

**IN RE: THE PETITIONS OF ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW FOR ADMISSION  
TO THE SUPREME COURT BAR AS COUNSELLORS-AT-LAW**

HEARD: July 19 and November 21, 2005 DECIDED: January 6, 2006

MR. CHIEF JUSTICE COOPER DELIVERED THE OPINION OF THE  
COURT.

The Petitioners herein, Attorneys-At-Law, filed petitions before this Court during its March and October Terms, A.D. 2005, praying for admission to the Honourable Supreme Court Bar as Counsellors-At-Law.

The Petitioners averred in their Petitions that they are graduates of the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law, University of Liberia, were admitted to the Montserrado County Legal Bar and actively practiced law at least three years before various courts and other tribunals within this Republic , and that they are all citizens of the Republic of Liberia of good moral and professional character.

The Revised Rules of Court, Admission of Counsellors, Part I page 76 (1999) provides that "Except as hereinafter provided, no person shall be admitted as a Counsellor of this Court, unless he or she shall have been a practicing attorney for a period of at least three (3) years immediately previous to his or her application for admission, and shall be of good moral standing, the same to be evidenced by the certificate of at least two (2) members of the bar of this Court."

On July 19, and November 21, 2005, respectively, this Court, as is customary, had the reading of fifteen Petitions and accepted fifteen thereof. This Court accordingly referred these candidates to two Committees to examine their moral and ethical conducts and professional qualifications for membership of the Supreme Court Bar. Members of the two committees are as follows:

***[Please see pdf file for list of names]***

Reports from these Committees show that eleven of fifteen candidates that took the Examinations were successful, and they are listed herein below in the order of the scores which they received on the Examinations, beginning with the highest:

***[Please see pdf file for list of names]***

This Court recognizes and appreciates the efforts of and services rendered by the members of both Committees to this Honourable Court in spite of their volume of work and busy schedules. It is our desired hope and expectation that the long existing cordial relationship existing between this Court and the National Bar Association will be further cemented in the years ahead.

Before the Chief Justice proceeds with the qualification and admission of Petitioners as Counsellors-at-Law and members of the Supreme Court Bar, this Court thinks it appropriate to emphasize certain aspects of the duties of a lawyer and the significance of compliance with the Revised Rules of Moral and Ethical Conduct, as approved by this Court in January 1999.

A lawyer is under duty to instill faith and confidence in the administration of justice, to uphold the Constitution and laws of Liberia, and to ensure the integrity and dignity of the legal profession and the Judicial System. We shall quote from the Revised Rules, as follows:

"Rule 1. It shall be unprofessional for any lawyer to advise, initiate or otherwise participate directly or indirectly in any act that tends to undermine or impugn the authority, dignity, integrity of the courts or judges thereby hindering the effective administration of justice."

"Rule 3. Usual hospitality and attention to a judge by a lawyer interested in a case, which attention or favor is uncalled for by the customary relations of the parties, subject both the judge and the lawyer to misconstruction of motives, and should be avoided as indecent and unprofessional. A lawyer should not communicate or argue with the judge on any hearing, and he deserves rebuke and denunciation for any device or attempt to gain from a judge special personal consideration or favor during a case hearing or in connection with any case hearing. A self-respecting in-dependence in the discharge of professional duty, without denial or diminution of the courtesy and respect due the judge's station, is the only proper foundation for cordial personal and official relations between bench and bar.

"Rule 39. It is expected of every member of the legal profession, be he/she a judge or a practicing lawyer, under the professional oath he has taken to support the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, and uphold the laws of his country and the rules of all courts, to stand firm and committed to the enforcement of these rules through courts and the Ethics and Grievance Committee of the National Bar Association set by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia."

The legal profession is a noble profession which has its own requirements, good, moral and, ethical standards pursuant to statute governing the practice of legal profession in this jurisdiction. The Judicial Branch of Government should be made up of noble men and women with sound legal education and of good moral and ethical standards. Lawyers practicing before our courts are the ingredients of a credible Judiciary in this Republic. This Court therefore disfavors any guilt of professional misconduct, legal malpractice and indecent conduct or acts that will tend to discredit the Judicial Branch of Government.

It is encumbered upon our lawyers to maintain a respectful attitude towards our Courts, Judges and Justices thereof. A lawyer is also required to obtain full knowledge of his client's cause before advising thereon, and he is also duty bound to give such client his legal opinion of the merits and probable outcome of pending or contemplated litigation. A lawyer must therefore advise his client to avoid or to end litigation, wherein the controversy will not permit a fair judgment. It is indeed unprofessional for a lawyer practicing in our jurisdiction to advise the institution or the continuation of an unmeritorious suit or action.

We urge you to continue to be lawyers of good moral and high ethical standards, and to uphold the dignity and integrity of this Court and the subordinate courts. It is also our hope and expectation that the admitted candidates shall live up to their oaths to be administered hereafter, and shall endeavor to be responsible and diligent Counsellors of this Court.

This Court carefully reviewed the qualifications of the Petitioners pursuant to statute, and unanimously voted and determined that the Petitioners are qualified for admission to the Supreme Court Bar.

Wherefore and in view of the foregoing, the Petitions of the eleven Petitioners mentioned herein are hereby granted and they are ordered admitted to the Supreme Court Bar as Counsellors-at-Law; as such, we shall now administer the Oath of admission and thereafter declare the Petitioners admitted as members of the Supreme Court Bar and qualified to practice law before the Honourable Supreme Court of Liberia. The Clerk of this Court is hereby ordered to inform all subordinate courts that Petitioners herein have been qualified by this Court as Counsellors-At-Law and we have thereby granted to them all the rights and privileges due and befitting members of the Bar of the Honourable Supreme Court of the Republic of Liberia. AND IT IS HEREBY SO ORDERED.