

PENNSYLVANIA RULES OF DISCIPLINARY ENFORCEMENT
(This Text Contains Revisions & Amendments which Became Effective May 2, 2009)

Rule 217. Formerly admitted attorneys.

(a) A formerly admitted attorney shall promptly notify, or cause to be notified, by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, all clients being represented in pending matters, other than litigation or administrative proceedings, of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status and the consequent inability of the formerly admitted attorney to act as an attorney after the effective date of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status and shall advise said clients to seek legal advice elsewhere.

(b) A formerly admitted attorney shall promptly notify, or cause to be notified, by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, all clients who are involved in pending litigation or administrative proceedings, and the attorney or attorneys for each adverse party in such matter or proceeding, of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status and consequent inability of the formerly admitted attorney to act as an attorney after the effective date of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status. The notice to be given to the client shall advise the prompt substitution of another attorney or attorneys in place of the formerly admitted attorney. In the event the client does not obtain substitute counsel before the effective date of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to status, it shall be the responsibility of the formerly admitted attorney to move in the court or agency in which the proceeding is pending for leave to withdraw. The notice to be given to the attorney or attorneys for an adverse party shall state the place of residence of the client of the formerly admitted attorney.

(c) A formerly admitted attorney shall promptly notify, or cause to be notified, of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status, by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested:

(1) all persons or their agents or guardians to whom a fiduciary duty is or may be owed at any time after the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status, and

(2) all other persons with whom the formerly admitted attorney may at any time expect to have professional contacts under circumstances where there is a reasonable probability that they may infer that he or she continues as an attorney in good standing.

The responsibility of the formerly admitted attorney to provide the notice required by this subdivision shall continue for as long as the formerly admitted attorney is disbarred, suspended, administratively suspended or on inactive status.

(d) Orders imposing suspension, disbarment, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status shall be effective 30 days after entry. The formerly admitted attorney, after entry of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status order, shall not accept any new retainer or engage as attorney for another in any new case or legal matter of any nature. However, during the period from the entry date of the order and its effective date the formerly admitted attorney may wind up and complete, on behalf of any client, all matters which were pending on the entry date.

(e) Within ten days after the effective date of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status order, the formerly admitted attorney shall file with the Board a verified statement showing:

(1) that the provisions of the order and these rules have been fully complied with; and

(2) all other state, federal and administrative jurisdictions to which such person is admitted to practice. Such statement shall also set forth the residence or other address of the formerly admitted attorney where communications to such person may thereafter be directed.

(f) The Board shall cause a notice of the suspension, disbarment, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status to be published in the legal journal and a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the formerly admitted attorney practiced.

(g) The Board shall promptly transmit a certified copy of the order of suspension, disbarment, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status to the president judge of the court of common pleas in the judicial district in which the formerly admitted attorney practiced. The president judge shall make such further order as may be necessary to fully protect the rights of the clients of the formerly admitted attorney.

(h) Within ten days after the effective date of an order of disbarment or suspension for a period longer than one year, the formerly admitted attorney shall surrender to the Board the certificate issued by the Attorney Registration Office under Rule 219(e) (relating to periodic assessment of attorneys; voluntary inactive status) for the current year, along with any certificate of good standing issued under Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rule 201(d) (relating to certification of good standing), certificate of admission issued under Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rule 231(d)(3) (relating to action by Prothonotary), certificate

of licensure issued under Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rule 341(e)(3) (relating to motion for licensure), Limited In-House Corporate Counsel License issued under Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rule 302 (relating to limited in-house corporate counsel license) or limited certificate of admission issued under Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rule 303 (relating to limited admission of military attorneys). The Board may destroy the annual certificate issued under Rule 219(e), but shall retain any other documents surrendered under this subdivision and shall return those documents to the formerly admitted attorney in the event that he or she is subsequently reinstated.

(i) A formerly admitted attorney shall keep and maintain records of the various steps taken by such person under these rules so that, upon any subsequent proceeding instituted by or against such person, proof of compliance with these rules and with the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status order will be available. Proof of compliance with these rules shall be a condition precedent to any petition for reinstatement.

(j) A formerly admitted attorney may not engage in any form of law-related activities in this Commonwealth except in accordance with the following requirements:

(1) All law-related activities of the formerly admitted attorney shall be conducted under the supervision of a member in good standing of the Bar of this Commonwealth who shall be responsible for ensuring that the formerly admitted attorney complies with the requirements of this subdivision (j). If the formerly admitted attorney is engaged by a law firm or other organization providing legal services, whether by employment or other relationship, an attorney of the firm or organization shall be designated by the firm or organization as the supervising attorney for purposes of this subdivision.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision (j), the only law-related activities that may be conducted by a formerly admitted attorney are the following:

(i) legal work of a preparatory nature, such as legal research, assembly of data and other necessary information, and drafting of transactional documents, pleadings, briefs, and other similar documents;

(ii) direct communication with the client or third parties to the extent permitted by paragraph (3);
and

(iii) accompanying a member in good standing of the Bar of this Commonwealth to a deposition or other discovery matter or to a meeting regarding a matter that is not currently in litigation, for the limited purpose of providing clerical assistance to the member in good standing who appears as the representative of the client.

(3) A formerly admitted attorney may have direct communication with a client or third party regarding a matter being handled by the attorney, organization or firm for which the formerly admitted attorney works only if the communication is limited to ministerial matters such as scheduling, billing, updates, confirmation of receipt or sending of correspondence and messages. The formerly admitted attorney shall clearly indicate in any such communication that he or she is a legal assistant and identify the supervising attorney.

(4) Without limiting the other restrictions in this subdivision (j), a formerly admitted attorney is specifically prohibited from engaging in any of the following activities:

(i) performing any law-related activity for a law firm, organization or lawyer if the formerly admitted attorney was associated with that law firm, organization or lawyer on or after the date on which the acts which resulted in the disbarment or suspension occurred, through and including the effective date of disbarment or suspension;

(ii) performing any law-related services from an office that is not staffed by a supervising attorney on a full time basis;

(iii) performing any law-related services for any client who in the past was represented by the formerly admitted attorney;

(iv) representing himself or herself as a lawyer or person of similar status;

(v) having any contact with clients either in person, by telephone, or in writing, except as provided in paragraph (3);

(vi) rendering legal consultation or advice to a client;

(vii) appearing on behalf of a client in any hearing or proceeding or before any judicial officer, arbitrator, mediator, court, public agency, referee, magistrate, hearing officer or any other adjudicative person or body;

(viii) appearing as a representative of the client at a deposition or other discovery matter;

(ix) negotiating or transacting any matter for or on behalf of a client with third parties or having any contact with third parties regarding such a negotiation or transaction;

(x) receiving, disbursing or otherwise handling client funds.

(5) The supervising attorney and the formerly admitted attorney shall file with the Disciplinary Board a notice of engagement, identifying the supervising attorney and certifying that the formerly admitted attorney's activities will be monitored for compliance with this subdivision (j). The supervising attorney and the formerly admitted attorney shall file a notice with the Disciplinary Board immediately upon the termination of the engagement between the formerly admitted attorney and the supervising attorney.

(6) The supervising attorney shall be subject to disciplinary action for any failure by either the formerly admitted attorney or the supervising attorney to comply with the provisions of this subdivision (j).

Note: Subdivision (j) was adopted by the Court to limit and regulate the law-related activities performed by formerly admitted attorneys regardless of whether those formerly admitted attorneys are engaged as employees, independent contractors or in any other capacity. Subdivision (j) requires that a notice be filed with the Disciplinary Board when any law-related activities are performed by a formerly admitted attorney and when the engagement is terminated. Subdivision (j) is addressed only to the special circumstance of formerly admitted attorneys engaging in law-related activities and should not be read more broadly to define the permissible activities that may be conducted by a paralegal, law clerk, investigator, etc. who is not a formerly admitted attorney. Subdivision (j) is also not intended to establish a standard for what constitutes the unauthorized practice of law. Finally, subdivision (j) is not intended to prohibit a formerly admitted attorney from performing services that are not unique to law offices, such as physical plant or equipment maintenance, courier or delivery services, catering, typing or transcription or other similar general office support activities.

Subchapter E.
FORMERLY ADMITTED ATTORNEYS
(This Text Contains Revisions & Amendments which Became Effective August 8, 2009)

- Sec.
- 91.91. Notification of clients in nonlitigation matters.
 - 91.92. Notification of clients in litigation matters.
 - 91.93. Notification of other persons.
 - 91.94. Effective date of suspension, disbarment, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status.
 - 91.95. Proof of compliance.
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 - 91.97. Action to protect clients of formerly admitted attorney.
 - 91.98. Maintenance of records.
 - 91.99. Indicia of licensure.
 - 91.100. Law-related activities of formerly admitted attorneys.

§91.91. Notification of clients in nonlitigation matters.

(a) *General rule.* Enforcement Rule 217(a) provides that a formerly admitted attorney shall promptly notify, or cause to be notified, by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, all clients being represented in pending matters, other than litigation or administrative proceedings, of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status and the consequent inability of the formerly admitted attorney to act as an attorney after the effective date of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status and shall advise such clients to seek legal advice elsewhere. Such notices shall be in substantially the language of Form DB-23 (Nonlitigation Notice of Disbarment, Suspension, Administrative Suspension or Transfer to Inactive Status).

(b) *Copies of notices.* The formerly admitted attorney shall file photocopies of such notices and returned receipts in the Office of the Secretary.

§91.92. Notification of clients in litigation matters.

(a) *General rule.* Enforcement Rule 217(b) provides that a formerly admitted attorney shall promptly notify, or cause to be notified, by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, all clients who are involved in pending litigation or administrative proceedings, and the attorney or attorneys for each adverse party in such matter or proceeding, of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status and consequent inability of the formerly admitted attorney to act as an attorney after the effective date of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status. Such rule further provides that the notice to be given to the client shall advise the prompt substitution of another attorney or attorneys in place of the formerly admitted attorney; that in the event the client does not obtain substitute counsel before the effective date of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status, it shall be the responsibility of the formerly admitted attorney to move in the court or agency in which the proceeding is pending for leave to withdraw; and that the notice to be given to the attorney or attorneys for an adverse party shall state the place of residence of the client of the formerly admitted attorney. Such notices shall be in substantially the language of Form DB-24 (Litigation Notice of Disbarment, Suspension, Administrative Suspension or Transfer to Inactive Status).

(b) *Copies of notices.* The formerly admitted attorney shall file photocopies of such notices and returned receipts in the Office of the Secretary.

§91.93. Notification of other persons.

(a) *General rule.* Enforcement Rule 217(c) provides that a formerly admitted attorney shall promptly notify, or cause to be notified, of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status, by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested:

(1) all persons or their agents or guardians to whom a fiduciary duty is or may be owed at any time after the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status, and

(2) all other persons with whom the formerly admitted attorney may at any time expect to have professional contacts under circumstances where there is a reasonable probability that they may infer that he or she continues as an attorney in good standing.

(b) *Responsibility to provide notice.* Enforcement Rule 217(c) further provides that the responsibility of the formerly admitted attorney to provide the notice required by this section shall continue for as long as the formerly admitted attorney is disbarred, suspended, administrative suspension or on inactive status.

§91.94. Effective date of suspension, disbarment, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status.

Enforcement Rule 217(d) provides that orders imposing suspension, disbarment, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status shall be effective 30 days after entry; that the formerly admitted attorney, after entry of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status order, shall not accept any new retainer or engage as attorney for another in any new case or legal matter of any nature; but that, during the period from the entry date of the order to its effective date the formerly admitted attorney may wind up and complete, on behalf of any client, all matters which were pending on the entry date.

§91.95. Proof of Compliance.

(a) *General rule.* Enforcement Rule 217(e) provides that within ten days after the effective date of the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status order, the formerly admitted attorney shall file with the Board a verified statement (Form DB-25) (Statement of Compliance) showing:

- (1) That the provisions of the order and the Enforcement Rules have been fully complied with; and
- (2) All other state, federal and administrative jurisdictions to which such person is admitted to practice.

(b) *Notice of address.* Enforcement Rule 217(e) further provides that such Form DB-25 shall also set forth the residence or other address of the formerly admitted attorney where communications to such person may thereafter be directed.

(c) *Cross reference.* See § 95.3 (relating to monitoring of notices to be sent by formerly admitted attorneys).

§91.96. Publication of notice of suspension, disbarment, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status.

Enforcement Rule 217(f) provides that the Board shall cause a notice of the suspension, disbarment, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status to be published in the legal journal and a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the formerly admitted attorney practiced. If there is no such legal journal, the notice shall be published in the legal journal of an adjoining county. Upon entry of an order imposing suspension, disbarment, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status, such notice shall be published forthwith and shall be transmitted to such courts as may be appropriate.

§91.97. Action to protect clients of formerly admitted attorney.

Enforcement Rule 217(g) provides that the Board shall promptly transmit a certified copy of the order of suspension, disbarment, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status to the president judge of the court of common pleas in the judicial district in which the formerly admitted attorney practiced; and that the president judge shall make such further order as may be necessary to fully protect the rights of the clients of the formerly admitted attorney.

§91.98. Maintenance of records.

(a) *General rule.* Enforcement Rule 217(i) provides that a formerly admitted attorney shall keep and maintain records of the various steps taken by such person under the Enforcement Rules so that, upon any subsequent proceeding instituted by or against such person, proof of compliance with the Enforcement Rules and with the disbarment, suspension, administrative suspension or transfer to inactive status order will be available; and that proof of compliance with the Enforcement Rules shall be a condition precedent to any petition for reinstatement.

(b) *Cross reference.* See § 95.3 (relating to monitoring of notices to be sent by formerly admitted attorneys).

§91.99. Indicia of licensure.

Enforcement Rule 217(h) provides that within ten days after the effective date of an order of disbarment or suspension for a period longer than one year, the formerly admitted attorney shall surrender to the Board the certificate issued by the Attorney Registration Office under § 93.143 (relating to issue of certificate as evidence of compliance) for

the current year, along with any certificate of good standing issued under Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rule 201(d) (relating to certification of good standing), certificate of admission issued under Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rule 231(d)(3) (relating to action by Prothonotary), certificate of licensure issued under Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rule 341(e)(3) (relating to motion for licensure), Limited In-House Corporate Counsel License issued under Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rule 302 (relating to limited in-house corporate counsel license) or limited certificate of admission issued under Pennsylvania Bar Admission Rule 303 (relating to limited admission of military attorneys). . The Board may destroy the annual certificate issued under § 93.143, but shall retain any other documents surrendered under this subdivision and shall return those documents to the formerly admitted attorney in the event that he or she is subsequently reinstated.

§91.100. Law-related activities of formerly admitted attorneys.

(a) *General rule.* A formerly admitted attorney may not engage in any form of law-related activities in this Commonwealth except in accordance with the requirements of this section.

(b) *Supervision.* Enforcement Rule 217(j)(1) provides that all law-related activities of the formerly admitted attorney shall be conducted under the supervision of a member in good standing of the Bar of this Commonwealth who shall be responsible for ensuring that the formerly admitted attorney complies with the requirements of this section. If the formerly admitted attorney is engaged by a law firm or other organization providing legal services, whether by employment or other relationship, an attorney of the firm or organization shall be designated by the firm or organization as the supervising attorney for purposes of this subsection.

(c) *Permissible activities.* Enforcement Rule 217(j)(2) provides that, for purposes of this section, the only law-related activities that may be conducted by a formerly admitted attorney are the following:

- (1) legal work of a preparatory nature, such as legal research, assembly of data and other necessary information, and drafting of transactional documents, pleadings, briefs, and other similar documents;
- (2) direct communication with the client or third parties to the extent permitted by subsection (d); and
- (3) accompanying a member in good standing of the Bar of this Commonwealth to a deposition or other discovery matter or to a meeting regarding a matter that is not currently in litigation, for the limited purpose of providing clerical assistance to the member in good standing who appears as the representative of the client.

(d) *Communications with clients.* Enforcement Rule 217(j)(3) provides that a formerly admitted attorney may have direct communication with a client or third party regarding a matter being handled by the attorney, organization or firm for which the formerly admitted attorney works only if the communication is limited to ministerial matters such as scheduling, billing, updates, confirmation of receipt or sending of correspondence and messages. The formerly admitted attorney shall clearly indicate in any such communication that he or she is a legal assistant and identify the supervising attorney.

(e) *Prohibited activities.* Enforcement Rule 217(j)(4) provides that, without limiting the other restrictions in this section, a formerly admitted attorney is specifically prohibited from engaging in any of the following activities:

- (1) performing any law-related activity for a law firm, organization or lawyer if the formerly admitted attorney was associated with that law firm, organization or lawyer on or after the date on which the acts which resulted in the disbarment or suspension occurred, through and including the effective date of disbarment or suspension;
- (2) performing any law-related services from an office that is not staffed by a supervising attorney on a full time basis;
- (3) performing any law-related services for any client who in the past was represented by the formerly admitted attorney;
- (4) representing himself or herself as a lawyer or person of similar status;
- (5) having any contact with clients either in person, by telephone, or in writing, except as provided in subsection (d);
- (6) rendering legal consultation or advice to a client;
- (7) appearing on behalf of a client in any hearing or proceeding or before any judicial officer, arbitrator, mediator, court, public agency, referee, magistrate, hearing officer or any other adjudicative person or body;

- (8) appearing as a representative of the client at a deposition or other discovery matter;
- (9) negotiating or transacting any matter for or on behalf of a client with third parties or having any contact with third parties regarding such a negotiation or transaction;
- (10) receiving, disbursing or otherwise handling client funds.

(f) *Notice to Board.* Enforcement Rule 217(j)(5) provides that the supervising attorney and the formerly admitted attorney shall file with the Board a notice of engagement, identifying the supervising attorney and certifying that the formerly admitted attorney's activities will be monitored for compliance with this section. The supervising attorney and the formerly admitted attorney shall file a notice with the Board immediately upon the termination of the engagement between the formerly admitted attorney and the supervising attorney.

(g) *Jurisdiction over supervising attorney.* Enforcement Rule 217(j)(6) provides that the supervising attorney shall be subject to disciplinary action for any failure by either the formerly admitted attorney or the supervising attorney to comply with the provisions of this section.

Note: This section limits and regulates the law-related activities performed by formerly admitted attorneys regardless of whether those formerly admitted attorneys are engaged as employees, independent contractors or in any other capacity. This section requires that a notice be filed with the Board when any law-related activities are performed by a formerly admitted attorney and when the engagement is terminated. This section is addressed only to the special circumstance of formerly admitted attorneys engaging in law-related activities and should not be read more broadly to define the permissible activities that may be conducted by a paralegal, law clerk, investigator, etc. who is not a formerly admitted attorney. This section is also not intended to establish a standard for what constitutes the unauthorized practice of law. Finally, this section is not intended to prohibit a formerly admitted attorney from performing services that are not unique to law offices, such as physical plant or equipment maintenance, courier or delivery services, catering, typing or transcription or other similar general office support activities.