

§ 11.7

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practice before the Office. When appropriate, any alien who is not an attorney, who lawfully resides in the United States, and who fulfills the requirements of this part may be registered as a patent agent to practice before the Office, provided that such registration is not inconsistent with the terms upon which the alien was admitted to, and resides in, the United States, and further provided that the alien may remain registered only:

(1) If the alien continues to lawfully reside in the United States and registration does not become inconsistent with the terms upon which the alien continues to lawfully reside in the United States or

(2) If the alien ceases to reside in the United States, the alien is qualified to be registered under paragraph (c) of this section. *See also* § 11.9(b).

(c) *Foreigners.* Any foreigner not a resident of the United States who shall file proof to the satisfaction of the OED Director that he or she is registered and in good standing before the patent office of the country in which he or she resides and practices, and who is possessed of the qualifications stated in § 11.7, may be registered as a patent agent to practice before the Office for the limited purpose of presenting and prosecuting patent applications of applicants located in such country, provided that the patent office of such country allows substantially reciprocal privileges to those admitted to practice before the Office. Registration as a patent agent under this paragraph shall continue only during the period that the conditions specified in this paragraph obtain. Upon notice by the patent office of such country that a patent agent registered under this section is no longer registered or no longer in good standing before the patent office of such country, and absent a showing of cause why his or her name should not be removed from the register, the OED Director shall promptly remove the name of the patent agent from the register and publish the fact of removal. Upon ceasing to reside in such country, the patent agent registered under this section is no longer qualified to be registered under this section, and the OED Director shall promptly remove the name of

the patent agent from the register and publish the fact of removal.

(d) *Patent Trial and Appeal Board matters.* For action by a person who is not registered in a proceeding before the Patent Trial and Appeal Board, see § 41.5(a) or § 42.10(c) of this title.

[69 FR 35452, June 24, 2004, as amended at 69 FR 50003, Aug. 12, 2004; 77 FR 46629, Aug. 6, 2012]

§ 11.7 Requirements for registration.

(a) No individual will be registered to practice before the Office unless he or she has:

(1) Applied to the USPTO Director in writing by completing an application for registration form supplied by the OED Director and furnishing all requested information and material; and

(2) Established to the satisfaction of the OED Director that he or she:

(i) Possesses good moral character and reputation;

(ii) Possesses the legal, scientific, and technical qualifications necessary for him or her to render applicants valuable service; and

(iii) Is competent to advise and assist patent applicants in the presentation and prosecution of their applications before the Office.

(b)(1) To enable the OED Director to determine whether an individual has the qualifications specified in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, the individual shall:

(i) File a complete application for registration each time admission to the registration examination is requested. A complete application for registration includes:

(A) An application for registration form supplied by the OED Director wherein all requested information and supporting documents are furnished,

(B) Payment of the fees required by § 1.21(a)(1) of this subchapter,

(C) Satisfactory proof of scientific and technical qualifications, and

(D) For aliens, provide proof that recognition is not inconsistent with the terms of their visa or entry into the United States;

(ii) Pass the registration examination, unless the taking and passing of the examination is waived as provided in paragraph (d) of this section. Unless examination is waived pursuant to

paragraph (d) of this section, each individual seeking registration must take and pass the registration examination to enable the OED Director to determine whether the individual possesses the legal and competence qualifications specified in paragraphs (a)(2)(ii) and (a)(2)(iii) of this section. An individual failing the examination may, upon receipt of notice of failure from OED, reapply for admission to the examination. An individual failing the examination must wait thirty days after the date the individual last took the examination before retaking the examination. An individual reapplying shall:

(A) File a completed application for registration form wherein all requested information and supporting documents are furnished,

(B) Pay the fees required by § 1.21(a)(1) of this subchapter, and

(C) For aliens, provide proof that recognition is not inconsistent with the terms of their visa or entry into the United States; and

(iii) Provide satisfactory proof of possession of good moral character and reputation.

(2) An individual failing to file a complete application for registration will not be admitted to the examination and will be notified of the incompleteness. Applications for registration that are incomplete as originally submitted will be considered only when they have been completed and received by OED, provided that this occurs within sixty days of the mailing date of the notice of incompleteness. Thereafter, a new and complete application for registration must be filed. Only an individual approved as satisfying the requirements of paragraphs (b)(1)(i)(A), (b)(1)(i)(B), (b)(1)(i)(C) and (b)(1)(i)(D) of this section may be admitted to the examination.

(3) If an individual does not reapply until more than one year after the mailing date of a notice of failure, that individual must again comply with paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section.

(c) Each individual seeking registration is responsible for updating all information and answers submitted in or with the application for registration based upon anything occurring between the date the application for registra-

tion is signed by the individual, and the date he or she is registered or recognized to practice before the Office in patent matters. The update shall be filed within thirty days after the date of the occasion that necessitates the update.

(d) *Waiver of the Registration Examination for Former Office Employees*—(1) *Former patent examiners who by July 26, 2004, had not actively served four years in the patent examining corps, and were serving in the corps at the time of their separation.* The OED Director may waive the taking of a registration examination in the case of any individual meeting the requirements of paragraph (b)(1)(i)(C) of this section who is a former patent examiner but by July 26, 2004, had not served four years in the patent examining corps, if the individual demonstrates that he or she:

(i) Actively served in the patent examining corps of the Office and was serving in the corps at the time of separation from the Office;

(ii) Received a certificate of legal competency and negotiation authority;

(iii) After receiving the certificate of legal competency and negotiation authority, was rated at least fully successful in each quality performance element of his or her performance plan for the last two complete fiscal years as a patent examiner; and

(iv) Was not under an oral or written warning regarding the quality performance elements at the time of separation from the patent examining corps.

(2) *Former patent examiners who on July 26, 2004, had actively served four years in the patent examining corps, and were serving in the corps at the time of their separation.* The OED Director may waive the taking of a registration examination in the case of any individual meeting the requirements of paragraph (b)(1)(i)(C) of this section who is a former patent examiner and by July 26, 2004, had served four years in the patent examining corps, if the individual demonstrates that he or she:

(i) Actively served for at least four years in the patent examining corps of the Office by July 26, 2004, and was serving in the corps at the time of separation from the Office;

(ii) Was rated at least fully successful in each quality performance element of his or her performance plan for the last two complete fiscal years as a patent examiner in the Office; and

(iii) Was not under an oral or written warning regarding the quality performance elements at the time of separation from the patent examining corps.

(3) *Certain former Office employees who were not serving in the patent examining corps upon their separation from the Office.* The OED Director may waive the taking of a registration examination in the case of a former Office employee meeting the requirements of paragraph (b)(1)(i)(C) of this section who by petition demonstrates possession of the necessary legal qualifications to render to patent applicants and others valuable service and assistance in the preparation and prosecution of their applications or other business before the Office by showing that he or she has:

(i) Exhibited comprehensive knowledge of patent law equivalent to that shown by passing the registration examination as a result of having been in a position of responsibility in the Office in which he or she:

(A) Provided substantial guidance on patent examination policy, including the development of rule or procedure changes, patent examination guidelines, changes to the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, development of training or testing materials for the patent examining corps, or development of materials for the registration examination or continuing legal education; or

(B) Represented the Office in patent cases before Federal courts; and

(ii) Was rated at least fully successful in each quality performance element of his or her performance plan for said position for the last two complete rating periods in the Office, and was not under an oral or written warning regarding such performance elements at the time of separation from the Office.

(4) To be eligible for consideration for waiver, an individual formerly employed by the Office within the scope of one of paragraphs (d)(1), (d)(2) or (d)(3) of this section must file a complete application for registration and pay the fee required by § 1.21(a)(1)(i) of this sub-

chapter within two years of the individual's date of separation from the Office. All other individuals formerly employed by the Office, including former examiners, filing an application for registration or fee more than two years after separation from the Office, are required to take and pass the registration examination. The individual or former examiner must pay the examination fee required by § 1.21(a)(1)(ii) of this subchapter within thirty days after notice of non-waiver.

(e) *Examination results.* Notification of the examination results is final. Within sixty days of the mailing date of a notice of failure, the individual is entitled to inspect, but not copy, the questions and answers he or she incorrectly answered. Review will be under supervision. No notes may be taken during such review. Substantive review of the answers or questions may not be pursued by petition for regrade. An individual who failed the examination has the right to retake the examination an unlimited number of times upon payment of the fees required by § 1.21(a)(1)(i) and (ii) of this subchapter, and a fee charged by a commercial entity administering the examination.

(f) *Application for reciprocal recognition.* An individual seeking reciprocal recognition under § 11.6(c), in addition to satisfying the provisions of paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, and the provisions of § 11.8(c), shall pay the application fee required by § 1.21(a)(1)(i) of this subchapter upon filing an application for registration.

(g) *Investigation of good moral character and reputation.* (1) Every individual seeking recognition shall answer all questions in the application for registration and request(s) for comments issued by OED; disclose all relevant facts, dates and information; and provide verified copies of documents relevant to his or her good moral character and reputation. An individual who is an attorney shall submit a certified copy of each of his or her State bar applications and moral character determinations, if available.

(2)(i) If the OED Director receives information from any source that reflects adversely on the good moral

character or reputation of an individual seeking registration or recognition, the OED Director shall conduct an investigation into the good moral character and reputation of that individual. The investigation will be conducted after the individual has passed the registration examination, or after the registration examination has been waived for the individual, as applicable. An individual failing to timely answer questions or respond to an inquiry by OED shall be deemed to have withdrawn his or her application, and shall be required to reapply, pass the examination, and otherwise satisfy all the requirements of this section. No individual shall be certified for registration or recognition by the OED Director until, to the satisfaction of the OED Director, the individual demonstrates his or her possession of good moral character and reputation.

(ii) The OED Director, in considering an application for registration by an attorney, may accept a State bar's character determination as meeting the requirements set forth in paragraph (g) of this section if, after review, the Office finds no substantial discrepancy between the information provided with his or her application for registration and the State bar application and moral character determination, provided that acceptance is not inconsistent with other rules and the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2)(D).

(h) *Good moral character and reputation.* Evidence showing lack of good moral character and reputation may include, but is not limited to, conviction of a felony or a misdemeanor identified in paragraph (h)(1) of this section, drug or alcohol abuse; lack of candor; suspension or disbarment on ethical grounds from a State bar; and resignation from a State bar while under investigation.

(1) *Conviction of felony or misdemeanor.* An individual who has been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, breach of trust, interference with the administration of justice, false swearing, misrepresentation, fraud, deceit, bribery, extortion, misappropriation, theft, or conspiracy to commit any felony or misdemeanor, is presumed not to be of good moral character and reputation in the absence of

a pardon or a satisfactory showing of reform and rehabilitation, and shall file with his or her application for registration the fees required by § 1.21(a)(1)(ii) and (a)(10) of this subchapter. The OED Director shall determine whether individuals convicted of said felony or misdemeanor provided satisfactory proof of reform and rehabilitation.

(i) An individual who has been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor identified in paragraph (h)(1) of this section shall not be eligible to apply for registration during the time of any sentence (including confinement or commitment to imprisonment), deferred adjudication, and period of probation or parole as a result of the conviction, and for a period of two years after the date of completion of the sentence, deferred adjudication, and period of probation or parole, whichever is later.

(ii) The following presumptions apply to the determination of good moral character and reputation of an individual convicted of said felony or misdemeanor:

(A) The court record or docket entry of conviction is conclusive evidence of guilt in the absence of a pardon or a satisfactory showing of reform or rehabilitation; and

(B) An individual convicted of a felony or any misdemeanor identified in paragraph (h)(1) of this section is conclusively deemed not to have good moral character and reputation, and shall not be eligible to apply for registration for a period of two years after completion of the sentence, deferred adjudication, and period of probation or parole, whichever is later.

(iii) The individual, upon applying for registration, shall provide satisfactory evidence that he or she is of good moral character and reputation.

(iv) Upon proof that a conviction has been set aside or reversed, the individual shall be eligible to file a complete application for registration and the fee required by § 1.21(a)(1)(ii) of this subchapter and, upon passing the registration examination, have the OED Director determine, in accordance with

paragraph (h)(1) of this section, whether, absent the conviction, the individual possesses good moral character and reputation.

(2) *Good moral character and reputation involving drug or alcohol abuse.* An individual's record is reviewed as a whole to see if there is a drug or alcohol abuse issue. An individual appearing to abuse drugs or alcohol may be asked to undergo an evaluation, at the individual's expense, by a qualified professional approved by the OED Director. In instances where, before an investigation commences, there is evidence of a present abuse or an individual has not established a record of recovery, the OED Director may request the individual to withdraw his or her application, and require the individual to satisfactorily demonstrate that he or she is complying with treatment and undergoing recovery.

(3) *Moral character and reputation involving lack of candor.* An individual's lack of candor in disclosing facts bearing on or relevant to issues concerning good moral character and reputation when completing the application or any time thereafter may be found to be cause to deny registration on moral character and reputation grounds.

(4) *Moral character and reputation involving suspension, disbarment, or resignation from a profession.* (i) An individual who has been disbarred or suspended from practice of law or other profession, or has resigned in lieu of a disciplinary proceeding (excluded or disbarred on consent) shall be ineligible to apply for registration as follows:

(A) An individual who has been disbarred from practice of law or other profession, or has resigned in lieu of a disciplinary proceeding (excluded or disbarred on consent) shall be ineligible to apply for registration for a period of five years from the date of disbarment or resignation.

(B) An individual who has been suspended on ethical grounds from the practice of law or other profession shall be ineligible to apply for registration until expiration of the period of suspension.

(C) An individual who was not only disbarred, suspended or resigned in lieu of a disciplinary proceeding, but also

convicted in a court of a felony, or of a crime involving moral turpitude or breach of trust, shall be ineligible to apply for registration until the conditions in paragraphs (h)(1) and (h)(4) of this section are fully satisfied.

(ii) An individual who has been disbarred or suspended, or who resigned in lieu of a disciplinary proceeding shall file an application for registration and the fees required by § 1.21(a)(1)(ii) and (a)(10) of this subchapter; provide a full and complete copy of the proceedings that led to the disbarment, suspension, or resignation; and provide satisfactory proof that he or she possesses good moral character and reputation. The following presumptions shall govern the determination of good moral character and reputation of an individual who has been licensed to practice law or other profession in any jurisdiction and has been disbarred, suspended on ethical grounds, or allowed to resign in lieu of discipline, in that jurisdiction:

(A) A copy of the record resulting in disbarment, suspension or resignation is *prima facie* evidence of the matters contained in the record, and the imposition of disbarment or suspension, or the acceptance of the resignation of the individual shall be deemed conclusive that the individual has committed professional misconduct.

(B) The individual is ineligible for registration and is deemed not to have good moral character and reputation during the period of the imposed discipline.

(iii) The only defenses available with regard to an underlying disciplinary matter resulting in disbarment, suspension on ethical grounds, or resignation in lieu of a disciplinary proceeding are set out below, and must be shown to the satisfaction of the OED Director:

(A) The procedure in the disciplinary court was so lacking in notice or opportunity to be heard as to constitute a deprivation of due process;

(B) There was such infirmity of proof establishing the misconduct as to give rise to the clear conviction that the Office could not, consistently with its duty, accept as final the conclusion on that subject; or

(C) The finding of lack of good moral character and reputation by the Office would result in grave injustice.

(i) *Factors that may be taken into consideration when evaluating rehabilitation of an individual seeking a moral character and reputation determination.* The factors enumerated below are guidelines to assist the OED Director in determining whether an individual has demonstrated rehabilitation from an act of misconduct or moral turpitude. The factors include:

(1) The nature of the act of misconduct, including whether it involved moral turpitude, whether there were aggravating or mitigating circumstances, and whether the activity was an isolated event or part of a pattern;

(2) The age and education of the individual at the time of the misconduct and the age and education of the individual at the present time;

(3) The length of time that has passed between the misconduct and the present, absent any involvement in any further acts of moral turpitude, the amount of time and the extent of rehabilitation being dependent upon the nature and seriousness of the act of misconduct under consideration;

(4) Restitution by the individual to any person who suffered monetary losses through acts or omissions of the individual;

(5) Expungement of a conviction;

(6) Successful completion or early discharge from probation or parole;

(7) Abstinence from the use of controlled substances or alcohol for not less than two years if the specific misconduct was attributable in part to the use of a controlled substance or alcohol, where abstinence may be demonstrated by, but is not necessarily limited to, enrolling in and complying with a self-help or professional treatment program;

(8) If the specific misconduct was attributable in part to a medically recognized mental disease, disorder or illness, proof that the individual sought professional assistance, and complied with the treatment program prescribed by the professional, and submitted letters from the treating psychiatrist/psychologist verifying that the medically recognized mental disease, disorder or

illness will not impede the individual's ability to competently practice before the Office;

(9) Payment of the fine imposed in connection with any criminal conviction;

(10) Correction of behavior responsible in some degree for the misconduct;

(11) Significant and conscientious involvement in programs designed to provide social benefits or to ameliorate social problems; and

(12) Change in attitude from that which existed at the time of the act of misconduct in question as evidenced by any or all of the following:

(i) Statements of the individual;

(ii) Statements from persons familiar with the individual's previous misconduct and with subsequent attitudes and behavioral patterns;

(iii) Statements from probation or parole officers or law enforcement officials as to the individual's social adjustments; and

(iv) Statements from persons competent to testify with regard to neuropsychiatry or emotional disturbances.

(j) *Notice to Show Cause.* The OED Director shall inquire into the good moral character and reputation of an individual seeking registration, providing the individual with the opportunity to create a record on which a decision is made. If, following inquiry and consideration of the record, the OED Director is of the opinion that the individual seeking registration has not satisfactorily established that he or she possesses good moral character and reputation, the OED Director shall issue to the individual a notice to show cause why the individual's application for registration should not be denied.

(1) The individual shall be given no less than ten days from the date of the notice to reply. The notice shall be given by certified mail at the address appearing on the application if the address is in the United States, and by any other reasonable means if the address is outside the United States.

(2) Following receipt of the individual's response, or in the absence of a response, the OED Director shall consider the individual's response, if any, and the record, and determine whether,

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in the OED Director's opinion, the individual has sustained his or her burden of satisfactorily demonstrating that he or she possesses good moral character and reputation.

(k) *Reapplication for registration.* An individual who has been refused registration for lack of good moral character or reputation may reapply for registration two years after the date of the decision, unless a shorter period is otherwise ordered by the USPTO Director. An individual, who has been notified that he or she is under investigation for good moral character and reputation may elect to withdraw his or her application for registration, and may reapply for registration two years after the date of withdrawal. Upon reapplication for registration, the individual shall pay the fees required by § 1.21(a)(1)(ii) and (a)(10) of this subchapter, and has the burden of showing to the satisfaction of the OED Director his or her possession of good moral character and reputation as prescribed in paragraph (b) of this section. Upon reapplication for registration, the individual also shall complete successfully the examination prescribed in paragraph (b) of this section, even though the individual has previously passed a registration examination.

§ 11.8 Oath and registration fee.

(a) After an individual passes the examination, or the examination is waived, the OED Director shall promptly publish a solicitation for information concerning the individual's good moral character and reputation. The solicitation shall include the individual's name, and business or communication postal address.

(b) An individual shall not be registered as an attorney under § 11.6(a), registered as an agent under § 11.6(b) or (c), or granted limited recognition under § 11.9(b) unless within two years of the mailing date of a notice of passing registration examination or of waiver of the examination the individual files with the OED Director a completed Data Sheet, an oath or declaration prescribed by the USPTO Director, and the registration fee set forth in § 1.21(a)(2) of this subchapter. An individual seeking registration as an attorney under § 11.6(a) must pro-

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vide a certificate of good standing of the bar of the highest court of a State that is no more than six months old.

(c) An individual who does not comply with the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section within the two-year period will be required to retake the registration examination.

(d) [Reserved]

[69 FR 35452, June 24, 2004, as amended at 73 FR 67757, Nov. 17, 2008; 78 FR 20198, Apr. 3, 2013]

§ 11.9 Limited recognition in patent matters.

(a) Any individual not registered under § 11.6 may, upon a showing of circumstances which render it necessary or justifiable, and that the individual is of good moral character and reputation, be given limited recognition by the OED Director to prosecute as attorney or agent a specified patent application or specified patent applications. Limited recognition under this paragraph shall not extend further than the application or applications specified. Limited recognition shall not be granted while individuals who have passed the examination or for whom the examination has been waived are awaiting registration to practice before the Office in patent matters.

(b) A nonimmigrant alien residing in the United States and fulfilling the provisions of § 11.7(a) and (b) may be granted limited recognition if the nonimmigrant alien is authorized by the United States Government to be employed or trained in the United States in the capacity of representing a patent applicant by presenting or prosecuting a patent application. Limited recognition shall be granted for a period consistent with the terms of authorized employment or training. Limited recognition shall not be granted or extended to a non-United States citizen residing abroad. If granted, limited recognition shall automatically expire upon the nonimmigrant alien's departure from the United States.

(c) An individual not registered under § 11.6 may, if appointed by an applicant, prosecute an international patent application only before the United States International Searching Authority and