

**15-310. Former federal employee limited license method.**

A. **Description.** As further specified in this rule, an applicant may apply for a limited license which permits a current or former federal employee to practice law in New Mexico. Submission of a complete application by a qualified applicant will result in expedient issuance of a temporary limited license until the board completes its investigation at which time the applicant may be issued a limited license.

B. **Application deadline.** An application for a license under this rule may be submitted at any time.

C. **Qualifications.** An applicant for a license under this rule shall provide proof that the applicant:

- (1) meets the qualifications set forth in Rule 15-202 NMRA;
- (2) is either:
  - (a) actively licensed to practice law in at least one other state without condition, restriction or limitation, and not involved in disciplinary proceedings in any state; or
  - (b) an inactive member of the State Bar of New Mexico or another state, and was not under disciplinary proceedings when inactive status was taken;
- (3) is in good standing in all states in which the applicant has ever been licensed to practice law;
- (4) has passed all examinations described in Rule 15-501(A) NMRA;
- (5) is currently or was, within the last twelve (12) months, an employee of the United States Federal Government; and

(6) practiced as an attorney for the United States Federal Government for a period of no less than two consecutive years immediately preceding the date of filing the application for licensure.

**D. Character and fitness.** The board shall make a determination about the character and fitness of an applicant as set forth in Rule 15-205 NMRA for any applicant who has submitted an application for a license under this rule. An applicant shall pay any fees and costs associated with a character and fitness hearing.

**E. Procedure for issuance.**

(1) Within ten (10) business days of the board's receipt from an applicant of (a) a completed application for a license under this rule, (b) the required fees, and (c) documents required by the board, the board shall provide the applicant's name to the Supreme Court for issuance of a temporary limited license;

(2) The Clerk of the Supreme Court shall then promptly issue a temporary limited license to the applicant;

(3) The board shall then complete an investigation and make a determination of the applicant's character and fitness; and

(4) If the board determines the applicant is qualified and has the requisite character and fitness, then the board shall follow the requirements of Rule 15-207(A) NMRA for recommending issuance of a license to the applicant.

**F. Fees and costs.** The following fees and costs must be paid by the applicant on submission of the application for a license under this rule, and shall not offset fees and costs required to apply for another method of licensure:

(1) **Application fee.** An application fee according to a published schedule of application fees promulgated by the board and approved by the Supreme Court; and

(2) **Investigation costs.** Investigation costs according to the schedule of pass-through costs promulgated by the board as described in Rule 15-204(B) NMRA.

G. **Limitations.** A person practicing law under a license issued under this rule may only practice law in New Mexico as a former federal employee attorney.

H. **Expiration.**

(1) A license issued under this rule shall expire:

(a) Five (5) years from the date of issuance; or

(b) On the issuance of a license to practice law under another method of licensure described in these rules; in which event the licensee shall notify the board.

(2) On expiration of a license under this rule, the board shall notify the Clerk of the Supreme Court that the limited license has expired, and whether the attorney has been issued a license under another method of licensure. The Supreme Court shall then summarily order that the attorney may no longer practice law under that limited license.

I. **Suspension.** A license issued under this rule is subject to suspension as described in the Rules Governing Discipline. In addition, a temporary limited license issued under this rule may be suspended by the Supreme Court for an indefinite period as follows:

(1) **Petition by board.** The board may file a petition, under Rule 15-404 NMRA, to suspend a temporary limited license which shows that the licensee has not: qualified for the license, complied with board requirements for a character and fitness investigation, responded to requests for information, appeared for a scheduled hearing, or produced records or documents requested by the board. One or more affidavits shall be attached to the petition identifying the

1 efforts undertaken by the board to obtain the licensee's cooperation and compliance, whether the  
2 licensee interposed objections to producing the records or documents, and whether objections  
3 interposed by the licensee appear to have been made in good faith. In addition to other service  
4 requirements required for a petition, a copy of the petition shall be served on the licensee's  
5 employer. Any response filed by the licensee shall set forth facts showing that the licensee has  
6 complied with the board's requests or the reasons why the licensee has not complied.

7 (2) ***Reinstatement.*** The Supreme Court may summarily reinstate a temporary  
8 limited license suspended under the provisions of this paragraph, on the licensee's filing of a  
9 motion for reinstatement with the Supreme Court, which proves compliance with the requirements  
10 of the board as alleged in the petition to suspend or as otherwise ordered by the Supreme Court.  
11 The licensee shall serve the motion on the board, and the board may file a response within five (5)  
12 business days of service. The licensee and board may also submit an agreed motion to reinstate  
13 the licensee's temporary limited license.

14 (3) ***No pro hac vice admittance.*** A licensee suspended under this rule shall not  
15 be admitted to the practice of law for a particular case under the pro hac vice rules approved by  
16 the Supreme Court.

17 J. ***Revocation.*** A license issued under this rule is subject to revocation as described  
18 in Rule 15-201(F) NMRA and the Rules Governing Discipline. In addition, a license issued under  
19 this rule may also be revoked by the Supreme Court as follows:

20 (1) ***Summary revocation on petition by board.*** The Clerk of the Supreme Court  
21 shall summarily revoke a license issued under this rule on the filing of a petition by the board,  
22 under Rule 15-404, which shows that the board has determined the licensee does not have the

1 character and fitness to practice law in New Mexico. In addition to service requirements required  
2 for petitions, a copy of the petition shall be served on the licensee's employer.

3 (2) ***Other revocation.*** The Supreme Court may revoke a license issued under  
4 this rule on the board's filing of a petition, under Rule 15-404, showing the attorney's violation of  
5 this rule or any other rule approved by the Supreme Court regulating the licensing or conduct of  
6 attorneys. In addition to service requirements required for petitions, a copy of the petition shall be  
7 served on the licensee's employer.

8 (3) ***No appearances; no pro hac vice admission.*** Except as ordered by the  
9 Supreme Court, a licensee whose license has been revoked under this rule shall not appear in any  
10 court in this state as an attorney and shall not be admitted to the practice of law for a particular  
11 case under the pro hac vice rules approved by the Supreme Court.

12 [Adopted by Supreme Court Order No. S-1-RCR-2025-00140, effective June 1, 2025.]