

VIRGINIA:

*In the Supreme Court of Virginia held at the Supreme Court Building in the
City of Richmond on* Friday *the* 31st *day of* October, 2014.

It is ordered that the Rules heretofore adopted and promulgated by this Court and now in effect be and they hereby are amended to become effective immediately.

Amend Parts of Rule 1A:1 to read as follows:

Rule 1A:1. Admission to Practice in This Commonwealth Without Examination.

(a) *Reciprocity.* -- Any person who has been admitted to practice law before the court of last resort of any state or territory of the United States or of the District of Columbia may file an application to be admitted to practice law in this Commonwealth without examination, if counsel licensed to practice law in this Commonwealth may be admitted in that jurisdiction without examination.

* * *

Regulations Governing Applications for Admission to Virginia Bar Pursuant to Rule of the Supreme Court of Virginia 1A:1, Effective October 31, 2014.

INTRODUCTION

Each person who has met the educational requirements and has proved that he or she satisfies the character and fitness requirements as established by the law of Virginia may seek admission to the Virginia Bar by taking the Virginia Bar

Examination. A primary purpose of the Virginia Bar Examination is to determine whether an applicant is able to demonstrate his or her current minimum competency to engage in the general practice of law in Virginia.

In addition to admission to the Bar by examination, the Supreme Court of Virginia, in its discretion under Code § 54.1-3931, has determined that a person who has been admitted to practice law before the court of last resort of a state or territory of the United States or of the District of Columbia for a minimum of five years, who has been admitted to the bar of a Reciprocal Jurisdiction, hereinafter defined, and who has been engaged in the lawful practice of law on a full-time basis for at least three of the immediately preceding five years, may seek to demonstrate that he or she has made such progress in the practice of law that it would be unreasonable to require the person to take an examination to demonstrate current minimum competency. In other words, an applicant's experience in the practice of law may, at the discretion of the Court, be accepted as adequate evidence of current minimum competency in lieu of the bar examination.

The Supreme Court of Virginia has assigned to the Virginia Board of Bar Examiners (the "Board") the responsibility to assess the information furnished by an applicant for admission without examination and to determine, from the information so furnished, whether the applicant's experience in the practice of law is sufficient to demonstrate his or her current competence, good character, and fitness to practice law in Virginia.

In order to guide the Board in its determinations, the Court has adopted the following criteria to be applied by the Board in assessing applications for admission to the bar of Virginia without examination:

THRESHOLD REQUIREMENTS

1. **Reciprocity.** The Board shall consider an application for admission without examination only from a person who has been admitted to practice before the court of last resort of a jurisdiction (*i.e.*, a state or territory of the United States, or the District of Columbia) that permits lawyers licensed in Virginia to be admitted to practice without examination in such jurisdiction (a "Reciprocal Jurisdiction"). The purpose of the reciprocity requirement is to encourage other jurisdictions to grant the same privilege to Virginia lawyers.

2. **Minimum Period of Bar Admission.** Before being eligible to apply for admission without examination, the applicant must have been admitted to practice law before the court of last resort of a state or territory of the United States, or of the District of Columbia, for at least five (5) years.

* * *

A Copy,

Teste:

Pate L Hamington

Clerk