

**Appellate Division
Supreme Court of the State of New York**

FIRST JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT
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SECOND JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT
45 MONROE PLACE
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11201

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CAPITOL STATION, PO BOX 7288
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FOURTH JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT
50 EAST AVENUE
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14604

Dear Student:

It is never too early to begin familiarizing yourself with the Bar admission process. As the Presiding Justices of the Appellate Division Departments, we are reaching out to those of you who intend to practice in New York State in an effort to assist you in gaining admission as seamlessly as possible. **At this time, we urge you to carefully review the character and fitness application for admission to the Bar** to understand the requirements you will need to satisfy and to start compiling necessary materials as they become available during your time in law school.

Admission to the New York State Bar is a multi-step process. Two major components are: (a) demonstrating your legal knowledge and training, principally through the passage of the bar examinations; and (b) demonstrating that you have the character and fitness for admission. The character and fitness component, and the actual admission to practice, are administered by each of the four Departments of the Appellate Division. In addition to sitting for the bar examination and fulfilling all other requirements for certification by the Board of Law Examiners, you will be required to submit a thorough and detailed application for admission, including a character and fitness questionnaire and related materials. Once the application is complete, a personal interview will be conducted and, assuming bar passage and approval by the Court, you will be included in a class for a swearing-in ceremony.

While the process moves expeditiously once an application is deemed complete, it is our collective experience that many applicants encounter difficulty in submitting a complete application, including failure to have gathered all the required documents for the character and fitness component. As a result, admission may be delayed. Some students may be under the erroneous impression that they cannot start working on their applications until after they receive notification of their bar passage. This is not the case. The forms are readily available online and there is nothing preventing you from starting to assemble your questionnaire answers and materials while you are still in law school. For example, you can obtain affirmations from law-related employers as you complete your tenure as an employee or intern. By being proactive, you will be well positioned to submit a properly completed application and, if all is in order, gain prompt admission to the Bar.

An explanatory guide accompanies this letter to provide information about the character and

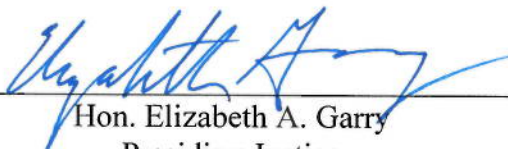
fitness component of the admission process. This letter and the guide are also posted on the Courts' websites.

We are committed to making the application process as efficient as possible, and look forward to assisting you in achieving your goal of joining our noble profession.

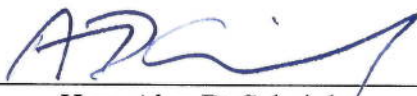
Very truly yours,



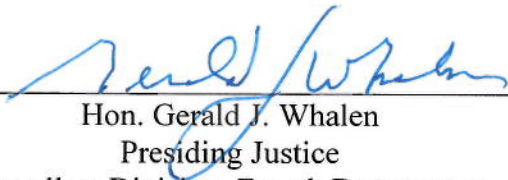
Hon. Rolando T. Acosta
Presiding Justice
Appellate Division, First Department



Hon. Elizabeth A. Garry
Presiding Justice
Appellate Division, Third Department



Hon. Alan D. Scheinkman
Presiding Justice
Appellate Division, Second Department



Hon. Gerald J. Whalen
Presiding Justice
Appellate Division, Fourth Department