The Supreme Court of Ohio

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

May 14, 2020

[Cite as *05/14/2020 Administrative Actions #2*, 2020-Ohio-2954.]

In re July 2020 Bar Examination and Expansion of Practice Pending Admission during the Admission to the Practice of Law Process

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, the Governor of Ohio issued Executive Order 2020-01D and declared a state of emergency in Ohio in response to COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization publicly characterized COVID-19 as a global "pandemic" requiring "urgent and aggressive action" to control the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a National Emergency;

WHEREAS, Gov.Bar R. I establishes a July administration of the Ohio Bar Examination;

WHEREAS, Gov.Bar R. I(19) establishes Practice Pending Admission during the Admission to the Practice of Law Process;

NOW THEREFORE, the Court hereby orders the following:

(A) In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and for vital safety, logistical, and planning considerations concerning the administration of the Ohio Bar Examination, the July 2020 Ohio Bar Examination is postponed to September 9, 2020, and September 10, 2020. Details regarding the September Bar Examination will be provided as soon as they are available.

(B) Applicants who timely applied to sit for the July 2020 Bar Examination on or before the May 10, 2020, deadline shall be automatically rolled over to the September Bar Examination, and the application deadlines contained in Gov.Bar R. I shall not be extended. If an applicant withdraws the application to sit for this administration of this Bar Examination, the application fee shall be refunded, and the applicant will not be permitted to apply at a later date to sit for this administration of the examination.

(C) Gov.Bar R. I(19), Practice Pending Admission during the Admission to the Practice of Law Process, which is effective June 1, 2020, shall be expanded to allow recent law graduates to apply to the Court for temporary supervised practice on or after Monday, June 15, 2020, under the following eligibility requirements:

(1) Applicants must be a December 2019 or 2020 graduate of an ABA accredited law school;

(2) Applicants must satisfy the provisions of Gov. Bar R. I(1) through (3) and have a Registration Application and Application to take the July 2020 bar examination submitted to the Office of Bar Admissions;

(3) Applicants must receive from the Board of Commissioners on Character and Fitness final approval of the applicant's character, fitness, and moral qualifications to practice;

(4) Applicants must practice under the supervision of an active Ohio attorney in good standing who has been licensed to practice law for at least three years;

(5) Applicants must not have failed a Bar Examination since their graduation from law school;

(6) Applicants must submit to the Office of Bar Admissions a form attesting that the applicant has read and agrees to be bound by the Ohio Rules of Professional Conduct;

(7) Applicants must complete and submit for approval to the Office of Bar Admissions an Application to Practice Pending Admission, on forms provided by that office;

(8) Upon acceptance of an Application to Practice Pending Admission, the Office of Bar Admissions shall forward the application to the Office of Attorney Services, which shall issue the applicant an Ohio attorney-registration number and designate the applicant as "Practice Pending Admission." The Office of Attorney Services shall notify the Office of Disciplinary Counsel that the applicant has been granted this status;

(9) The applicant shall immediately notify the Office of Disciplinary Counsel and the Office of Bar Admissions if the applicant becomes subject to criminal charges or becomes subject to a disciplinary investigation or sanction in any jurisdiction while authorized to practice pending admission;

(10) Once the applicant has been designated Practice Pending Admission, the applicant may do any of the following:

(a) Enter appearances;

(b) Draft legal documents and pleadings;

(c) Provide legal services to clients;

(d) Provide other counsel consistent with the practice of law in Ohio.

(11) The supervising attorney's name and bar ID number shall appear on all papers filed with a court;

(12) The temporary authority to practice for December 2019 and 2020 graduates shall terminate upon the occurrence of any of the following:

(a) On the date the applicant withdraws the applicant's application to sit for the July/September 2020 Ohio Bar Examination;

(b) On the first date of the Bar Examination, if an applicant fails to sit for the next available Bar Examination in Ohio;

(c) On the Monday after distribution of the results of the first Bar Examination offered in Ohio if the applicant is not successful on that examination. If the applicant is successful on that examination, it shall extend until the applicant is admitted to practice of law in Ohio so long as the applicant is admitted within 12 months of that Bar Examination. If the applicant is not admitted within 12 months

following that Bar Examination, the temporary authority to practice law shall automatically terminate.

(d) Upon the Board of Commissioners on Character and Fitness revoking final approval of the applicant's character, fitness, and moral qualifications to practice;

(e) On the date the applicant is no longer practicing under the supervision of an active Ohio attorney in good standing.