

THE SUPREME COURT OF WASHINGTON

IN THE MATTER OF THE SUGGESTED)
AMENDMENTS TO APR 3—APPLICANTS FOR)
ADMISSION TO PRACTICE LAW)
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_____)

ORDER

NO. 25700-A-1585

The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA), having recommended the suggested amendments to APR 3—Applicants for Admission to Practice Law, and the Court having approved the suggested amendments for publication;

Now, therefore, it is hereby

ORDERED:

(a) That pursuant to the provisions of GR 9(g), the suggested amendments as attached hereto are to be published for comment in the Washington Reports, Washington Register, Washington State Bar Association and Administrative Office of the Court's websites in January 2025.

(b) The purpose statement as required by GR 9(e) is published solely for the information of the Bench, Bar and other interested parties.

(c) Comments are to be submitted to the Clerk of the Supreme Court by either U.S. Mail or Internet E-Mail by no later than April 30, 2025. Comments may be sent to the following addresses: P.O. Box 40929, Olympia, Washington 98504-0929, or supreme@courts.wa.gov. Comments submitted by e-mail message must be limited to 1500 words.

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ADMISSION TO PRACTICE LAW

DATED at Olympia, Washington this 11th day of July, 2024.

For the Court


González, C.J.

GR 9 COVER SHEET

Suggested Amendments ADMISSION AND PRACTICE RULES (APR) Rule 3(c)

Submitted by the Washington State Bar Association

A. Name of Proponent:

Washington State Bar Association

B. Spokesperson:

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C. Purpose:

On March 15, 2024, the Washington Supreme Court entered order 27500-B-711 adopting in concept the Washington Bar Licensure Task Force's (WBLTF) recommendation that the practice time required for admission by motion be shortened to one year. The primary purpose of the suggested amendments to APR 3(c) is to implement the Washington Supreme Court's adoption of this recommendation. At its May 2, 2024 meeting, the WSBA Board of Governors voted unanimously to recommend these suggested amendments to the Washington Supreme Court.

To qualify for admission by motion to the Washington State Bar Association, current APR 3(c) requires that lawyers admitted to practice law in other states, territories,

or the District of Columbia have active legal experience¹ for at least three of the five years preceding the filing of an application for admission. The WBLTF recommended that out-of-state licensed lawyers instead be eligible for admission by motion after one year of active legal experience. In accordance with the Court's order and the WBLTF recommendation, the suggested amendments reduce the practice time required for admission by motion to at least one year of active practice within the three years preceding the application for admission.

While the WBLTF recommendations do not suggest a period of time within which the qualifying experience must have occurred, the suggested amendments propose that the one year of practice must have occurred within the preceding three years. A period of less than three years—for instance, requiring simply that the applicant have actively practiced for the full year preceding the application—would disproportionately exclude individuals whose practice may have been interrupted by periods of leave for medical reasons and parents, especially women, who may have taken parental leave. Requiring one year of experience within a period of time greater than three years is not likely to ensure an applicant has sufficient recent experience for admission.

The suggested amendments would also eliminate the duplicative first sentence of APR 3(c) and correct a typographical error.

D. Hearing: A hearing is not requested.

E. Expedited Consideration: Expedited consideration is not requested.

F. Supporting Material:

1. Washington Supreme Court Order 27500-B-711

¹ “Active legal experience” is defined in APR 1(e).

2. Washington Bar Licensure Task Force February 28, 2024 Proposal for the
Future of WA State Bar Admissions

SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS TO ADMISSION AND PRACTICE RULES

APR 3(c) LAWYER ADMISSION BY MOTION

1 **TITLE**

2 **ADMISSION AND PRACTICE RULES**

3 **RULE 3. APPLICANTS FOR ADMISSION TO PRACTICE LAW**

4 **(a) – (b)** [Unchanged.]

5 **(c) Lawyer Admission by Motion.** ~~Lawyers admitted to practice law in other states or~~
6 ~~territories of the United States or the District of Columbia are not required to sit for the lawyer bar~~
7 ~~examination if they:~~

8 (1) Lawyers admitted to practice law in other states or territories of the United States or the
9 District of Columbia are not required to sit for the lawyer bar examination if they:

10 (A) file a certificate from that jurisdiction certifying the lawyer’s admission to practice,
11 and the date thereof, and current good standing or the equivalent; and

12 (B) present satisfactory proof of active legal experience for at ~~least three~~one of the ~~five~~three
13 years immediately preceding the filing of the application.

14 (2) *Military Spouse Admission by Motion.* [Unchanged.]

15 **(d) – (i)** [Unchanged.]

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