Supreme Court

In re Article II of the Supreme Court Rules	:
(Further Response to COVID-19 - July 2020	:
Rhode Island Bar Examination)	:

O R D E R

The COVID-19 pandemic has created significant obstacles for both applicants and bar admissions staff related to the administration of a bar examination. The Court is mindful of both the need of recent law school graduates and others to be admitted to the bar as soon as possible and our duty to protect the public by ensuring that persons licensed to practice law in Rhode Island are competent and possess the requisite character and fitness. The Court acknowledges that no plan to proceed with a bar examination amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will be ideal, and that plans to administer a bar examination will remain uncertain. The health and safety of applicants and staff has remained paramount throughout the Court's consideration of how to proceed, as well as the goal to establish a process that is as fair as possible under the circumstances.

In light of the ongoing public health concerns related to the outbreak of COVID-19, and the actions that have been taken by the Governor of the State of Rhode Island in response, and in consultation with the Board of Bar Examiners, the Court orders as follows:

The Rhode Island Bar Examination scheduled for July 2020 is hereby postponed to September 30 and October 1, 2020.

Persons seeking to sit for this examination pursuant to Article II, Rule 1 shall file a petition for admission with the Court no later than June 26, 2020.

Persons who apply to sit for another jurisdiction's upcoming bar examination in 2020 are ineligible for the Rhode Island Bar Examination to be held on September 30 and October 1, 2020.

Based upon the number of applicants tested in Rhode Island during past administrations of the July bar examination, the Court expects to test all qualified applicants at a bar examination held on September 30 and October 1, 2020. However, should the number of qualified applicants for the next bar examination exceed the number of available seats, seats will be assigned to applicants on a first-come, first-serve basis based on the date and time the petition for admission was accepted for filing with the Court. Only petitions from qualified applicants will be processed and applicants who do not meet the prerequisites for admission contained in Article II, Rule 1 are discouraged from filing a petition to sit for the upcoming examination.

Qualified applicants who do not secure a seat for the examination, may elect to defer to the February 2021 Rhode Island Bar Examination at no cost or to receive a full refund of the petition filing fee.

The provisions in this Court's order dated March 18, 2020 remain in effect.

Applicant participation in the upcoming bar examination is contingent upon compliance with all COVID-19 protocols set by the Court throughout the admissions process and the two-day examination.

The Court, in consultation with the Board of Bar Examiners, will continue to closely monitor public health and safety guidelines, including prohibitions against large gatherings, related to the COVID-19 pandemic and will adjust plans to administer a bar examination on September 30 and October 1, 2020 accordingly.

Entered as an Order of this Court this ***11th*** day of ***June 2020***.

/s/
Suttell, C. J.

/s/
Goldberg, J.

/s/
Flaherty, J.

/s/
Robinson, J.

/s/
Indeglia, J.