with respect to which the restrictions of paragraph (b)(3) of this section apply to the former employee, in that transaction, unless the firm isolates the former Government employee in such a way that he does not assist in the representation.

(3) When isolation of the former Government employee is required under paragraphs (c)(1) or (c)(2) of this section,

a statement affirming the fact of such isolation shall be executed under oath by the former Government employee and by a member of the firm acting on behalf of the firm, and shall be filed with the Director of Practice and in such other place and in the manner prescribed by regulation. This statement shall clearly identify the firm, the former Government employee, and the transaction or transactions requiring such isolation.

(d) Pending **representation.** Practice by former Government employees, their partners and associates with respect to representation in specific matters where actual representation commenced before publication of this regulation is governed by the regulations set forth in the June 1972 amendments to the regulations of this part (published at 37 FR 11676): *Provided*, that the burden of showing that representation commenced before publication is with the former Government employees, their partners and associates.

[42 FR 38352, July 28, 1977, as amended at 57 FR 41095, Sept. 9, 1992; 59 FR 31527, June 20, 1994]

§10.27 Notaries.

No attorney, certified public accountant enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary as notary public shall with respect to any matter administered by the Internal Revenue Service, take acknowledgments, administer oaths, certify papers, or perform any official act in connection with matters in which he is employed as counsel, attorney, or agent, or in which he may be in any way interested before the Internal Revenue Service (26 Op. Atty. Gen. 236).

[31 FR 10773, Aug. 13, 1966, as amended at 57 FR 41095, Sept. 9, 1992]

§10.28 Fees.

(a) *Generally.* A practitioner may not charge an unconscionable fee for representing a client in a matter before the Internal Revenue Service.

(b) *Contingent fees for return preparation.* A practitioner may not charge a contingent fee for preparing an original return. A practitioner may charge a contingent fee for preparing an amended return or a claim for refund (other than a claim for refund made on an original return) if the practitioner reasonably anticipates at the time the fee arrangement is entered into that the amended return or claim will receive substantive review by the Service. A contingent fee includes a fee that is based on a percentage of the refund on a return or a percentage of the taxes saved, or that otherwise depends on the specific result attained.

[59 FR 31527, June 20, 1994]

§10.29 Conflicting interests.

No attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary shall represent conflicting interests in his practice before the Internal Revenue Service, except by express consent of all directly interested parties after full disclosure has been made.

[31 FR 10773, Aug. 13, 1966, as amended at 57 FR 41095, Sept. 9, 1992]

§10.30 Solicitation.

(a) *Advertising and solicitation restrictions.* (1) No attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, enrolled actuary, or other individual eligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service shall, with respect to any Internal Revenue Service matter, in any way use or participate in the use of any form of public communication containing (i) A false, fraudulent, unduly influencing, coercive, or unfair statement or claim; or (ii) a misleading or deceptive statement or claim. Enrolled agents, in describing their professional designation, may not utilize the term of art “certified” or indicate an employer/employee relationship with the Internal Revenue Service. Examples of acceptable descriptions are “enrolled to represent taxpayers before the Internal Revenue Service,” “enrolled to practice before the Internal Revenue Service,” and “admitted to practice before the Internal Revenue Service.” Enrolled agents and enrolled actuaries may abbreviate such designation to either EA or E.A.

(2) No attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, enrolled actuary, or other individual eligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service shall make, directly or indirectly, an uninvited solicitation of employment in matters related to the Internal Revenue Service. Solicitation includes, but is not limited to, in-person contacts and telephone communications. This restriction does not apply to:

(i) Seeking new business from an existing or former client in a related matter;

(ii) communications with family members;

(iii) making the availability of professional services known to other

practitioners, so long as the person or firm contacted is not a potential client;

(iv) solicitation by mailings; or

(v) non-coercive in-person solicitation by those eligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service while acting as an employee, member, or officer of an exempt organization, listed in sections 501(c)(3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (26 U.S.C.). Any targeted direct mail solicitation, i.e. a mailing to those whose unique circumstances are the basis for the solicitation, distributed by or on behalf of an attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, enrolled actuary, or other individual eligible to practice, before the Internal Revenue Service shall be clearly marked as such in capital letters on the envelope and at the top of the first page of such mailing. In addition, all such solicitations must clearly identify the source of the information used in choosing the recipient.

(b) *Fee information.* (1) Attorneys, certified public accountants, enrolled agents, or enrolled actuaries and other individuals eligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service may disseminate the following fee information:

(i) Fixed fees for specific routine services.

(ii) Hourly rates.

(iii) Range of fees for particular services.

(iv) Fee charged for an initial consultation.

Any statement of fee information concerning matters in which costs may be incurred shall include a statement disclosing whether clients will be responsible for such costs.

(2) Attorneys, certified public accountants, enrolled agents, or enrolled

actuaries and other individuals eligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service may also publish the availability of a written schedule of fees.

(3) Attorneys, certified public accountants, enrolled agents, or enrolled actuaries and other individuals eligible to practice before the Internal Revenue Service shall be bound to charge the hourly rate, the fixed fee for specific routine services, the range of fees for particular services, or the fee for an initial consultation published for a reasonable period of time, but no less than thirty days from the last publication of such hourly rate or fees.

(c) *Communications.* Communication, including fee information, may include professional lists, telephone directories, print media, mailings, radio and television, and any other method:

Provided, that the method chosen does not cause the communication to become untruthful, deceptive, unduly influencing or otherwise in violation of these regulations. It shall be construed as a violation of these regulations for a practitioner to persist in attempting to contact a prospective client, if such client has made known to the practitioner a desire not to be solicited. In the case of radio and television broadcasting, the broadcast shall be prerecorded and the practitioner shall retain a recording of the actual audio transmission. In the case of direct mail communications, the practitioner shall retain a copy of the actual mailing, along with a list or other description of persons to whom the communication was mailed or otherwise distributed. Such copy shall be retained by the practitioner for a period of at least 36 months from the date of the last transmission or use.

(d) *Improper associations.* An attorney, certified public-accountant,

enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary may, in matters related to the Internal Revenue Service, employ or accept employment assistance as an associate correspondent, or subagent from, or share fees with any person or entity who, to the knowledge of the practitioner, obtains clients or otherwise practices in a manner forbidden under this section: *Provided*, that a practitioner does not, directly or indirectly act or hold himself out as an Internal Revenue Service practitioner in connection with that relationship. Nothing herein shall prohibit an attorney, certified public accountant, or enrolled agent from practice before the Internal Revenue Service in a capacity other than described above.

[44 FR 4943, Jan. 24, 1979, as amended at 57 FR 41095, Sept. 9, 1992].

§10.31 Negotiation of taxpayer refund checks.

No attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary who is an income tax return preparer shall endorse or otherwise negotiate any check made in respect of income taxes, which is issued to a taxpayer other than the attorney, certified public accountant or enrolled agent.

[42 FR 38353, July 28, 1977, as amended at 57 FR 41095, Sept. 9, 1992]

§10.32 Practice of law.

Nothing in the regulations in this part shall be construed as authorizing persons not members of the bar to practice law.

[31 FR 10773, Aug. 13, 1966. Redesignated at 42 FR 38353, July 28, 1977]

§10.33 Tax shelter opinions.

(a) *Tax shelter opinions and offering materials.* A practitioner who provides a tax shelter opinion analyzing the Federal tax effects of a tax shelter investment shall comply with each of the following requirements: (1) *Factual matters.* (i) The practitioner must make inquiry, as to all relevant facts, be satisfied that the material facts are accurately and completely described in the offering materials, and assure that any representations as to future activities are clearly identified, reasonable and complete.

(ii) A practitioner may not accept as true asserted facts pertaining to the tax shelter which he/she should not, based on his/her background and knowledge, reasonably believe to be true. However, a practitioner need not conduct an audit or independent verification of the asserted facts, or assume that a client's statement of the facts cannot be relied upon, unless he/she has reason to believe that any relevant facts asserted to him/her are untrue.

(iii) If the fair market value of property or the expected financial performance of an investment is relevant to the tax shelter, a practitioner may not accept an appraisal or financial projection as support for the matters claimed therein unless:

(A) The appraisal or financial projection makes sense on its face;

(B) The practitioner reasonably believes that the person making the appraisal or financial projection is competent to do so and is not of dubious reputation; and

(C) The appraisal is based on the definition of fair market value prescribed under the relevant Federal tax provisions.

(iv) If the fair market value of purchased property is to be established by reference to its stated purchase price, the practitioner must examine the terms and conditions upon which the property was (or is to be) purchased to determine whether the stated purchase price reasonably may be considered to be its fair market value.

(2) *Relate law to facts.* The practitioner must relate the law to the actual facts and, when addressing issues based on future activities, clearly identify what facts are assumed.

(3) *Identification of material issues.* The practitioner must ascertain that all material Federal tax issues have been considered, and that all of those issues which involve the reasonable possibility of a challenge by the Internal Revenue Service have been fully and fairly addressed in the offering materials.

(4) *Opinion on each material issue.* Where possible, the practitioner must provide an opinion whether it is more likely than not that an investor will prevail on the merits of each material tax issue presented by the offering which involves a reasonable possibility of a challenge by the Internal Revenue Service. Where such an opinion cannot be given with respect to any material tax issue, the opinion should fully describe the reasons for the practitioner's inability to opine as to the likely outcome.

(5) *Overall evaluation.* (i) Where possible, the practitioner must provide an overall evaluation whether the material tax benefits in the aggregate more likely than not will be realized. Where such an overall evaluation cannot

be given, the opinion should fully describe the reasons for the practitioner's inability to make an overall evaluation. Opinions concluding that an overall evaluation cannot be provided will be given special scrutiny to determine if the stated reasons are adequate.

(ii) A favorable overall evaluation may not be rendered unless it is based on a conclusion that substantially more than half of the material tax benefits, in terms of their financial impact on a typical investor, more likely than not will be realized if challenged by the Internal Revenue Service.

(iii) If it is not possible to give an overall evaluation, or if the overall evaluation is that the material tax benefits in the aggregate will not be realized, the fact that the practitioner's opinion does not constitute a favorable overall evaluation, or that it is an unfavorable overall evaluation, must be clearly and prominently disclosed in the offering materials.

(iv) The following examples illustrate the principles of this paragraph:

Example (1). A limited partnership acquires real property in a sale-lease back transaction. The principal tax benefits offered to investing partners consist of depreciation and interest deductions. Lesser tax benefits are offered to investors by reason of several deductions under Internal Revenue Code section 162 (ordinary and necessary business expenses). If a practitioner concludes that it is more likely than not that the partnership will not be treated as the owner of the property for tax purposes (which is required to allow the interest and depreciation deductions), then he/she may not opine to the effect that it is more likely than not that the material tax benefits in the aggregate

will be realized, regardless of whether favorable opinions may be given with respect to the deductions claimed under Code section 162.

Example (2). A corporation electing under Subchapter S of the Internal Revenue Code is formed to engage in research and development activities. The offering materials forecast that deductions for research and experimental expenditures equal to 75% of the total investment in the corporation will be available during the first two years of the corporation's operations, other expenses will account for another 15% of the total investment, and that little or no gross income will be received by the corporation during this period. The practitioner concludes that it is more likely than not that deductions for research and experimental expenditures will be allowable. The practitioner may render an opinion to the effect that based on this conclusion, it is more likely than not that the material tax benefits in the aggregate will be realized, regardless of whether he/she can opine that it is more likely than not that any of the other tax benefits will be achieved.

Example (3). An investment program is established to acquire offsetting positions in commodities contracts. The objective of the program is to close the loss positions in year one and to close the profit positions in year two. The principal tax benefit offered by the program is a loss in the first year, coupled with the deferral of offsetting gain until the following year. The practitioner concludes that the losses will not be deductible in year one. Accordingly, he/she may not render an opinion to the effect that it is more likely than not that the material tax benefits in the aggregate will be realized, regardless of the fact that he/she is of the opinion

that losses not allowable in year one will be allowable in year two, because the principal tax benefit offered is a one year deferral of income.

Example (4). A limited partnership is formed to acquire, own and operate residential rental real estate. The offering material forecasts gross income of \$2,000,000 and total deductions of \$10,000,000, resulting in net losses of \$8,000,000 over the first six taxable years. Of the total deductions, depreciation and interest are projected to be \$7,000,000, and other deductions \$3,000,000. The practitioner concludes that it is more likely than not that all of the depreciation and interest deductions will be allowable, and that it is more likely than not that the other deductions will not be allowed. The practitioner may render an opinion to the effect that it is more likely than not that the material tax benefits in the aggregate will be realized.

(6) *Description of opinion.* The practitioner must assure that the offering materials correctly and fairly represent the nature and extent of the tax shelter opinion.

(b) *Reliance on other opinions* — (1) In general. A practitioner may provide an opinion on less than all of the material tax issues only if:

(i) At least one other competent practitioner provides an opinion on the likely outcome with respect to all of the other material tax issues which involve a reasonable possibility of challenge by the Internal Revenue Service, and an overall evaluation whether the material tax benefits in the aggregate more likely than not will be realized, which is disseminated in the same manner as the practitioner's opinion; and

(ii) The practitioner, upon reviewing such other opinions and any offering

materials, has no reason to believe that the standards of paragraph (a) of this section have not been complied with. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a practitioner who has not been retained to provide an overall evaluation whether the material tax benefits in the aggregate more likely than not will be realized may issue an opinion on less than all the material tax issues only if he/she has no reason to believe, based on his/her knowledge and experience, that the overall evaluation given by the practitioner who furnishes the overall evaluation is incorrect on its face.

(2) *Forecasts and projections.* A practitioner who is associated with forecasts or projections relating to or based upon the tax consequences of the tax shelter offering that are included in the offering materials, or are disseminated to potential investors other than the practitioner's clients, may rely on the opinion of another practitioner as to any or all material tax issues, provided that the practitioner who desires to rely on the other opinion has no reason to believe that the standards of paragraph (a) of this section have not been complied with by the practitioner rendering such other opinion, and the requirements of paragraph (b)(1) of this section are satisfied. The practitioner's report shall disclose any material tax issue not covered by, or incorrectly opined upon, by the other opinion, and shall set forth his/her opinion with respect to each such issue in a manner that satisfies the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

(1) *Practitioner* includes any individual described in §10.3(e).

(2) A *tax shelter*, as the term is used in

this section, is an investment which has as a significant and intended feature for Federal income or excise tax purposes either of the following attributes:

(i) Deductions in excess of income from the investment being available in any year to reduce income from other sources in that year, or

(ii) Credits in excess of the tax attributable to the income from the investment being available in any year to offset taxes on income from other sources in that year. Excluded from the term are municipal bonds; annuities; family trusts (but not including schemes or arrangements that are marketed to the public other than in a direct practitioner-client relationship); qualified retirement plans; individual retirement accounts; stock option plans; securities issued in a corporate reorganization; mineral development ventures, if the only tax benefit would be percentage depletion; and real estate where it is anticipated that in no year is it likely that deductions will exceed the tax attributable to the income from the investment in that year. Whether an investment is intended to have tax shelter features depends on the objective facts and circumstances of each case. Significant weight will be given to the features described in the offering materials to determine whether the investment is a tax shelter.

(3) A *tax shelter opinion*, as the term is used in this section, is advice by a practitioner concerning the Federal tax aspects of a tax shelter either appearing or referred to in the offering materials, or used or referred to in connection with sales promotion efforts, and directed to persons other than the client who engaged the practitioner, to give the advice. The term includes the tax aspects or tax risks portion of the offering materials prepared by or at the direction

of a practitioner, whether or not a separate opinion letter is issued or whether or not the practitioner's name is referred to in the offering materials or in connection with the sales promotion efforts. In addition, a financial forecast or projection prepared by a practitioner is a tax shelter opinion if it is predicated on assumptions regarding Federal tax aspects of the investment, and it meets the other requirements of the first sentence of this paragraph. The term does not, however, include rendering advice solely to the offeror or reviewing parts of the offering materials, so long as neither the name of the practitioner, nor the fact that a practitioner has rendered advice concerning the tax aspects, is referred to in the offering materials or in connection with the sales promotion efforts.

(4) A *material* tax issue as the term is used in this section is

(i) Any Federal income or excise tax issue relating to a tax shelter that would make a significant contribution toward sheltering from Federal taxes income from other sources by providing deductions in excess of the income from the tax shelter investment in any year, or tax credits available to offset tax liabilities in excess of the tax attributable to the tax shelter investment in any year;

(ii) Any other Federal income or excise tax issue relating to a tax shelter that could have a significant impact (either beneficial or adverse) on a tax shelter investor under any reasonably foreseeable circumstances (e.g., depreciation or investment tax credit recapture, availability of long-term capital gain treatment, or realization of taxable income in excess of cash flow, upon sale or other disposition of the tax shelter investment); and

(iii) The potential applicability of penalties, additions to tax, or interest charges that reasonably could be asserted against a tax shelter investor by the Internal Revenue Service with respect to the tax shelter. The determination of what is material is to be made in good faith by the practitioner, based on information available at the time the offering materials are circulated.

(d) For purposes of advising the Director of Practice whether an individual may have violated §10.33, the Director of Practice is authorized to establish an Advisory Committee, composed of at least five individuals authorized to practice before the Internal Revenue Service. Under procedures established by the Director of Practice, such Advisory Committee shall, at the request of the Director of Practice, review and make recommendations with regard to alleged violations of §10.33.

(Sec. 3, 23 Stat. 258, secs. 2-12, 60 Stat. 237 et seq.; 5 U.S.C. 301; 31 U.S.C. 330; 31 U.S.C. 321 (Reorg. Plan No. 26 of 1950, 15 FR 4935, 64 Stat. 1280,3 CFR, 1949-53 Comp., p. 1017))

[49 FR 6722, Feb. 23, 1984; 49 FR 7116, Feb. 27, 1984; 59 FR 31527, 31528, June 20, 1994]

§10.34 Standards for advising with respect to tax return positions and for preparing or signing returns.

(a) *Standards of conduct* — (1) *Realistic possibility standard.* A practitioner may not sign a return as a preparer if the practitioner determines that the return contains a position that does not have a realistic possibility of being sustained on its merits (the

realistic possibility standard) unless the position is not frivolous, and is adequately disclosed to the Service. A practitioner may not advise a client to take a position on a return, or prepare the portion of a return on which a position is taken, unless--

(i) The practitioner determines that the position satisfies the realistic possibility standard; or

(ii) The position is not frivolous and the practitioner advises the client of any opportunity to avoid the accuracy-related penalty in section 6662 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 by adequately disclosing the position and of the requirements for adequate disclosure.

(2) *Advising clients on potential penalties.* A practitioner advising a client to take a position on a return, or preparing or signing a return as a preparer, must inform the client of the penalties reasonably likely to apply to the client with respect to the position advised, prepared, or reported. The practitioner also must inform the client of any opportunity to avoid any such penalty by disclosure, if relevant, and of the requirements for adequate disclosure. This paragraph (a)(2) applies even if the practitioner is not subject to a penalty with respect to the position.

(3) *Relying on information furnished by clients.* A practitioner advising a client to take a position on a return, or preparing or signing a return as a preparer, generally may rely in good faith without verification upon information furnished by the client. However, the practitioner may not ignore the implications of information furnished to, or actually known by the practitioner, and must make reasonable inquiries if the information as furnished appears to be incorrect, inconsistent, or incomplete.

(4) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section:

(i) *Realistic possibility.* A position is considered to have a realistic possibility of being sustained on its merits if a reasonable and well-informed analysis by a person knowledgeable in the tax law would lead such a person to conclude that the position has approximately a one in three, or greater, likelihood of being sustained on its merits. The authorities described in 26 CFR 1.6662 - 4(d)(3)(iii), or any successor provision of the substantial understatement penalty regulations may be taken into account for purposes of this analysis. The possibility that a position will not be challenged by the Service (e.g., because the taxpayer's return may not be audited or because the issue may not be raised on audit) may not be taken into account.

(ii) *Frivolous.* A position is frivolous if it is patently improper.

(b) *Standard of discipline.* As provided in §10.52, only violations of this section that are willful, reckless, or a result of gross incompetence will subject a practitioner to suspension or disbarment from practice before the Service.

[59 FR 31527, June 20,1994]

Subpart C — Rules Applicable to Disciplinary Proceedings

§10.50 Authority to disbar or suspend.

Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 330(b), the Secretary of the Treasury after notice and an opportunity for a proceeding, may suspend or disbar any practitioner from practice before the Internal Revenue Service. The Secretary

may take such action against any practitioner who is shown to be incompetent or disreputable, who refuses to comply with any regulation in this part, or who, with intent to defraud, willfully and knowingly misleads or threatens a client or prospective client.

[59 FR 31528, June 20, 1994]

§10.51 Disreputable conduct.

Disreputable conduct for which an attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary may be disbarred or suspended from practice before the Internal Revenue Service includes, but is not limited to:

(a) Conviction of any criminal offense under the revenue laws of the United States, or of any offense involving dishonesty, or breach of trust.

(b) Giving false or misleading information, or participating in any way in the giving of false or misleading information to the Department of the Treasury or any officer or employee thereof, or to any tribunal authorized to pass upon Federal tax matters, in connection with any matter pending or likely to be pending before them, knowing such information to be false or misleading. Facts or other matters contained in testimony, Federal tax returns, financial statements, applications for enrollment, affidavits, declarations, or any other document or statement, written or oral, are included in the term "information."

(c) Solicitation of employment as prohibited under §10.30 of this part, the use of false or misleading representations with intent to deceive a client or prospective client in order to procure employment, or intimating that the practitioner is able improperly to

obtain special consideration or action from the Internal Revenue Service or officer or employee thereof.

(d) Willfully failing to make a Federal tax return in violation of the revenue laws of the United States, or evading, attempting to evade, or participating in any way in evading or attempting to evade any Federal tax or payment thereof, knowingly counseling or suggesting to a client or prospective client an illegal plan to evade Federal taxes or payment thereof, or concealing assets of himself or another to evade Federal taxes or payment thereof.

(e) Misappropriation of, or failure properly and promptly, to remit funds received from a client for the purpose of payment of taxes or other obligations due the United States.

(f) Directly or indirectly attempting to influence, or offering or agreeing to attempt to influence, the official action of any officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service by the use of threats, false accusations, duress or coercion, by the offer of any special inducement or promise of advantage or by the bestowing of any gift, favor or thing of value.

(g) Disbarment or suspension from practice as an attorney, certified public accountant, public accountant, or actuary by any duly constituted authority of any State, possession, territory, Commonwealth, the District of Columbia, any Federal court of record or any Federal agency, body or board.

(h) Knowingly aiding and abetting another person to practice before the Internal Revenue Service during a period of suspension, disbarment, or ineligibility of such other person. Maintaining a partnership for the practice of law, accountancy, or other

related professional service with a person who is under disbarment from practice before the Service shall be presumed to be a violation of this provision.

(i) Contemptuous conduct in connection with practice before the Internal Revenue Service, including the use of abusive language, making false accusations and statements knowing them to be false, or circulating or publishing malicious or libelous matter.

(j) Giving a false opinion, knowingly, recklessly or through gross incompetence including an opinion which is intentionally or recklessly misleading, or a pattern of providing incompetent opinions on questions arising under the Federal tax laws. False opinions described in this paragraph include those which reflect or result from a knowing misstatement of fact or law; from an assertion of a position known to be unwarranted under existing law; from counseling or assisting in conduct known to be illegal or fraudulent; from concealment of matters required by law to be revealed; or from conscious disregard of information indicating that material facts expressed in the tax opinion or offering material are false or misleading. For purposes of this paragraph, reckless conduct is a highly unreasonable omission or misrepresentation involving an extreme departure from the standards of ordinary care that a practitioner should observe under the circumstances. A pattern of conduct is a factor that will be taken into account in determining whether a practitioner acted knowingly, recklessly, or through gross incompetence. Gross incompetence includes conduct that reflects gross indifference, preparation which is grossly inadequate under the

circumstances, and a consistent failure to perform obligations to the client.

(Sec. 3, 23 Stat. 258, secs. 2-12, 60 Stat. 237 et seq.; 5 U.S.C. 301; 31 U.S.C. 330; 31 U.S.C.321 (Reorg; Han No. 26 of 1950, 15 FR 4935, 64 Stat. 1280,3 CFR, 1949-53 Comp.,p. 1017))

[131 FR 10773, Aug. 13,1966., as amended at 35 FR 13205, Aug. 19, 1970; 42 .FR 38353, July 28, 1977; 44FR 4946, Jan. 24, 1979; 49 FR 6723, Feb. 23,1984; 57 FR 41095, Sept. 9,1992; 59 FR 3 1528, June 2&1994]

§10.52 Violation of regulations.

A practitioner may be disbarred or suspended, from practice before the Internal Revenue Service for any of the following:

(a) Willfully violating any of the regulations contained in this part.

(b) Recklessly or through gross incompetence (within the meaning of §10.51(j) violating §10.33 or §10.34 of this part.

[59 FR 31528, June 20, 1994]

§10.53 Receipt of information concerning attorneys, certified public accountants, enrolled agents, or enrolled actuaries.

If an officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service has reason to believe that an attorney, certified public accountant, enrolled agent, or enrolled actuary has violated any provision of this part, or if any such officer or employee receives information to that effect, he shall promptly make a written report thereof, which report or a copy thereof

shall be forwarded to the Director of Practice. If any other person has information of such violations, he may make a report thereof to the Director of Practice or to any officer or employee of the Internal Revenue Service.

[31 FR 10773, Aug. 13, 1966, as amended at 57 FR 41095, Sept. 9, 1992]