

In re Amendments to Article II :
of the Supreme Court Rules :
(Admission of Attorneys and :
Others to Practice Law). :

ORDER

Section 1. Article II, Rule 1 of the Supreme Court Rules is hereby amended as follows:

“Rule 1. Admission on Examination.

Every person applying for admission to the bar upon examination shall electronically file, under oath, with the Clerk of the Supreme Court the Petition for Admission to the Rhode Island Bar available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal and shall satisfy the Board of Bar Examiners that:

(a) He/She is a citizen of the United States ~~or legal resident~~, an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, or an alien otherwise authorized to work lawfully in the United States, of good character;

(b) He/She is over twenty-one (21) years of age;

(c) He/She has graduated from a law school accredited and approved by the American Bar Association and approved by the Board; and

(d) He/She is otherwise qualified to practice law. No person who has failed a total of five (5) bar examinations, whether in Rhode Island or in any other combination of states, districts, or territories of the United States (including the District of Columbia), will ~~again~~ be permitted to seek admission to the Rhode Island Bar either by transfer of a Uniform Bar Examination score or by ~~take~~ taking the Rhode Island Bar Examination, and no special order excepting any such person from this five (5) examination limit will be granted by this Court. Failure to achieve the minimum passing score required by the rules in place at the time of the administration of the Uniform Bar Examination constitutes a failed bar examination for purposes of this rule.”

Section 2. Article II, Rule 1A of the Supreme Court Rules is hereby amended as follows:

“Rule 1A. ~~Uniform Bar~~ Attorney Admission on Examination.

~~The Rhode Island Bar Examination shall be the Uniform Bar Examination prepared by the National Conference of Bar Examiners, which consists of the Multistate Essay Examination, the Multistate Performance Tests, and the Multistate Bar Examination. Individuals must achieve a total scaled score of 270 on the Uniform Bar Examination to be eligible for admission to this state’s bar. An applicant’s score on the Uniform Bar Examination, as certified by the National~~

~~Conference of Bar Examiners, is final.~~

A person who has been admitted as an attorney of the highest court of any state, district, or territory of the United States for at least five (5) years who applies for admission in this state shall only be required to take the essay portion of the Rhode Island Bar Examination upon the applicant's compliance with the following conditions:

(a) He/She shall electronically file, under oath, with the Clerk of the Supreme Court the Petition for Admission to the Rhode Island Bar available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal and shall satisfy the Board that he/she meets the requirements of subdivisions (a), (b), and (d) of Rule 1; and

(b) He/She has been engaged in the full-time active practice of law for at least five (5) years of the last ten (10) years immediately preceding filing of his or her petition; or

(c) He/She has been engaged in the full-time teaching of law at a law school accredited by the American Bar Association for at least five (5) years of the last ten (10) years immediately preceding the filing of his/her petition.

(d) Said applicant shall provide the Court with a certificate of admission from the highest judicial court of each state, district, or territory, of which the applicant is admitted, and shall submit to a character investigation conducted by the National Conference of Bar Examiners.

Individuals must achieve a total scaled score of 135 or higher on the examination to be eligible for admission to this state's bar pursuant to this rule."

Section 3. Article II, Rule 1B of the Supreme Court Rules is hereby amended as follows:

"Rule 1B. Admission on Transferred Uniform Bar Examination Score.

Individuals may seek admission to this state's bar by transfer of a Uniform Bar Examination score of 270 or higher earned on an administration of the Uniform Bar Examination which occurred within two (2) years of filing a Petition for Admission to the Rhode Island Bar. Applicants seeking admission by transfer of a Uniform Bar Examination Score shall electronically file, under oath, with the Clerk of the Supreme Court the Petition for Admission to the Rhode Island Bar available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal and shall satisfy the Board that they meet the requirements set forth in Rule 1(a) – (d). An applicant's score on the Uniform Bar Examination, as certified by the National Conference of Bar Examiners, is final."

Section 4. Article II, Rule 2 of the Supreme Court Rules is hereby amended as follows:

"Rule 2. Temporary Attorney Admitted in Other States Admission.

~~(a) Attorney admission on examination. A person who has been admitted as an~~

~~attorney of the highest court of any state, district, or territory of the United States for at least five (5) years who applies for admission in this state shall only be required to take the essay portion of the Rhode Island Bar Examination upon the applicant's compliance with the following conditions:~~

~~—(1) He/She shall electronically file, under oath, with the Clerk of the Supreme Court the Petition for Admission to the Rhode Island Bar available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal and shall satisfy the Board that he/she meets the requirements of subdivisions (a), (b), and (d) of Rule 1; and~~

~~—(2) He/She has been engaged in the full-time active practice of law for at least five (5) years of the last ten (10) years immediately preceding filing of his or her petition; or~~

~~—(3) He/She has been engaged in the full-time teaching of law at a law school accredited by the American Bar Association for at least five (5) years of the last ten (10) years immediately preceding the filing of his/her petition.~~

~~—(4) Said applicant shall provide the Court with a certificate of admission from the highest judicial court of each state, district, or territory, of which the applicant is admitted, and shall submit to a character investigation conducted by the National Conference of Bar Examiners.~~

~~—Individuals must achieve a total scaled score of 135 or higher on the examination to be eligible for admission to this state's bar pursuant to this rule.~~

(a) *Qualifications and Requirements.* Attorneys who are a member of the bar of the highest judicial court of a state, district, or territory of the United States, and who meet the qualifications set forth in this rule, may seek temporary admission to the Rhode Island bar.

(1) Attorneys who have previously failed the Rhode Island Bar Examination are not eligible for admission under this rule.

(2) Attorneys who fail the Rhode Island Bar Examination while temporarily admitted under this rule shall have their temporary admission immediately revoked.

(3) Time spent practicing law pursuant to this rule shall not be used to satisfy the requirement of Rule 1A.

(4) The conduct of attorneys admitted under this rule shall conform to the conduct expected of members of the bar of this Court, with all of its obligations, including Articles III (Disciplinary Procedures), IV (Periodic Registration of Attorneys and Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Regulations), and V (Rules of Professional Conduct) of these rules.

(b) *Programs providing legal services to indigents —Special counsel to the Department of Attorney General.* Any attorney who is a member of the bar of the highest judicial court of a state, district, or territory of the United States who has been engaged in the full-time active practice of law for at least one (1) year and seeks to be admitted to practice before the courts of this state in cases in which the attorney is associated with an organized and Supreme Court approved program providing legal services to indigents may be temporarily admitted to practice upon electronically filing with the Clerk of the Supreme Court the Petition for Temporary/Limited Admission to the Rhode Island Bar available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal and after satisfying this Court that the

attorney is a member in good standing of said court and the attorney is or will be associated with such a program. ~~Attorneys who have previously failed the Rhode Island Bar Examination are not eligible for admission under this rule.~~ Approval by this Court may be granted to programs providing legal services to indigents which programs are either:

(1) Funded in whole or in part by the federal government or by the Rhode Island Bar Foundation;

(2) Sponsored by a law school accredited and approved by the American Bar Association; or

(3) Sponsored by the office of the Rhode Island Public Defender.

The petition shall be filed with a statement from the program administrator certifying the proposed placement of the attorney and that the proposed placement meets the requirements of this rule.

~~Any attorney who is a member of the bar of the highest judicial court of a state, district, or territory of the United States may be temporarily admitted to practice law in this state as special counsel in cases in which the attorney is associated with the Department of Attorney General upon electronically filing with the Clerk of the Supreme Court the Petition for Temporary/Limited Admission to the Rhode Island Bar available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal and after satisfying this Court that the attorney is a member in good standing of said court and that good cause supports the request to be associated with the Department of Attorney General. The petition shall be filed with a statement from the Attorney General certifying the proposed placement of the attorney and that the proposed placement meets the requirements of this rule.~~

~~The conduct of attorneys admitted under this rule shall conform to the conduct expected of members of the bar of this Court, with all of its obligations, including Articles III (Disciplinary Procedures), IV (Periodic Registration of Attorneys and Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Regulations), and V (Rules of Professional Conduct) of these rules.~~

Admission to practice under this subdivision shall cease to be effective whenever the attorney is no longer associated with the Attorney General or with such a program and in no event shall permission to practice under this subdivision remain in effect longer than two (2) years for any individual invoking its provision.

~~Time spent practicing law pursuant to the authority of this subdivision, shall not be used to satisfy the requirement of subdivision (a) herein.~~

(c) *Admission while on active duty with the armed services – Temporary admission of military spouse attorneys.* (1) *Member of the Armed Services.* Any attorney who is a member of the bar of the highest judicial court of a state, district, or territory of the United States who is on active duty with any one of the armed services in the State of Rhode Island may be admitted to practice law in this state upon electronically filing the Petition for Temporary/Limited Admission to the Rhode Island Bar available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal and after satisfying this Court that the attorney is a member in good standing of said court. Admission under this subdivision is limited to representing in civil or criminal causes, junior non-commissioned officers, and enlisted personnel of such service who might not otherwise be able to afford proper legal assistance. The

petition shall be filed with a statement from the senior legal officer on active duty with the division of armed services in the district for the State of Rhode Island certifying the proposed placement of the attorney and that the proposed placement meets the requirements of this rule.

Admission to practice under this subdivision shall cease to be effective upon separation from active duty in the armed services or transfer from Rhode Island.

(2) *Spouse of Member of the Armed Services.* Any attorney who is a member of the bar of the highest judicial court of a state, district, or territory of the United States, who graduated from a law school accredited and approved by the American Bar Association, who has been engaged in the full-time active practice of law for at least one (1) year, and whose spouse is on active duty with any one of the armed services and is stationed in the State of Rhode Island, may be admitted to practice law in this state upon electronically filing the Petition for Temporary/ Limited Admission to the Rhode Island Bar available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal. ~~Attorneys who have previously failed the Rhode Island Bar Examination are not eligible for admission under this rule.~~ Admission under this rule shall terminate and the attorney shall cease the practice of law in Rhode Island three (3) years from the date of admission. The three (3) years shall be inclusive of any time admitted under Article II, Rules 2(b) - (e) and 9(b) of the Rhode Island Supreme Court Rules. Additionally, admission under this rule shall terminate sixty (60) days after any of the following events:

- (i) The spouse's separation or retirement from the armed services;
- (ii) The spouse's transfer to another jurisdiction, unless the spouse's assignment specifies that the Department of Defense does not allow the attorney to accompany the service member, in which case the attorney upon petition to the Supreme Court may continue to practice law in Rhode Island as provided in this rule;
- (iii) The marriage terminates due to death or divorce;
- (iv) The attorney fails to meet the annual licensing requirements for an active attorney licensed to practice law in Rhode Island, including any and all continuing legal education requirements;
- (v) Upon the attorney's written request;
- (vi) The attorney is admitted to practice law in Rhode Island under any other admission rule; or
- (vii) Upon notice by the Supreme Court at any time.

~~(3) The conduct of attorneys admitted under these subdivisions shall conform to the conduct expected of members of the bar of this Court, with all of its obligations, including Articles III (Disciplinary Procedures), IV (Periodic Registration of Attorneys and Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Regulations), and V (Rules of Professional Conduct) of these rules.~~

~~—Time spent practicing law pursuant to the authority of these subdivisions shall not be used to satisfy the requirements of subdivision (a) herein.~~

(d) *Judge Advocate Generals.* Any attorney who is a member in good standing of the bar of the highest judicial court of a state, district, or territory of the United States who is on extended active duty with the Rhode Island National Guard or who is on duty as a member of the Rhode Island National Guard and assigned to a Judge Advocate General position may provide legal services pursuant to a legal assistance

program established under 10 U.S.C. § 1044 and may appear before any court, tribunal, commission, board, department, or agency of the State of Rhode Island upon electronically filing the Petition for Temporary/Limited Admission to the Rhode Island Bar available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal and after satisfying this Court that the attorney is a member in good standing of said court. Admission to practice under this subdivision is limited to representing the Rhode Island National Guard, its officers, members, and employees acting in their official capacities. The petition shall be filed with a statement from the State Judge Advocate of the Rhode Island National Guard certifying placement of the attorney and that the proposed placement meets the requirements of this rule.

~~The conduct of such an attorney shall conform to the conduct expected of members of the bar of this Court, with all of its obligations, including Articles III (Disciplinary Procedures), IV (Periodic Registration of Attorneys and Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Regulations), and V (Rules of Professional Conduct) of these rules.~~

Admission to practice under this subdivision shall cease to be effective immediately upon separation from the Rhode Island National Guard.

~~Time spent practicing law pursuant to the authority of this subdivision shall not be used to satisfy the requirements of subdivision (a) herein.~~

(e) *Law school faculty supervising clinical law programs.* Any attorney who is a member in good standing of the bar of the highest judicial court of a state, district, or territory of the United States who is employed as a full-time permanent or full-time visiting faculty member of a law school accredited and approved by the American Bar Association may be admitted to practice law in this state upon electronically filing the Petition for Temporary/Limited Admission to the Rhode Island Bar available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal and after satisfying this Court that the attorney is a member in good standing of said Court. Admission to practice under this subdivision is solely for the purpose of supervising clinical law students in a clinical law program providing legal services to indigent clients. The petition shall be filed with a statement from the dean of the law school certifying the proposed placement of the attorney and that the proposed placement meets the requirements of this rule.

~~—The conduct of such an attorney shall conform to the conduct expected of members of the bar of this Court, with all of its obligations, including Articles III (Disciplinary Procedures), IV (Periodic Registration of Attorneys and Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Regulations), and V (Rules of Professional Conduct) of these rules.~~

Admission to practice under this subdivision shall cease to be effective when the attorney is no longer a full-time faculty member or is no longer associated with a clinical law program. An attorney admitted under this subdivision shall neither ask for nor receive any compensation or remuneration of any kind for services rendered under this rule other than salary as a law school faculty member.

~~Time spent practicing law pursuant to the authority of this subdivision shall not be used to satisfy the requirements of subdivision (a) herein.~~

(f) *Temporary Practice Pending Attorney Admission.* Any attorney who is a member of the bar of the highest judicial court of a state, district, or territory of the

United States who has applied for admission under ~~subsection (a) of this rule~~ Rule 1A may practice law out of an office in this state for a period of one year from filing a ~~Rule 2(a) 1A~~ petition for admission with the Court subject to the requirements in this rule. The out-of-state attorney must be in good standing in all jurisdictions and shall not ~~(1) have been disbarred or resigned with disciplinary matters pending in any jurisdiction;~~ ~~(2) have previously failed the Rhode Island Bar Examination;~~ or ~~(3) have previously applied for admission under Rule 2(a) 1A.~~ Attorneys practicing under this rule shall be supervised by a designated active member of the Rhode Island bar working full-time at the same Rhode Island office and shall clearly state in all advertisements and written communications related to their practice of law that their practice here is pending admission under this rule. All court pleadings must be signed by the supervising attorney.

Any attorney seeking to practice pursuant to this subsection shall advise the Court by filing a notice of intention to practice pending admission on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal (RISCAP) as a formal amendment to the attorney's pending petition for admission to the Rhode Island Bar. The notice shall identify the active member of the Rhode Island bar who will be the supervising attorney and shall be filed on a form that is prescribed by the Clerk. The attorney shall not engage in the practice of law in the state until this filing has been accepted and the Clerk's Office has issued the attorney a bar number.

For purposes of this rule, an "office" is a private law firm located in Rhode Island with at least five (5) attorneys actively practicing in the state on behalf of the firm, or the Rhode Island Department of the Attorney General. Attorneys seeking to practice law pending admission at an office with fewer than five (5) attorneys, or seeking to practice law for a state or municipal entity other than the Rhode Island Department of the Attorney General, shall petition the Court for an exception to this rule setting forth sufficient information for the Court to conclude that the attorney will be adequately supervised.

~~The conduct of attorneys practicing under this rule shall conform to the conduct expected of members of the bar of this Court, including complying with Articles III (Disciplinary Procedures) and V (Rules of Professional Conduct) of these rules. Any attorney engaged in the private practice of law, who is practicing pursuant to this rule, must be covered by professional liability insurance.~~

In no event shall permission to practice under this subdivision remain in effect longer than one (1) year from the filing of the ~~Rule 2(a) 1A~~ petition for admission and shall cease immediately should the attorney fail the Rhode Island Bar Examination. ~~Time spent practicing law under this subdivision shall not be used to satisfy the requirement of subdivision (a) herein."~~

~~**Note.**—The Rules of Practice of the Board of Bar Examiners Governing Admission on Examination and by Transfer of a Uniform Bar Examination Score are available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court website or by contacting the Bar Administrator at the Rhode Island Supreme Court Clerk's Office, Licht Judicial Complex, 250 Benefit Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903, ribarex-am@courts.ri.gov."~~

Section 5. Article II, Rule 3 of the Supreme Court Rules is hereby amended as follows:

“Rule 3. Filing a Petition for Admission to the Rhode Island Bar.

(a) *Filing Deadlines for Admission on Examination.* Persons seeking admission under Rule 1 shall file a petition for admission no later than May 1 of the year in which they intend to take a July examination and no later than December 1 next preceding the year in which they intend to take the February examination. Applicants seeking admission under Rule ~~2(a)~~ 1A shall file a petition for admission no later than February 1 for the July examination and no later than September 1 of the next preceding year in which they intend to take the February examination.”

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Section 6. Article II, Rule 5 of the Supreme Court Rules is hereby amended as follows:

“Rule 5. Fees and Notice.

An applicant for admission on examination or by transfer of a Uniform Bar Examination score shall pay to the Clerk of the Supreme Court a fee of nine hundred and seventy five dollars (\$975.00). Rule 1B applicants who are required to submit to a character investigation conducted by the National Conference of Bar Examiners and Rule ~~2(a)~~ 1A applicants shall pay a separate fee to the National Conference of Bar Examiners for the required character investigation, including a supplemental report upon retaking or deferral of the examination.”

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Section 7. Article II, Rule 9 of the Supreme Court Rules is hereby amended as follows:

“Rule 9. Nonresident Attorneys – In-house Counsel – Senior Law Students.

(a) *Pro Hac Vice Admissions.* Any attorney who is a member in good standing of the bar of any other state, not resident in this state, whether practicing in such other jurisdiction as an individual or a member or employee of a limited liability entity authorized to practice law in such jurisdiction, may, upon special and infrequent occasion and for good cause shown upon a written miscellaneous petition presented by a member of the bar of this state, be permitted in the discretion of this Court, or such other court to which authority is delegated, to participate to such an extent as the court may prescribe in the presentation of a cause or appeal in this or any court, tribunal, commission, board, or agency in this state; provided, however, that, unless waived for good cause shown by this Court upon the filing of a miscellaneous petition requesting such relief:

* * *

A separate miscellaneous petition and filing fee shall be required of each attorney seeking pro hac vice admission, except where such admission is sought to represent a party in respect to a prior pending action, appeal, or other proceeding in the court from which admission pro hac vice is sought, in which event a motion in lieu of a miscellaneous petition may be filed within that action, appeal, or other proceeding ~~without the necessity of any additional~~ with the required filing fee.

* * *

(b) *Registration of In-House Counsel.* An attorney who is employed by a corporation or other entity at an office in this state, and who is a member in good standing of the bar of any other state but is not a member of the bar of this state, may be permitted to practice law in Rhode Island consistent with this rule upon electronically filing the Petition for Registration as In-House Counsel available on the Rhode Island Supreme Court Attorney Portal and after satisfying this Court that the attorney is a member in good standing of said court. Attorneys who have previously failed the Rhode Island Bar Examination are not eligible for registration under this rule. Attorneys who fail the Rhode Island bar examination while temporarily admitted under this rule shall have their temporary admission immediately revoked.”

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Entered as an Order of this Court this 6th day of *January 2026*.

/s/

Suttell, C. J.

/s/

Goldberg, J.

/s/

Robinson, J.

/s/

Lynch Prata, J.

/s/

Long, J.