
E-89-6 Lawyer advertising through “Welcome Wagon”

Question

May lawyers use the services of local chapters of Welcome Wagon International Inc. in advertising their law practices?

Opinion

Yes, subject to the following:

1. Assuming that the following representation by Welcome Wagon International is factually correct:

“You may be assured that our representatives are trained to observe the regulations and restrictions enforced by state licensing boards and professional associations. Our representatives do not solicit business on behalf of any professional sponsors.” Welcome Wagon International Inc., Brochure #H-1168 Rev. 12/84.

2. Provided that there is compliance with the Rules of Professional Conduct (SCR Chapter 20), SCR 20:7.1 through SCR 20:7.5 particularly. Lawyers using Welcome Wagon services should ascertain whether or not any fees charged the lawyers by Welcome Wagon reflect only its costs of advertising the lawyers’ services and that, in fact, no Welcome Wagon recommendations regarding employment of the lawyers are made. *See* SCR 20:7.2(b) prohibiting giving “anything of value to a person for recommending (a) lawyer’s services. . . .”