

Tennessee Prohibits Practice Before Admission to Bar

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The Board of Professional Responsibility of the Tennessee Supreme Court has decided that a lawyer admitted in another state who joins a Tennessee firm may not practice in Tennessee until he is formally admitted in Tennessee. The board recognized two exceptions to its broad proscription: the lawyer may be admitted pro hac vice in a Tennessee state court, or he may make a limited appearance before a federal court or agency.

Lawyers who are admitted pro hac vice must nevertheless be supervised and controlled by a Tennessee lawyer and the law firm must disclose the lawyers' limited authority in all its advertising.

The law firm employing the in-coming lawyer is responsible for the lawyer's compliance with the Tennessee ethics rules and is required to sign all pleadings and motion papers in which the lawyer is involved.

The Board's action was prompted by 3 controlling facts: the greater mobility of lawyers; the growing specialization in legal practice; and the development of the multi-state law firm.