

Illinois Supreme Court Approves Three Significant Proposals For Practicing Law In Illinois

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Today, the Illinois Supreme Court announced the approval of “3 Proposals Impacting the Practice of Law in Illinois.” These are positive developments for Illinois lawyers and those needing legal assistance in Illinois, helping to bridge some gaps between the law and technology, and furthering the goal of addressing unmet legal needs in Illinois.

The approved proposals include: 1) Regulation of Intermediary Connecting Services (ICS), 2) New Supreme Court Rule 300, and 3) MCLE for Pro Bono Pilot Project.

As to the first proposal, according to the Court, ICS entities are “organizations which connect lawyers to clients, typically through the internet” and “have the potential to help address unmet legal needs by making it easier for consumers to find a lawyer.” However, as the existing Illinois rules did not clearly contemplate such arrangements, there was some uncertainty as to whether attorneys should participate. This proposal will amend Rules of Professional Conduct 1.6 and 7.2 to define ICS and permit attorney participation, assuming certain conditions, including the exercise of due diligence, are met.

The second proposal addresses the New Supreme Court Rule 300 Governing Attorney’s Fee Petitions and encourages alternative fee agreements beyond the standard billable hour, by clearly establishing that such alternative fee agreements may be the basis for recovery of attorneys’ fees. The change is intended to increase access to affordable legal services, providing consistency in the consideration of attorneys’ fee petitions.

Finally, the third proposal, the MCLE Pro Bono Pilot Project, adds a temporary category of Nontraditional Courses or Activities eligible for Continuing Legal Education credits pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 795(d)(14), for participation in Illinois Free Legal Answers, which is a “virtual, internet-based legal advice clinic administered by the Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI).” Attorneys participating in this program may earn one hour of MCLE credit for every two hours of pro bono work for Illinois Free Legal Answers, qualifying for up to five credits per two-year reporting period. This will be a two-year pilot program, and it will be monitored by PILI and the Supreme Court’s Executive Committee to see whether CLE credit will increase attorneys’ voluntary participation in such pro bono services, with a goal of broadening initiatives to help those in need.

You may read more about these proposals, which will take effect on July 1, 2025, in the Supreme Court's press [release](#).

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