

PUBLIC NOTICE
MINNESOTA STATE BOARD OF LAW EXAMINERS

In response to a May 18, 2017, [Order](#) from the Minnesota Supreme Court, the Board of Law Examiners is studying Rule 7A (eligibility for admission based on years of practice) of the Rules for Admission to the Bar (Rules), including a review of whether and how the Board should treat part-time legal work and periods of leave.

The Board of Law Examiners is charged with ensuring “that those who are admitted to the bar have the necessary competence and character to justify the trust and confidence that clients, the public, the legal system, and the legal profession place in lawyers.” ([Rule 1](#))

Applicants may provide evidence of competence by:

- Obtaining a score of 260 or higher on the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE), which may be taken in Minnesota or another UBE jurisdiction. Applicants applying to take the bar examination in Minnesota may apply under Rule 6; the examination score is valid for 36 months from the date of examination. Applicants may also transfer a UBE score into Minnesota by submitting evidence of the score and a complete application for admission to the Board within 36 months of the date of the qualifying examination being used as the basis for the admission. ([Rule 7C](#))
- Transferring into Minnesota a score of 145 or higher on the Multi-state Bar Examination (MBE), which is the test instrument used on the second day of the bar examination. The applicant must be successful on the bar examination in which they obtained the MBE score, be admitted in that jurisdiction, and submit a completed application and evidence of the score within 24 months of the date of the examination in which the applicant obtained the score. ([Rule 7B](#))
- Providing documentation that for at least 60 of the 84 months immediately preceding the application, the applicant has “engaged, as principal occupation, in the lawful practice of law” in one of the legal roles set forth in Rule 7A(1)(c). ([Rule 7A](#)) Principal occupation is defined as an applicant’s “primary professional work or business.” ([Rule 2A\(12\)](#))

A Board policy published to the Board’s website advises applicants that the “the phrase ‘engaged as principal occupation’ is interpreted to mean that one’s practice of law must be full-time or substantially full-time (at least 120 hours or more per month).”

Applicants unable to provide documentation that their practice qualifies under Rule 7A are permitted to transfer their Rule 7A application to Rule 6 and sit for a bar examination administered within the next 15 months without paying an additional application fee. ([Rule 12J](#))

The Board seeks comments from the legal community and the public as part of its comprehensive review, including commentary on part-time practice and threshold requirements,

how to address periods of time in which an individual is not engaged in the practice of law, and whether 60 of the last 84 months is a reasonable look back period. The Board will survey other states and provide the entities who filed amicus briefs to the Court on this matter, including the Minnesota State Bar Association, the opportunity to present written comment and oral testimony. Others who wish to provide comments to the Board may provide written comments or submit a written request to provide oral testimony.

Written comments and requests to present oral testimony may be submitted to the Board of Law Examiners, Attn: Douglas Peterson, Board Chair, 180 E. 5th Street, Suite 950, MN 55101 or emailed to ble.cle.blc@mbcle.state.mn.us by November 30, 2017.

Once the Board has received the written and oral comments and studied the provisions in other jurisdictions, the Board will publish an initial recommendation on the issue and hold a public hearing to solicit feedback. The Board will compile the results of its study and provide feedback to the Court no later than June 1, 2018.

Notices of the dates, time, and locations of the Board's public meetings will be posted to the Board's website: www.ble.mn.gov

Dated: September 12, 2017

Emily John Eschweiler
Director
Minnesota State Board of Law Examiners