



Pelican Center
for Children and Families

Professionalism & Ethics: *Closing the Year with Integrity*

In law school, you learned the principle of *talem qualem* – “take your victim as you find them.” Known as the “eggshell skull” rule, this doctrine holds defendants fully accountable for harm, even when the plaintiff has pre-existing vulnerabilities.

But have you ever considered that, as an attorney, you also “take your clients as you find them”?

The Rules of Professional Conduct make it clear: when representing a client with diminished capacity, you are ethically obligated—so far as reasonably possible—to maintain a standard attorney-client relationship. But what exactly constitutes diminished capacity? What professional and ethical responsibilities come into play when your client’s decision-making ability is impaired?

This engaging seminar will explore the answers to these critical questions. Join our experienced presenter for a discussion designed to engage attorneys seeking to navigate these complex scenarios with confidence, the program offers practical guidance and a deeper understanding of the rules that govern your role. Strengthen your ethical foundation while enhancing your capacity to advocate with professionalism and integrity.

**Monday, December 15,
2025**

**In-Person CLE!
Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

**ETHICS: 10-11am
PROFESSIONALISM:
11:30am-12:30pm**

**Be sure to have your required
CLE hours before 12/31!**

\$150 for both or \$90 for one

Who should attend?
Any Louisiana attorney. The
content will be applicable to all.



<https://bit.ly/Integrity2025>



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SCHEDULE

10:00 am Ethical Considerations in Representing Clients with Diminished Capacity

11:30 am Common Challenges and How to Address Them with Professionalism

OBJECTIVES

- Recognize concerns and challenges to ethical and professional representation when representing clients with diminished capacity.
- Identify ways to ethically and professionally address concerns and challenges to representing clients with diminished capacity.

ETHICS AGENDA

- Brief Introductions of Speakers/Agenda
- Review of applicable Rules of Professional Conduct
- Applying the Rules to scenarios with a discussion of ways to address any issues:
 - Client with intellectual disabilities
 - Client with mental health issues impairing decision-making
 - Client with substance abuse/alcohol abuse
- Questions

PROFESSIONALISM AGENDA

- Brief Introductions of Speakers/Agenda
- Review of potential issues an attorney may have with dealing with a client with diminished capacity
 - Discussion of ways to address the issues:
 - Client with intellectual disabilities
 - Client with mental health issues impairing decision-making
 - Client with substance abuse/alcohol abuse
- Questions

SPEAKER

Rodney Hastings, J.D., CWLS, State of Louisiana Mental Health Advocacy Service – Child Advocacy Program

An attorney with the Mental Health Advocacy Service, Child Advocacy Program, representing foster children in Child-in-Need-of-Care court proceedings in East Baton Rouge Parish. Rodney has been active in child welfare matters since 2011, representing foster children with MHAS/CAP and Southeast Louisiana Legal Services in multiple jurisdictions, as well as serving as a regional attorney supervisor for the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services. Rodney received his undergraduate degree from Southeastern Louisiana University and his J.D. from Loyola University College of Law – New Orleans. Rodney has been certified as a Child Welfare Law Specialist by the National Association of Counsel for Children since 2015. Prior to entering the child welfare practice, Rodney spent 12 years working in various positions with the Louisiana Attorney Disciplinary Board, including serving as a deputy disciplinary counsel with the Office of the Disciplinary Counsel and as counsel for the Board's appellate review panels. Rodney has served as a trainer for the Pelican Center for Children and Families, and as a presenter/speaker at seminars throughout Louisiana on the topics of child welfare, ethics, professionalism, and computer forensics.

