

CHARACTER AND FITNESS PROCESS
FOR OUT OF STATE ATTORNEY BAR ADMISSION

This process only applies to those qualified to take the Out-of-State Attorney's Examination under Maryland Rules 19-212 and 19-213.

The Court of Appeals of Maryland ("the Court") is the admitting authority for attorneys in the State of Maryland. The State Board of Law Examiners Board Members ("Board") are appointed by the Court in the seven Appellate Judicial Circuits. The Board is mandated to oversee the process for becoming licensed as an attorney in the State of Maryland. When a petition is received by the Board from a prospective out-of-state attorney applicant, the Request for Character Report is sent to the National Conference of Bar Examiners ("NCBE").

The NCBE conducts the investigation of each Out-of-State Attorney and provides the Board with a summary of the investigation. The Board may conduct further proceedings based on the investigation of the NCBE or other information which has come to the Board's attention. The Board then makes an admission recommendation to the Court. The Court makes the final decision with regard to the admission of an Out-of-State Attorney applicant.

Procedure

1. When a complete Petition for Admission to the Bar of Maryland is filed by an Out-of-State Attorney, the Request for Character Report is sent to the NCBE for investigation.
2. Once the NCBE investigation is complete, meaning all references and verifications have been returned, or multiple attempts made to no avail, a report is returned to the administrative office of the Board. The report is reviewed for completeness. The Petitioner may be asked for additional documentation at this time. It is the burden of the Petitioner to obtain the documentation that NCBE could not.
3. Once the entire Petition file is complete, it is sent to the Board, who are seven practicing attorneys from around the state. The Board conducts a review of whether the Petitioner meets the burden of Md. Rule 19-213(f). If it is determined the burden is met and the Petitioner passes the Out-of-State Attorney's examination, the Board recommends to the Court of Appeals that the Petitioner be admitted to the Bar of Maryland. If it is concluded the burden is not met, further proceedings may be conducted by the Board.

Please Note: *Out-of-State Attorneys are admitted by mail after they have met all requirements of the Md. Rules. This includes the requirements of Md. Rule 19-210, the Orientation Program. There is no interview or swearing in for an Out-of-State Attorney.*