

Lucy Wang Authors *Law360* “Expert Analysis” on Why Attorney Civility Means More in 2026

In The News | 2 min read

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Hinshaw attorney Lucy Wang recently wrote an “Expert Analysis” for *Law360* regarding California’s renewed focus on attorney civility amid a wider national push to promote adherence to professionalism standards.

[The article closely follows her earlier *Lawyers’ Lawyer Newsletter*](#) and discusses California’s new rule, effective February 1, requiring attorneys to reaffirm a civility oath annually during their license renewal. As Lucy explains, although the civility oath has been part of California’s professional standards since 2014, the need for annual re-attestation indicates a growing concern that unprofessional behavior in the legal community has increased rather than decreased.

Lucy further notes that California is not alone; over 24 states now require a civility oath or pledge for bar admission or enforce professionalism through court rules or disciplinary measures. For instance, Texas has mandated a civility clause in its attorney oath since 2015, building on its earlier Texas Lawyers’ Creed from 1989.

Using recent case law and media examples, Lucy shows how courts are penalizing and disbaring attorneys for highly uncivil conduct. One court stated, *“An attorney who demonstrates a lack of civility, good manners and common courtesy taints the image of the legal profession and, consequently, the legal system, which was created and designed to resolve differences and disputes in a civil manner.”*

Key Takeaways and Tips for Attorney Civility

Forms of Incivility to Avoid

- Legal professionals should avoid abusive or obstructive discovery tactics, gratuitous personal attacks in pleadings or correspondence, refusal to meet and confer in good faith, strategic delay designed to increase costs or pressure settlement, and disrespectful conduct toward court staff or opposing counsel.

Practical Reminders

- Confer in good faith before filing discovery motions, aiming to resolve disputes rather than create a record of conflict. Communicate clearly and professionally in correspondence, even when disagreements are sharp. Make reasonable scheduling accommodations when possible. Focus advocacy on the merits, not personal attacks.

Strategic Advantage

- Courts and clients expect attorneys to be both strong advocates and civil professionals. In an era of rising costs and increasing demands on the justice system, civility is not simply a matter of etiquette—it is a strategic advantage and an essential component of effective advocacy.

[Read the full article \(PDF\)](#)

- *Law360*: “[Calif.’s Civility Push Shows Why Professionalism Is Vital](#)” (February 20, 2026)

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