

U.S. Federal Courts: Attorney Admission Requirements

Preface

While one might be inclined to think the rules for bar admission across the U.S. federal court system would be uniform, this is simply not the case. There are numerous examples of varying admission criteria and procedures, even within the same circuit, the same state or the same judicial district. In some federal courts an attorney who is a member in good standing of any state bar could be admitted in a matter of days with minimal effort and little to no expense. Conversely, other courts have independent examinations, initial and recurring fees, sponsorship requirements, etc.

The primary purpose for writing this book is to provide a straightforward guide for attorneys who may seek admission to any of the federal courts. The book will answer questions, such as:

- Do I need to be a member of the state bar to be admitted to the U.S. District Court?
- Which federal courts have reciprocity?
- Does District Court admission automatically provide membership in its Bankruptcy Court?
- Does the court allow *pro hac vice* admissions?
- What are the admission and renewal fees, if any?
- Do I have to take an exam or any courses to be admitted to the court?
- Are there any continuing legal education requirements for members?
- Do I need an attorney to sponsor my motion for admission?
- Must the oath be given in person in open court?
- Are there any residency requirements for membership?
- Do I need to be in the military to be admitted to a particular military court of appeals?
- What courts allow non-attorneys or attorneys licensed outside the U.S. to be members?
- What are the admission rules for the U.S. territorial courts?
- What are the admission rules for the courts of the freely associated states?

Anyone considering a multijurisdictional practice that involves the practice of law in the federal court system should find this information useful.

There is also an educational purpose for this book. The more research I conducted, the more intrigued I became by the differences and peculiarities in the rules of admission in the federal court system. *U.S. Federal Courts: Attorney Admission Requirements* and future editions will provide not only a snapshot in time, but also a historical record of a transition to more a liberal or restrictive admission framework.

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