

EMAIL DISCUSSION LIST RULES

The Maryland State Bar Association provides these email discussion lists as a benefit to its members. The purpose of the listservs is to facilitate communication between members of the various committees and sections. The listservs are to be used only for the discussion of related MSBA issues or other legal-related discussions.

We will send these Rules of Etiquette (“Netiquette”) to the listservs on a regular basis as a friendly reminder for long-time users and as valuable information for newcomers. The subject header will be Rules of Etiquette.

ANTI-TRUST ISSUES

Do not post queries or information, and refrain from any discussion which may provide the basis for an inference that the members agreed to take action relating to prices, production, allocation of markets, or any other matter having a market effect. Examples of topics which should not be discussed include current or future billing rates, fees, disbursement charges or other items which would be construed as “price”, fair profit, billing rate, or wage level, current billing or fee procedures, imposition of credit terms. Do not post regarding refusing to deal with anyone because of his/her pricing or fees.

There is no organization too small or too localized to escape the possibility of a civil or criminal antitrust suit, and the penalties for violating federal or state antitrust laws are severe. The government’s attitude toward professional associations requires professional association members, as well as professional associations themselves, to at all times conduct their business openly and avoid any semblance of activity which might lead to the belief that the association members had agreed, even informally, to something that could have an effect on prices, fees or competition.

ATTACHMENTS

The list does not accept attachments. If you wish to send an attachment to an individual member of the list, you may do so but not to the list. You should get permission from a member of the list to send an attachment.

CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES

One word of caution in using Section listservs. When seeking information, attorneys need to remain aware that client confidentiality obligations apply. For example, an attorney need not disclose the entire detailed, and confidential, factual basis of the client’s life in order to ask a simple procedural question.

Although section listservs are only open to members of the particular MSBA Section, the only criteria for joining sections is that person must be an MSBA member.

INAPPROPRIATE POSTS

Do not forward jokes or any other non-legal related messages via the listserv. The lists are not intended to discuss political, religious or other non-legal views outside the realm of legal related issues. You have no idea where it will eventually be received. The Internet allows for very easy forwarding and sending of information. If you would not send out the jokes or message on your firm's letterhead, then do not forward it.

Do not send anything via e-mail you do not want to see in public.

PROMOTION/SOLICITATION

The MSBA provides all sections and committees with listservs to assist members in sharing legal-related information, ideas and resources.

The MSBA reserves the right to restrict promotion of products, services and programs not specifically endorsed by the MSBA. Only MSBA staff are authorized to post information about various MSBA programs, services and activities. No outside CLE provider may solicit/recruit faculty or topics for their programs on the MSBA Section list serves

In accordance with common email list courtesy, you may not send non-State Bar "commercial" and/or self-promotional postings to the list. The email list is not intended to provide a forum for the promotion or advocacy of the beliefs of any other organization. Solicitations and endorsements for political candidates or requests for fundraising contributions are out of order.

The MSBA does not provide e-mail addresses to outside vendors.

RULE FOR SECTIONS PROMOTING THEIR PROGRAMS ON OTHER LISTSERVS

Many sections do meetings/programs and they are welcome to send notices to their section listservs promoting the program.

Members who are also members of other sections and listservs are welcome to send information to other section listservs as long as they only promote MSBA or MICPEL events.

The MSBA will not, however, send messages for one section to other sections. We will put that information in the Bar Brief, Bar Events and now on the MSBA Twitter Account, www.twitter.com/MSBALOMA.

RESPONDING TO POSTS (1) - When sending to individual

If you hit **Reply** the list is programmed to send the reply only to the person who sent the message and NOT the entire list. If you wish to send the reply to the entire list, please hit **Reply to All**.

If you are responding to a post on a listserve, trim some of the original message. Avoid sending a reply that just says "Me, too" or some other short response. Keep messages short and to the point. If you are going to post a long reply or in some cases, a long rant, please indicate that in the subject header. Subject: Expert Witnesses - Long Reply.

RESPONDING TO POSTS (2) When sending to list

If you hit **Reply** the list is programmed to send the reply to the entire list. If you wish to send the reply to just the sender, when you hit reply, you must delete the address of the list in the TO: line and put in the address of the sender.

If you are responding to a post on a listserv, trim some of the original message. Avoid sending a reply that just says “Me, too” or some other short response. Keep messages short and to the point. If you are going to post a long reply or in some cases, a long rant, please indicate that in the subject header. Subject: Expert Witnesses - Long Reply.

SHOUTING/EMPHASIS

Emails written in all caps are interpreted as “shouting”. Use upper/lower case type in your posts. (Spell check doesn’t hurt either <g>!) The use of a row of symbols such as *&!@*^& denotes cursing and should not be included in your posts.

SIGNATURES

All messages must be “signed” each with at least your full name and telephone number. Autosignatures make this an automatic process. If you use an autosignature, you should keep its length to under 6 - 8 lines. Do not attach your vcard as part of your autosignature, as viruses can attach themselves to vcards.

SUBJECT LINES

Use a subject that adequately introduces the topic of your message, so people can quickly determine whether or not they will find it of interest. If you are changing the topic of a previous post you respond to, you should change the subject line of the post.

Do not send messages without a topic in the Subject box.

SUBSCRIBING TO THE LISTSERV

One must first be a MEMBER of the listserv in order to post, and receive replies. In order to join a particular open listserv, go to http://www.msba.org/sec_comm/listserves/index.htm. You may subscribe to as many of the open listservs as you wish but you must subscribe to each one separately. Once you have subscribed you may post and receive messages.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

If you believe that there is a technical problem with the listserv, do not post to the listserv.

UNSUBSCRIBING TO THE LISTSERV

At the bottom of all e-mail messages from the listservs is the ability to unsubscribe. You may unsubscribe at any time.

VIRUS SCANNING

Viruses are destructive, both in terms of the damage they can do to computers, and in terms of lost billable time trying to get one’s computer back up and running. For this reason, participants of listservs have an extra responsibility to their fellow attorneys to employ a virus

detection package, and to regularly update the virus definitions, so it continues to provide adequate protection.

If you discover you have a virus on your computer, you should immediately contact John Anderson by telephone at 800-492-1964, ext 3036 and ask him to post a warning not to open any emails with attachments sent under your name.