

Announcement on 2020 Bar Admission by Examination

Because the COVID-19 pandemic has affected bar exam administration, as it has every other sector of the legal system and the global economy, the Kansas Supreme Court is preparing to adjust its bar examination schedule and certain of its rules governing bar admission by examination.

According to the National Conference of Bar Examiners, which writes and disseminates the uniform examination administered in Kansas and 35 other jurisdictions, the examination scheduled for July 28 and 29, 2020, will be made available only if two conditions are met: First, administration of the exam must be in compliance with public health guidelines and state and local orders in effect at that time. Second, the number of examinees nationally must be high enough to enable proper scoring and grading of the exam.

The Court and its admissions staff and the Board of Law Examiners are exploring ways in which the first condition may be met, including use of alternatives to the traditional single exam location and secure electronic testing. Whether the second condition is met, however, must be determined by the NCBE; and it has said that it intends to decide by the first week of May whether an examination can be given on the July dates.

The NCBE also has promised to make one of two alternative exams available to Kansas and other jurisdictions, one to be given on September 9 and 10, 2020, and the other to be given on September 30 and October 1. Because the Court wishes to offer an alternative exam as soon as possible after July and because it wishes to avoid religious holidays, it will use the September 9 and 10 alternative, if needed.

As the Court and those who have applied to take the July examination in Kansas await the NCBE decision in early May, the following guidance should assist bar applicants and their employers and potential employers in planning:

- If the July examination is made available by the NCBE, those who have applied for and qualified to sit for that exam in Kansas will be permitted to take it on the dates originally planned OR to take an alternative exam on September 9 and 10 without submitting a new application and accompanying documents or paying an additional fee.

- Applicants who elect to take the July exam must inform the Office of Attorney Admissions by email to admissions@kscourts.org of that election no later than June 10, 2020.
- Applicants who elect to take the September exam must inform the Office of Attorney Admissions by email to admissions@kscourts.org of that election no later than July 22, 2020.
- Those who have applied for and been qualified to sit for the July exam in Kansas may apply for a temporary permit if they otherwise qualify under Rule 710.
- For these applicants for a temporary permit, both Rule 710(b)'s requirement of a certificate from a supervising attorney and Rule 704(a)(2)'s requirement of a \$100 temporary permit fee shall be suspended.
- Any temporary permit issued to an applicant who sits for the July 2020 examination will expire as set forth in Rule 710(e)(1). Any temporary permit issued to an applicant who sits for the September examination will expire as set forth in Rule 710(e)(1), with the exception that the phrase "last Friday in April or September following the bar examination" in the current rule will be replaced by "the last Friday in November."