

# MILITARY SPOUSE RULE FAQs

- 1. What is Chapter 21 of the Rules Regulating The Florida Bar?**  
Chapter 21 is the “Military Spouse Rule.” Under this rule, the Supreme Court of Florida may certify a lawyer who is the spouse of a full-time active duty member of the United States armed forces to engage in the practice of law in Florida while the lawyer’s spouse is stationed in Florida. A lawyer certified under this chapter is considered a member of The Florida Bar during the period of certification.
- 2. How do I apply to become certified as a “Military Spouse” lawyer in Florida?**  
The first step in the process of applying to become certified under Chapter 21 is handled by the Florida Board of Bar Examiners (FBBE), which is the agency that handles Bar admissions in Florida. All questions regarding FBBE’s application process and background investigation, including the length of time for completion of its process, should be directed to FBBE. The telephone number for FBBE is (850)487-1292 and its web site can be found at the following link: <https://www.floridabarexam.org/>
- 3. What happens when FBBE completes its process and background investigation?**  
If FBBE, upon completion of its process and background investigation, has determined that you are cleared for certification under Chapter 21, it will send a clearance letter to you and to The Florida Bar indicating that you have established the requisite character and fitness to warrant a favorable recommendation for certification.
- 4. Once I receive FBBE’s clearance letter, am I now certified to practice law in Florida?**  
Not quite yet. After receiving FBBE’s clearance letter, you will contact The Florida Bar at the name and number provided to you in the clearance letter. Once you contact The Florida Bar, step #2 of the certification process commences. You will receive an application form from the Bar, which you will need to complete and return to the Bar together with the necessary documentation required by Chapter 21 and set forth in the Bar’s application form.
- 5. What is the necessary documentation that is required by the Bar?**  
The required documentation is outlined in the Bar’s application form which, you will receive upon contacting The Florida Bar as directed in the FBBE clearance letter.

6. **When providing proof of employment or mentorship with a member of the Florida Bar, will a letter from the Florida Bar member with whom I am employed or in mentorship suffice?**

Yes, a letter from that individual attesting that you are either employed, or in mentorship, with him/her is the necessary documentation to be provided.

7. **How long does it take for the Bar to complete its process once I provide the Bar with all of my documentation?**

The Bar's process can take up to 4-6 weeks once the Bar receives the completed form and all required documentation.

8. **What happens when the Bar's process is complete?**

If the Bar, upon completion of its process, has determined that you have met the requirements of Chapter 21, it will send a letter to the Supreme Court of Florida that states you have met the requirements of Chapter 21 and are eligible for certification by the Court.

9. **Once the Supreme Court issues its order granting certification will I be able to practice law?**

Not yet. We will send you the Oath of Attorney, which must be administered by anyone authorized to administer oaths and then notarized. If you are presently out of state, you may have the Oath of Attorney administered by an official authorized to administer oaths in your state. You must take the Oath within 90 days from the date the Oath is sent to you. The executed oath must then be returned to The Florida Bar.

10. **What happens after I sign the Oath of Attorney and return it to The Florida Bar?**

Once the executed Oath of Attorney is received, you may begin practicing law in Florida as a member of The Florida Bar. Shortly afterward, the Membership Records Department will send you a Florida Bar new member kit, which will include your Florida Bar Number and other important information.