



**VERMONT SUPREME COURT
OFFICE OF THE STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR
BOARD OF BAR EXAMINERS**

LAW OFFICE STUDY PROGRAM

The Law Office Study program is set out in Rule 7 of the Rules of Admission to the Bar of the Vermont Supreme Court. Until further notice, the Board of Bar Examiners is not requiring any specific forms. Rather, for now, participants should submit the *Commencement Notice* and *Six-Month Report* in the form of letters and affidavits that contain all of the information required by Rules 7(f)(1) and (2).

Rule 7 is below. Email questions to Brandy.Sickles@vermont.gov

Commencement forms and Six-Month Reports should be sent via US Mail to:

Brandy Sickles
32 Cherry Street, Suite 213
Burlington, VT 05401

PLEASE NOTE: the State Court Administrator approved a fee schedule that requires a \$200 filing fee to accompany the Commencement Form and a \$100 filing fee to accompany each Six-Month Report. Make checks payable to "Attorney Licensing."

RULE 7. THE LAW OFFICE STUDY PROGRAM

(a) *Definition.* "Law Office Study Program" (or "LOS Program") means apprenticing for the prescribed term under the supervision of a judge or an attorney who practices in Vermont and has been admitted to practice before this Court not less than 3 years prior to the Registrant's commencement of the apprenticeship.

(b) *Requirements for Study.* The purpose of the LOS Program is to prepare a Registrant to engage in the general practice of law. To ensure this purpose is met:

(1) a Registrant must carefully arrange with the supervising judge or attorney a systematic course of study to prepare the Registrant for the general practice of law, including, but not limited to, the subjects tested on the Uniform Bar Examination and related Vermont law; and

(2) a supervising judge or attorney may, and is encouraged to, enlist the assistance of other judges and attorneys to provide the greatest breadth of experience and instruction to the Registrant.

(c) *Minimum Education Requirements for an LOS Program Registrant.* Prior to enrollment in the LOS Program, a Registrant must have earned a bachelor's degree from a college or university within the United States that is authorized to grant a bachelor's degree by the law of the state in which it is located.

(d) *Measurement of Study.* Study under the supervision of a judge or an attorney is measured as follows:

(1) A week of study consists of

(A) not less than 25 hours of study during a period of 7 consecutive days, or

(B) not less than 30 hours of study during a period of 14 consecutive days; and

(2) A year of study consists of 12 calendar months during which not less than 44 weeks of study were pursued.

(e) *Term of Study; Credit Awarded Towards Term.* The LOS Program requires four years of approved study. Subject to Court approval, the Board has discretion to award a Registrant partial credit for up to 2 years towards the 4-year term based on a Registrant's prior legal study, if the Registrant demonstrates to the Board's satisfaction that the prior study:

- (1) satisfies the purpose of the LOS Program;
- (2) is recent and not stale; and
- (3) was acquired:
 - (A) from an Approved or non-Approved Law School, whether or not the Applicant has graduated;
 - (B) from a program in another U.S. jurisdiction, which the Registrant can demonstrate is substantially equivalent to the LOS Program; or
 - (C) through the study of law in a foreign, common-law jurisdiction if the Applicant has been admitted to the practice of law before a court of general jurisdiction.

(f) *Reporting Requirements.* The Registrant is responsible for satisfying all reporting requirements. The Registrant must comply with all deadlines and submit all required notices, certificates, and reports/affidavits to the Board on Board-approved forms.

- (1) *Commencement Notice.* The Registrant must file the commencement notice within 30 days after beginning the LOS Program or changing offices where he or she is pursuing the LOS Program. The commencement notice must include:

- (A) the date that study began;
- (B) the judge's or attorney's representation that he or she has personally investigated the moral character and fitness of the Registrant, and, that to the best of his or her knowledge, the Registrant, at the time of commencement, meets the requirements of good moral character and fitness; and
- (C) the supervising judge's or attorney's certification.

- (2) *Six-Month Report.*

- (A) *General Requirements.* Each report must be:

- (i) in the form of an affidavit;
- (ii) filed with the Board within 30 days of the expiration of the current, six-month study period;
- (iii) signed by the Registrant/affiant;
- (iv) accompanied by the supervising judge's or attorney's certification that to the best of his or her knowledge, the report is accurate; and
- (v) filed in duplicate.

- (B) *Contents.* Each report must:

- (i) include the number of weeks dedicated to study under the LOS Program;
- (ii) describe in detail the areas of study pursued, the tasks performed, and any other relevant study or work completed during the reporting period; and
- (iii) outline the Registrant's plan of study for the next reporting period.

- (3) *Completion Notice.* Within 30 days of completing the LOS Program, and together with the required six-month report, the Registrant must file with the Board a signed completion notice.

(4) *Failure to Timely Report.* In the Board's discretion, a Registrant's failure to timely file any notice, certificate, or report required may result in the withholding of credit for study, disqualification to take the bar examination, and/or disqualification to be admitted.

(5) *Extensions.* For good cause, the Board may extend by up to 60 days the period to file any notice, certificate, or report.

(6) *Review of Six-Month Reports.* An Examiner will review the Registrant's report and may forward the report to the Board for further review. The Registrant may be required to provide additional information to support a report. The Board will notify the Registrant within 60 days whether the report has been approved for credit or disapproved.

(7) *Deemed Approval.* Commencement notices, six-month reports, and completion notices that are timely filed will be deemed approved unless the Board notifies the Registrant in writing within 60 days of submission that the notice or report is disapproved or that further review is pending.

Board's Notes

The rule is drawn from the prior rules §§ 6(g), (j), (k), (l), (m) and 8.