

Rule 717. Limited Admission of Legal Service Program Lawyers

(a) Eligibility. A lawyer admitted to the practice of law in another state or the District of Columbia who meets the educational requirements of Rule 703 may receive a limited license to practice law in this state when the lawyer (i) has accepted an offer of employment in Illinois and has an anticipated start date pending or (ii) is employed in Illinois, for an organized legal service, public defender, or law school clinical program providing legal assistance to indigent persons.

(b) Application Requirements. To qualify for the license the applicant must file with the Board of Admissions to the Bar the following:

(1) A completed application for the limited license and a completed character and fitness registration application in the form prescribed by the Board.

(2) A certificate of good standing from the highest court of each jurisdiction of admission.

(3) A certificate from the disciplinary authority of each jurisdiction of admission which:

(a) states that the applicant has not been suspended, disbarred or disciplined and that no charges of professional misconduct are pending; or

(b) identifies any suspensions, disbarments, or disciplinary sanctions and any pending charges.

(4) A duly authorized and executed certification by the applicant's employer that:

(a) it is engaged in the practice of law for the rendering of legal services to indigent persons;

(b) it is duly qualified to do business under the laws of its organization and the laws of Illinois;

(c) it has notified the applicant that the applicant is expected to work exclusively as an employee of said employer, barring any employer-approved nonlegal secondary employment in Illinois, noting the date employment is expected to commence; and

(d) it will promptly notify the Clerk of the Supreme Court of the termination of the applicant's employment, should it occur during the term of the limited license as authorized by this rule.

(5) Such other affidavits, proofs and documentation as may be prescribed by the Board.

(6) The requisite fees in accordance with Rule 706.

(c) Character and Fitness Approval. Each applicant for a limited license under this rule must receive certification of good moral character and general fitness to practice law by the Committee on Character and Fitness in accordance with the provisions of Rule 708.

(d) Certification by the Board. In the event the Board of Admissions to the Bar shall find that the applicant meets the requirements of this rule and has received from the Committee on Character and Fitness its certification of good moral character and general fitness to practice law, the Board shall certify to the Court that such applicant is qualified for licensure.

(e) Limitation of Practice. A lawyer while in the employ of an employer described in subparagraph (a) of this rule may perform legal services in this state solely on behalf of such employer and the indigent clients represented by such employer. In criminal cases classified as

felonies, during the first six months after being licensed under this rule, the lawyer may participate in the proceedings only as an assistant of a supervising member of the bar who shall be present and responsible for the conduct of the proceedings.

(f) Duration and Termination of License. The license and authorization to perform legal services under this rule shall terminate upon the earliest of the following events:

(1) The lawyer is admitted to the general practice of law under any other rule of this Court.

(2) The lawyer ceases to be employed for the employer listed on his or her initial application for licensure under this rule.

(3) Withdrawal of an employer's certification filed pursuant to subparagraph (b)(4) of this rule. An employer may withdraw certification at any time without cause being stated.

(g) Annual Registration and MCLE. Once the Court has conferred a limited license to perform legal services under this rule, the lawyer must register with the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission and pay the fee for active lawyers set forth in Rule 756 and fully comply with all MCLE requirements for active lawyers set forth in article VII, part C, of the Illinois Supreme Court rules for the year in which the license is conferred and for any subsequent year into which the limited license extends.

(h) Discipline. All lawyers licensed under this rule shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the Court for disciplinary purposes to the same extent as all other lawyers licensed to practice law in this state.

(i) Credit Toward Admission on Motion. The period of time a lawyer practices law while licensed under this rule may be counted toward his or her eligibility for admission on motion, provided all other requirements of Rule 705 are met. Up to 18 months of retroactive credit toward admission on motion may be obtained for practice while licensed under this rule prior to July 15, 2026.

Adopted February 11, 2004, effective July 1, 2004; [amended Apr. 14, 2026, eff. July 15, 2026](#).