FILED
SUPREME COURT
STATE OF WASHINGTON
MARCH 24, 2020
BY SUSAN L. CARLSON
CLERK

THE SUPREME COURT OF WASHINGTON

IN THE MATTER OF TEMPORARILY WAIVING THE REQUIREMENT IN APR 5 THAT THE OATH OF ATTORNEY, LIMITED PRACTICE OFFICER OR LIMITED LICENSE LEGAL TECHNICIAN BE ADMINISTERED IN OPEN COURT	)))))	NO. 25700-B-608 **O R D E R**

Admission and Practice Rule 5 requires applicants who have qualified for admission as lawyers, limited practice officers or limited license legal technicians to take an oath before an elected or appointed judge sitting in open court in the state of Washington. Governor Jay Inslee has proclaimed the State of Washington to be in a state of emergency due to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak in Washington. In order to prevent the spread of the virus, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Washington State Department of Health have strongly urged all organizations to impose social distancing measures and other restrictions on public gatherings. On March 4, 2020, the Supreme Court entered an order authorizing Presiding Judges of the Washington courts to adopt, modify, and suspend court rules and orders, and to take further actions concerning court operations, as warranted to address the current public health emergency. In response, many courts in the state of Washington have entered orders restricting court appearances and, in some cases, prohibiting in-person appointments for swearing-in ceremonies. As a result, applicants for admission to the Washington State Bar Association as lawyers, limited practice officers and limited license legal technicians may not be able to complete the requirement in APR 5 for taking an oath before a

judge in open court. Therefore, the Washington State Bar Association has recommended that the Court temporarily waive the requirement in the rule that the oath be taken in open court and authorize judges to administer the oath remotely or virtually using face-time technology.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the Court's exclusive responsibility and inherent power to establish the qualifications for admission to practice law as provided in APR 1(a),

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED:

The requirements in APR 5 that the oath for an attorney, limited practice officer and limited license legal technician be administered in open court shall be waived until Washington State is no longer under a state of emergency due to COVID-19 emergency. Consistent with the goal of restricting in-person court appearances, any judge of any court in Washington authorized to administer the oath may do so by telephone, video or online face-time technology.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, this 24th day of March, 2020.

For the Court

CHIEF JUSTICE