

THE SUPREME COURT OF WASHINGTON

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPROVAL OF)
EXTENDING WSBA LICENSING DEADLINES)

ORDER

NO. 25700-B-613

The Washington Supreme Court has plenary authority over the practice of law in Washington. The Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) serves under the delegated authority of the Court in regulating and administering licenses to practice law in Washington and effectuating other purposes and functions as set forth in General Rule (GR) 12 and 12.1-12.5.

Deviation from WSBA Bylaws or APR 17 by the WSBA in executing its licensing functions requires approval of this Court.

The period of time encompassed within the WSBA's licensing compliance period in 2020, has seen the emergence and rapid expansion of the Novel Coronavirus. Both the Governor of Washington state and the President of the United States have declared the coronavirus pandemic to be an emergency requiring significant restrictions on activities and personal interactions in order to limit the rapid spread of the coronavirus; and this Court has taken actions modifying various court procedures to limit the virus's spread. In turn, the restrictions put in place have serious effects on the functioning of personal life, businesses, and the economy in Washington State including upon WSBA members.

The court has received notice and explanation of the WSBA's request to extend the date for sending the suspension recommendation to the Court to June 30, 2020, in the form of a March 19, 2020 letter from WSBA President Majumdar detailing the rationale of the WSBA in making this recommendation.

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The Court determined that this request is reasonable in light of the Novel Coronavirus-related public emergency.

Now, therefore, it is hereby

ORDERED:

That the WSBA is authorized to deviate from its Bylaws and APR 17(b)(1), by extending the date for sending the suspension recommendations to the Court to June 30, 2020, and the WSBA Board is granted limited authority to reasonably extend that deadline up to 60 days should the Court and Executive Branch restrictions regarding the Novel Coronavirus remain in place.

DATED at Olympia, Washington this 3rd day of April, 2020.

For the Court


CHIEF JUSTICE