SUPREME COURT OF GEORGIA

April 30, 2020

The Honorable Supreme Court met pursuant to adjournment.

The following order was passed:

IN RE: EMERGENCY SUSPENSION AND DEFERRAL OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE STATE BAR OF GEORGIA CONCERNING FAILURE TO TIMELY PAY LICENSE FEES

In the light of the economic disruption that has accompanied the ongoing outbreak of COVID-19 and the financial hardships that many Georgia lawyers have experienced as a result, the State Bar of Georgia has filed an emergency motion to temporarily suspend certain provisions of State Bar Rules 1-501 and 1-501.1 with respect to the failure of a lawyer to timely remit license fees.[1] For Bar Year 2020-2021, lawyers are required to remit their license fees no later than July 1, 2020. Rule 1-501.1 provides that, if a lawyer fails to remit the license fees by August 1, the lawyer is to be charged a late fee of $75. And Rule 1-501 provides that, if a lawyer fails to remit the license fees (and any late fee) by September 1, the lawyer ceases to be a member in good standing with the State Bar. The State Bar

[1] In its motion, the State Bar also asks the Court to waive State Bar Rule 5-101, which requires notice to the Bar membership at least 30 days prior to the filing of any motion to amend the Bar Rules. Although the motion is captioned as "Motion to Amend 2020-3," it does not actually seek an amendment of Rules 1-501 and 1-501.1. To the contrary, it only seeks an emergency suspension of certain provisions of those rules. Accordingly, the motion is outside the scope of Rule 5-101, and no notice was required.

moves to suspend the provision for a late fee to be assessed on August 1 and to defer the suspension of membership in good standing for a failure to pay license fees from September 1, 2020 until January 1, 2021.

The Court grants the motion. For Bar Year 2020-2021, license fees are due on July 1, 2020. No late fee, however, will be charged for the failure to remit the license fees by August 1, and no suspension of membership in good standing will result for a failure to pay the license fees by September 1. Any lawyer who has not paid the license fees by January 1, 2021, however, will be charged the $100 late fee for which Rule 1-501.1 provides (separately from its provision for a $75 late fee on August 1), and any such lawyer also will cease at that time to be a member in good standing with the State Bar. This temporary suspension of certain provisions of Rules 1-501 and 1-501.1 is limited to license fees due for Bar Year 2020-2021.

All the Justices concur.

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA
Clerk's Office, Atlanta

I certify that the above is a true extract from the minutes of the Supreme Court of Georgia.
Witness my signature and the seal of said court hereto affixed the day and year last above written.

, Clerk