SUPREME COURT OF WISCONSIN

IN RE THE MATTER
OF ADMISSION TO THE BAR
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

FILED

MAR 25, 2020

Sheila T. Reiff
Clerk of Supreme Court
Madison, WI

You are hereby notified that the Court has issued the following order, effective the date of this order and until further order of the Court:

As a result of the public health emergency relating to COVID-19, the bar admissions ceremonies scheduled on April 16, 2020, May 18, 2020, and May 27, 2020, are postponed indefinitely. WI-20-C-CO000.pdf

The Court recognizes that the delay in bar admissions may have significant professional consequences for some people. Accordingly, the Court finds good cause to temporarily modify the procedures for admission to the bar to accommodate this extraordinary situation. Admission to practice law in Wisconsin requires qualified applicants take the Attorney's Oath set forth in SCR 40.15. SCR 40.02(4) requires the oath be taken in person, before "the supreme court or a justice thereof or before a member of the highest court of another jurisdiction or a person authorized by that jurisdiction to administer the attorney's oath for bar admission there or before a judge of the U.S. District Court or Court of Appeals or a justice of the U.S. Supreme Court." In light of the exceptional circumstances, the Court finds good cause to temporarily waive this in person requirement, for all applicants certified for admission during the period this temporary order is in effect. Wis. Const. Art. VII, §§ 3 and 4; In re Kading, 70 Wis. 2d 508, 519-20, 235 N.W.2d 409 (1976); In re Bar Admission of Rippl, 2002 WI 15, ¶3, 250 Wis. 2d 519, 639 N.W.2d 553, (court has the "ultimate responsibility for regulating admission to the Wisconsin bar"); see also SCR 40.10.

In addition, persons admitted to the bar are required to enroll in the State Bar of Wisconsin within 10 days after admission to practice as a condition of practicing law in the state. See SCR 10.03(2). The State Bar of Wisconsin has requested and we agree that this enrollment deadline shall be extended under these extraordinary circumstances. Applicants who are admitted in absentia under the procedure set forth in this order are reminded of their duty to join the State Bar of Wisconsin, and pay applicable bar dues, assessments, and fees, or seek a waiver from the State Bar with respect to these dues, assessments and fees, within 30 days of receiving confirmation of admission, as a condition of practicing law in this state. Now therefore,

IT IS ORDERED that the bar admissions ceremonies scheduled on April 16, 2020, May 18, 2020, and May 27, 2020 are postponed, indefinitely.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that upon receipt of notification from the Board of Bar Examiners (Board) that an applicant has been certified for admission, the qualified applicant may complete the admissions process, in absentia, by executing the Certificate Mailing Address Form in the applicant's on-line admission account as instructed by the Board and by executing the Attorney Oath of Admission attached as Appendix A to this Order. The Attorney Oath of Admission need not be notarized.

Both documents shall be scanned and saved as a PDF document titled: "Attorney Oath [Last name_First name]" and emailed to *clerk@wicourts.gov*. Applicants should write "Attorney Oath" in the subject line of the email. Applicants who wish to sign their own name to the roll at a later date, should write "Attorney Oath – Request to Sign" in the subject line of the email and adjacent to line 1A of the Certificate Mailing Address Form should also clearly write "Request to Sign Later." Your name will be entered, but space will be reserved to allow you to sign the roll in person at a later date to be determined.

You will receive a confirmation email when the Clerk of Supreme Court and Court of Appeals has received and accepted your documents and has entered your name on the roll of attorneys maintained by the Clerk of the Supreme Court. Upon receipt of the confirmation email, your admission is complete and you may hold out that you are authorized to practice law in Wisconsin.

Applicants who are admitted in absentia under the procedure set forth in this order are reminded of their duty to join the State Bar of Wisconsin, and pay applicable bar dues, assessments, and fees, or seek a waiver from the State Bar with respect to these dues, assessments and fees, within 30 days of receiving confirmation of admission, as a condition of practicing law in this state.

Being admitted in absentia pursuant to the terms of this order does not obviate the requirement that an applicant complete all requirements for admission, including the submission of the Attorney Oath and Certificate Mailing Address Form, within one year following the date of certification by the Board. SCR 40.09.

Appendix 1

Supreme Court of Wisconsin

ATTORNEY'S OATH OF ADMISSION TO THE WISCONSIN SUPREME COURT

I, _____ do solemnly swear (or affirm) that as a member of the Bar of this Court, I will support the constitution of the United States and the constitution of the state of Wisconsin; I will maintain the respect due to courts of justice and judicial officers; I will not counsel or maintain any suit or proceeding which shall appear to me to be unjust, or any defense, except such as I believe to be honestly debatable under the law of the land; I will employ, for the purpose of maintaining the causes confided to me, such means only as are consistent with truth and honor, and will never seek to mislead the judge or jury by any artifice or false statement of fact or law; I will maintain the confidence and preserve inviolate the secrets of my client and will accept no compensation in connection with my client's business except from my client or with my client's knowledge and approval; I will abstain from all offensive personality and advance no fact prejudicial to the honor or reputation of a party or witness, unless required by the justice of the cause with which I am charged; I will never reject, from any consideration personal to myself, the cause of the defenseless or oppressed, or delay any person's cause for lucre or malice. So help me God.

_____

(Signature of Attorney)

_____

(Print Name of Attorney)