

TITLE 2. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LICENSEES

Adopted July 2007; last amended effective September 20, 2024.

DIVISION 3. LICENSEE STATUS

Rule 2.30 Inactive license status

- (A) Any licensee not under suspension, who does not engage in any of the activities listed in California, may, upon written request,¹ be enrolled as an inactive licensee. The State Bar may, in any case in which to do otherwise would work an injustice, permit retroactive enrollment of inactive licensees.
- (B) No licensee practicing law, or occupying a position in the employ of or rendering any legal service for an active licensee, or occupying a position wherein he or she is called upon in any capacity to give legal advice or counsel or examine the law or pass upon the legal effect of any act, document or law, shall be enrolled as an inactive licensee.
- (C) Notwithstanding (A) and (B) a licensee serving for a court or any other governmental agency as a referee, hearing officer, court commissioner, temporary judge, arbitrator, mediator or in another similar capacity is eligible for enrollment as an inactive licensee if he or she does not otherwise engage in any of the activities listed in (B) or hold himself or herself out as being entitled to practice law.

Rule 2.30 adopted effective August 19, 2006; amended effective July 20, 2007; amended effective January 25, 2019; amended effective September 22, 2023.

Rule 2.31 Change of license status

- (A) A licensee may apply to change from active to inactive status or vice versa by submitting the Transfer to Active Status Form or the Transfer to Inactive Status Form with the transfer fee indicated in the Schedule of Charges and Deadlines. A change to inactive with an effective date on or before December 31 entitles the licensee to pay the annual fees of an inactive licensee for the following year unless the licensee thereafter changes their status from inactive to active. A Transfer to Inactive form with an effective license status change date of December 31 or earlier must be properly submitted to the State Bar by December 1 of the same year for the licensee to qualify for the inactive license fee rate for the following year. A Transfer to Inactive Status form submitted after December 1 or with an effective date after December 31 will be accepted and processed, but the licensee must pay annual fees at the active rate and is not entitled to a refund because of the change to inactive status.

¹ Rule 2.31(A).

- (B) While suspended, a licensee cannot change license status.

Rule 2.31 adopted effective June 17, 2006; amended effective July 20, 2007; amended effective; January 25, 2019; amended effective September 20, 2024.

Rule 2.32 Inactive enrollment for failure to comply with Minimum Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) requirements

- (A) A licensee who fails to meet requirements for Minimum Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) will be involuntarily enrolled as inactive.
- (B) To terminate inactive enrollment for MCLE noncompliance, a licensee must comply with the MCLE rules governing reinstatement.²
- (C) Annual license fees accrue at the inactive rate.

Rule 2.32 adopted effective June 17, 2006; amended effective July 20, 2007; amended effective January 25, 2019.

Rule 2.33 Suspension for failure to pay annual license fees and outstanding penalties or costs

- (A) A licensee who fails to pay annual license fees or any outstanding penalties or costs will be sent a final delinquency notice at the licensee's address of record. If the State Bar fails to receive full payment of the amount due within two months of sending the final delinquency notice, the State Bar will recommend that the Supreme Court suspend the licensee from the practice of law.³
- (B) Annual license fees accrue according to the licensee's status prior to suspension.
- (C) To terminate suspension for nonpayment, a licensee must pay
- (1) all current and accrued fees, penalties, and costs; and
 - (2) the reinstatement fee set forth in the Schedule of Charges and Deadlines.
- The payment must be made by a credit card accepted by the State Bar, in cash, or by cashier's check, money order, bank certified check, or wire transfer.
- (D) The State Bar will seek by an amendment nunc pro tunc to retroactively strike the name of a licensee from the Supreme Court Order of Suspension for Nonpayment if the suspension resulted from State Bar error.

² See rule 2.93.

³ Bus. & Prof. Code, § 6143.

- (E) Annually the State Bar may recommend that the Supreme Court expunge a suspension for nonpayment of license fees if the suspension meets the criteria adopted by the court.⁴

Rule 2.33 adopted effective June 17, 2006; amended effective July 20, 2007; section (E) adopted effective July 20, 2007; amended effective January 25, 2019.

Rule 2.34 Suspension for failure to comply with a family or child support obligation

- (A) A licensee identified under the terms of Family Code § 17520 as failing to comply with a judgment or court order for child or family support will be suspended from the practice of law by the Supreme Court.⁵
- (B) The State Bar will send a written notice of suspension for failure to pay child or family support to the licensee’s address of record. The suspension will be effective on the date ordered by the Supreme Court.
- (C) The State Bar will ask the Supreme Court to reinstate a licensee if it receives statutory notice⁶ that the obligation has been discharged, if the licensee submits a declaration under penalty of perjury stating whether the licensee practiced law during the suspension and if the licensee has paid any surcharge authorized by statute.⁷
- (D) If a reinstated licensee subsequently fails to comply with a judgment or court order for child or family support,⁸ the State Bar will request that the Supreme Court suspend the licensee within thirty days and will send written notice of its request to the licensee’s address of record.
- (E) Annual license fees accrue according to the licensee’s status prior to suspension.

Rule 2.34 adopted effective June 17, 2006; amended effective July 20, 2007; amended effective January 17, 2014; amended effective January 25, 2019.

Rule 2.35 Suspension for disciplinary violations

A licensee on actual rather than stayed suspension for disciplinary violations for part of a year must pay full annual license fees. Annual license fees do not accrue during periods of suspension that last an entire year.

Rule 2.35 adopted effective June 17, 2006; amended effective July 20, 2007; amended effective January 25, 2019.

⁴ California Rules of Court, rule 9.8(b).

⁵ California Rules of Court, rule 9.22.

⁶ Fam. Code, § 17520.

⁷ California Rules of Court, rule 9.22; Fam. Code, § 17520(n).

⁸ Fam. Code, § 17520(l).

Rule 2.36 Suspension for failure to pay state taxes

- (A) A licensee identified under the terms of Business and Professions Code section 494.5 as delinquent in the payment of state taxes will be suspended from the practice of law by the Supreme Court.⁹
- (B) The State Bar will send a written notice of suspension for failure to pay state taxes to the licensee’s address of record. The suspension will be effective on the date ordered by the Supreme Court.
- (C) The State Bar will ask the Supreme Court to reinstate a licensee if it receives statutory notice¹⁰ releasing the licensee, if the licensee submits a declaration under penalty of perjury stating whether the licensee practiced law during the suspension and if the licensee has paid any fee authorized by statute.¹¹
- (D) If a reinstated licensee subsequently fails to comply with an installment payment agreement that the licensee entered into with the State Franchise Tax Board or the State Board of Equalization,¹² the State Bar will request that the Supreme Court suspend the licensee within thirty days and will send written notice of its request to the licensee’s address of record.
- (E) Annual license fees accrue according to the licensee’s status prior to suspension.

Rule 2.36 adopted effective January 17, 2014; amended effective January 25, 2019.

Rule 2.40 Multiple accrual rates for annual license fees

If under these rules there is a conflict in the rate at which a licensee accrues fees, the active rate applies.

Rule 2.40 adopted as Rule 2.36 effective July 20, 2007; renumbered as Rule 2.40 effective January 17, 2014; amended effective January 25, 2019.

Rule 2.45 Voluntary resignation

- (A) A licensee may tender a voluntary resignation from the State Bar of California if:
 - (1) the licensee is not
 - (a) currently suspended from the practice of law as a result of the imposition of discipline by the California Supreme Court;

⁹ California Rules of Court, rule 9.24.

¹⁰ Bus. & Prof. Code, § 494.5.

¹¹ California Rules of Court, rule 9.24; Bus. & Prof. Code, § 494.5(l).

¹² Bus. & Prof. Code, § 494.5(j).

- (b) currently subject to a period of probation or to conditions attached to a public or private reproof pursuant to discipline imposed by the State Bar Court or the California Supreme Court; or
 - (c) currently subject to the terms of an agreement in lieu of discipline that the licensee has entered into with the Office of the Chief Trial Counsel;
- (2) the licensee does not currently have a disciplinary complaint, investigation or proceeding pending against him or her with any professional licensing agency in California or another jurisdiction;
- (3) the licensee is neither currently charged with the commission of a felony or misdemeanor nor aware that he or she is the subject of a current criminal investigation or grand jury proceeding for the alleged commission of a felony or misdemeanor; and
- (4) the licensee
 - (a) has never been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor listed in Business and Professions Code section 6068(o)(5);
 - (b) has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor listed in Business and Professions Code section 6068(o)(5) and has been disciplined as a result of the conviction; or
 - (c) has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor listed in Business and Professions Code section 6068(o)(5) but the related disciplinary proceeding was dismissed without the imposition of discipline.
- (B) A licensee who is eligible to tender his or her voluntary resignation pursuant to subsection (A) of this rule must complete and execute, under penalty of perjury, the voluntary resignation form approved by the Board of Trustees and submit the original of the form to the State Bar's Office of Attorney Regulation & Consumer Resources.
- (C) Upon tendering his or her voluntary resignation and until the California Supreme Court accepts or rejects the resignation, the licensee is immediately enrolled as an inactive licensee of the State Bar of California and is ineligible to practice law or claim in any way to be entitled to practice law.
- (D) A licensee's voluntary resignation is effective only when it is accepted by the California Supreme Court.
- (E) A false statement made by a licensee in tendering his or her voluntary resignation under this rule

- (1) may result in an order of the Supreme Court denying or vacating the licensee's resignation;
- (2) constitutes cause for disbarment or suspension; and
- (3) may be punished as contempt or as a crime.

Rule 2.45 adopted as Rule 2.37 effective April 1, 2009; amended effective May 15, 2009; amended effective January 1, 2012; renumbered as Rule 2.45 effective January 17, 2014; amended effective January 25, 2019.

Rule 2.46 Noncompliance with Attorney Fingerprinting Requirement

- (A) Definition: Noncompliance is failure to submit proof that fingerprints have been taken in accordance with State law and State Bar procedures.
- (B) Enrollment as inactive for fingerprinting noncompliance
 - (1) A licensee determined by the State Bar to be in noncompliance with State Bar fingerprinting requirements will be enrolled as inactive and not eligible to practice law. The enrollment is administrative and no hearing is required.
 - (2) All licensees will receive notices of noncompliance at least 60 days prior to involuntary inactive enrollment.
- (C) Reinstatement following fingerprinting noncompliance
 - (1) Enrollment as inactive for fingerprinting noncompliance terminates when a licensee submits proof of compliance.

Rule 2.46 adopted effective May 18, 2018; amended effective January 25, 2019.