

Supreme Court of Kentucky

2025-43

ORDER

In Re: Amendments to the Rules of the Supreme Court

The following rule amendments shall be effective October 31, 2025:

II. Admission of Persons to Practice Law

SCR 2.010 Requirements for admission to the Kentucky Bar

Rule 2.010 shall read:

All applicants for admission to the Bar of this Commonwealth must meet certain basic requirements regardless of whether admission is sought by examination (SCR 2.022), by transferred bar examination score (SCR 2.090), without examination (SCR 2.110), for a limited certificate (SCR 2.111), or as an attorney participant in a defender or legal services program (SCR 2.112). Those requirements are set forth in the following sections SCR 2.011 through SCR 2.017.

CR 2.080 Bar examinations

Rule 2.080 shall read:

(1) The Board of Bar Examiners shall examine such applicants as are certified to it as provided in SCR 2.040. The examination shall cover a period of two (2) days and may cover the subjects and skills tested on the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE), as published on the website of the National Conference of Bar Examiners at www.ncbex.org.

(2) Beginning with the February 2021 Bar examination and continuing through the February 2027 Bar examination, the Board shall administer the UBE (also referenced and what will henceforth be referred to as the Legacy UBE) as prepared by the National Conference of Bar Examiners. Beginning with the July 2027 Bar examination, the Board shall administer what will henceforth be referred to as the NextGen UBE, as will be prepared by the National Conference of Bar Examiners.

(3) The Board of Bar Examiners shall, thirty (30) days before each examination, report to the Supreme Court information regarding the examination, including,

but not limited to, its location, number of applicants, special accommodations, and any other relevant information as determined by the Board.

(4) To pass the bar examination in Kentucky, an applicant must achieve a total score equal to or greater than 266 for the Legacy UBE and equal to or greater than 616 for the NextGen UBE. The National Conference of Bar Examiners will calculate scaled scores by the methodology NCBE uses for all UBE jurisdictions. Applicants must sit for all portions of the bar examination in the same administration in order to qualify for admission in Kentucky and earn a portable Legacy UBE score or NextGen UBE score that may be transferred to other UBE jurisdictions. Applicants who fail to earn the score required by the Board in five (5) or fewer attempts on the Kentucky Bar Examination, including attempts on the Legacy UBE or NextGen UBE taken in Kentucky or any other jurisdiction in February 2021 or after, shall not be permitted to sit for the Kentucky Bar Examination.

(5) For any applicant who completes the examination in written form, the papers containing the questions and answers given by the applicants to the written portion of the examination will be preserved by OBA Staff for a period of one (1) year from the time that the application for admission has been passed upon by the Supreme Court, and longer if so ordered by the Court.

(6) Upon recommendation of the Board, the Supreme Court may appoint qualified members of the Kentucky Bar, to be known as Bar Examination Graders, to assist the Board in the grading of examination papers. Persons so appointed shall hold those positions for terms of one (1) year and until the appointment of their successors.

SCR 2.085 Approval of certificate of admission to practice law

Rule 2.085 shall read:

(1) When an applicant has passed an examination as provided by Rule 2.080, the Board of Bar Examiners shall certify that fact to the Supreme Court together with a recommendation that the applicant be admitted to practice law. The Court may approve or disapprove the recommendations and, if approved, shall authorize the Clerk of the Court to issue a certificate of admission.

(2) When the Character and Fitness Committee determines that an applicant is eligible for admission to the Kentucky Bar without examination as provided by Rule 2.110 or for admission by transferred bar examination score as provided by Rule 2.090, the Committee's recommendation as provided for in Rule 2.040(6) shall be certified to the Supreme Court, and the recommendation for admission to the practice of law shall be considered as set forth in paragraph (1) of this rule.

(3) When the Supreme Court has granted approval for the issuance of a certificate of admission based upon the recommendation submitted under paragraph (1) or (2), the applicant must be admitted to the Kentucky Bar within two (2) years of the Supreme Court's approval date. If an applicant fails to be admitted within that two-year period, the applicant must make a new application for admission.

SCR 2.090 Admission by Transferred Bar Examination Score

Rule 2.090 shall read:

(1) A person who meets all requirements of paragraph 2(a) through (j) of this Rule may be admitted to the practice of law in Kentucky.

(2) The applicant must:

- (a) have earned a Legacy UBE score of 266 or higher or a NextGen UBE score of 616 or higher in five (5) or fewer attempts on the Legacy UBE or NextGen UBE taken in any jurisdiction;
- (b) have earned the score required in subparagraph (2)(a) in an administration of the Legacy UBE or NextGen UBE that occurred within five (5) years of the date of application for admission pursuant to this Rule;
- (c) intend to engage in the practice of law in Kentucky as set out in SCR 2.013, 3.020, and 3.022;
- (d) meet the educational requirements set out in SCR 2.014;
- (e) have achieved the required score on the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination as set out in SCR 2.015;
- (f) be a member in good standing in all jurisdictions where the applicant has been admitted;
- (g) not be currently subject to lawyer discipline or the subject of a pending disciplinary complaint or matter in any jurisdiction;
- (h) possess the good character and fitness to practice law in Kentucky as determined by the Character and Fitness Committee; and
- (i) certify that he or she has read and will follow the Kentucky Rules of Professional Conduct.

(3) The Application for Admission by Transferred Bar Examination Score shall be filed with the Kentucky Office of Bar Admissions on a verified form approved by the Board. The application shall be accompanied by a nonrefundable fee of \$875.00 for applicants whose Legacy UBE or NextGen UBE score was reported not more than twelve (12) months before the application date, as measured from the date the score was released by the National Conference of Bar Examiners, and \$1,200.00 for applicants whose Legacy UBE or NextGen UBE score was reported more than twelve (12) months before the application date, along with written confirmation issued by the National Conference of Bar Examiners that the applicant has submitted a request for an Official Legacy UBE or NextGen UBE Transcript to be sent directly to Kentucky. An applicant shall file with the Character and Fitness Committee such other affidavits, certificates, documents, and materials as shall be required to satisfy the Committee, pursuant to SCR 2.040, of the applicant's good moral character and fitness to be a member of the Bar of this Commonwealth.

SCR 2.113 Military spouse provisional admission

Rule 2.113 shall read:

(1) Requirements. A person who meets all requirements of subparagraphs (a) through (m) of paragraph 2 of this Rule may, upon motion, be provisionally admitted to the practice of law in Kentucky.

(2) Required Evidence. The applicant for provisional admission shall submit evidence satisfactory to the Kentucky Board of Bar Examiners that he or she:

- (a) has been admitted by examination to practice law before the Court of last resort of any jurisdiction of the United States;
- (b) holds a Juris Doctor degree from a law school accredited by the American Bar Association at the time of such applicant's graduation;
- (c) has achieved a passing score on the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination as it is established in Kentucky at the time of application;
- (d) is currently an active member in good standing in the bar of at least one jurisdiction of the United States where the applicant is admitted to the unrestricted practice of law, and is a member in good standing in all jurisdictions where the applicant has been admitted;
- (e) is not currently subject to lawyer discipline or the subject of a pending disciplinary matter in any other jurisdiction;

- (f) possesses the good character and fitness to practice law in Kentucky;
- (g) is the dependent spouse of an active-duty service member of the United States Uniformed Services as defined by the Department of Defense (or, for the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy, by the Department of Homeland Security) and that the service member is on military orders stationed in the Commonwealth of Kentucky;
- (h) is physically residing in Kentucky;
- (i) has submitted all requested character investigation information, in a manner and to the extent established by the Board of Bar Examiners, including all required supporting documents;
- (j) has successfully completed the New Lawyer Program as set out in SCR 2.017;
- (k) certifies that he or she has read and is familiar with the Kentucky Rules of Professional Conduct; and
- (l) has paid such fees as may be set by the Board of Bar Examiners to cover the costs of the character and fitness investigation and the processing of the application.

(3) Issuance, Duration, and Renewal:

- (a) The Board of Bar Examiners having certified that all prerequisites have been complied with, the applicant for provisional admission shall, upon payment of applicable dues and completion of the other membership obligations, become an active member of the Kentucky Bar Association. An attorney provisionally admitted pursuant to this Rule shall be subject to the same membership obligations as other active members of the Kentucky Bar Association, and all legal services provided in Kentucky by a lawyer admitted pursuant to this Rule shall be deemed the practice of law and shall subject the attorney to all rules governing the practice of law in Kentucky, including the Kentucky Rules of Professional Conduct.
- (b) A provisional admission may be renewed by July 31 of each year, upon filing with the Kentucky Bar Association (i) a written request for renewal, and (ii) compliance with the membership obligations of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Kentucky applicable to active members

of the Kentucky Bar Association. Provisional admission under this Rule may be renewed no more than four (4) times.

- (c) When the active-duty service member is assigned to an unaccompanied or remote follow-on assignment and the attorney continues to physically reside in Kentucky, the provisional admission may be renewed until that unaccompanied or remote assignment ends, provided that the attorney complies with the other requirements for renewal.
- (4) Events of Termination. An attorney's provisional admission to practice law pursuant to this Rule shall immediately terminate and except as provided in subsection (i) of this Rule, the attorney shall immediately cease all activities under this Rule upon the occurrence of any of the following:
- (a) The spouse's discharge, separation, or retirement from active duty in the United States Uniformed Services, or the spouse's no longer being on military orders stationed in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, except as provided in section 3(c) of this Rule;
 - (b) The attorney's failure to meet the annual licensing requirements of an active member of the Kentucky Bar Association;
 - (c) The attorney no longer physically residing within the Commonwealth of Kentucky;
 - (d) The attorney ceasing to be a dependent as defined by the Department of Defense (or, for the Coast Guard when it is not operating as a service in the Navy, by the Department of Homeland Security) on the spouse's official military orders;
 - (e) The attorney being admitted to practice law in this Commonwealth under an admissions rule other than that of Provisional Admission;
 - (f) The attorney being suspended from the practice of law in Kentucky or in any other state;
 - (g) Request by the attorney; or
 - (h) Upon the occurrence of a terminating event the attorney may continue the work that commenced prior to the terminating event until new counsel is retained.

(5) Notices Required:

- (a) An attorney provisionally admitted under this Rule shall provide written notice to the Kentucky Bar Association of any Event of Termination within thirty (30) days of the occurrence thereof.
- (b) Within thirty (30) days of the occurrence of any Event of Termination, the attorney shall:
 - i. provide written notice to all of his or her clients that he or she can no longer represent such clients and furnish proof to the Executive Director of the Kentucky Bar Association within sixty (60) days of such notification; and
 - ii. file in each matter pending before any Court or tribunal in this Commonwealth a notice that the attorney will no longer be involved in the matter, which shall include the substitution of the local counsel, or such other attorney licensed to practice law in Kentucky selected by the client, as counsel in the place of the provisionally admitted attorney.

(6) Benefits and Responsibilities. An attorney provisionally admitted under this Rule shall be entitled to the benefits and be subject to all responsibilities and obligations of active members of the Kentucky Bar Association, and shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the Courts and agencies of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and to the Kentucky Bar Association with respect to the laws and rules of this Commonwealth governing the conduct and discipline of attorneys to the same extent as an active member of the Kentucky Bar Association.

This Order shall be effective October 31, 2025, and until further Order of this Court.

Entered this 31st day of October, 2025.

All sitting; all concur.


CHIEF JUSTICE