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Delaware Supreme Court cancels in-person 2020 Bar Exam
Bar candidates may obtain temporary limited practice status

Ongoing concern about COVID-19 Pandemic prompted re-evaluation of in-person exam for 2020

Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz, Jr. announced today that the Supreme Court has canceled the in-person 2020 Bar Examination scheduled for September 9-11 at the Delaware State Fairgrounds. The Court and the Board of Bar Examiners concluded that COVID-19 public health concerns and quarantine requirements in other states necessitated cancellation. In lieu of the 2020 Bar Exam, the Board is working with the Supreme Court to implement a temporary limited practice rule that will allow many of this year's bar candidates to perform legal work in Delaware, under the supervision of a Delaware lawyer, until the next administration of the Bar Exam.

"The health and safety of all involved in the exam is our first priority. The Court and the Board had hoped that the temporary relocation of the Bar Exam to the Delaware State Fairgrounds in Harrington and the use of a wide array of safety procedures consistent with State and CDC guidelines would allow us to hold an in-person exam this year. But we are not where we hoped to be from a public health standpoint. The pandemic continues to evolve, and it is unclear how well the virus will be contained by September. Because of this uncertainty, the Court and the Board believe that canceling the in-person exam is the only way to protect the health and safety of all the applicants, proctors and staff," said Chief Justice Seitz.

Nearly 60 percent of the candidates that have applied to take the Delaware Bar Exam this year are from out of state, including locations currently considered "hotspots." Some of those out of state applicants are also subject to quarantine requirements in their home state. The rapidly changing nature of the pandemic makes this year's exam particularly difficult to administer. While cancellation of the in-person exam is disappointing, the interim limited practice privilege will allow many 2020 bar candidates to begin their legal careers in Delaware.

Details of the limited practice rule will be provided directly to the applicants and will be made available on the Supreme Court and Board of Bar Examiners web pages as soon as they are available.