

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN RE:) **S. Ct. Misc. No. 2017-00__**
)
VIRGIN ISLANDS BAR ASSOCIATION,)
Petitioner.)
_____)

**REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF DEADLINES PERTAINING TO
BAR DUES AND MANDATORY CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION**

COMES NOW, the Virgin Islands Bar Association, by and through its President, Anthony Michael Ciolli, Esq., and hereby files a request for an extension of time for its members to pay mandatory Bar dues for the 2018 Bar Year and to fulfill mandatory continuing legal education (CLE) requirements for the 2017 reporting period.

The payment of mandatory Bar dues is governed by Supreme Court Rule 205. Rule 205(d) provides that any member delinquent in the payment of dues as set forth in the Bylaws of the Virgin Islands Bar Association shall be suspended from the practice of law. Pursuant to Article I(12) of the Bylaws, members must pay Bar dues on or before December 1st of the prior calendar year, and shall pay delinquency fees and interest if dues are not paid in a timely manner. Similarly, Supreme Court Rule 208 requires that members earn all required CLE credits on or before December 31st and certify their compliance on or before January 31st, failing which the member must pay applicable delinquency fees and be subject to automatic suspension from the practice of law.

In September 2017, Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria both made landfall in the U.S. Virgin Islands as Category-5 hurricanes, resulting in devastating damage throughout the Territory, as well as disruptions to essential services that continue to this day. The Virgin Islands Bar Association and its members were not spared, and to this day many attorneys continue to lack consistent and reliable access to power and the Internet, which interferes with their ability to earn CLE credits. Moreover, the dual storms resulted in a temporary closure of the Bar Association's office, and significantly delayed the hiring of a full-time Executive Director. In fact, although Article VIII(6) of the Bylaws requires that the Bar Association send its dues invoice to each member no later than September 30th, the Bar Association was not able to complete the billing process for all members until November 17, 2017.

Given these highly unusual and unprecedented circumstances, the Bar Association requests that this Honorable Court permit and extend the time for members of the Virgin Islands Bar to pay mandatory Bar dues for the 2018 Bar Year and fulfill and report mandatory CLE requirements for the 2017 reporting period as follows:

- February 1, 2018**
- Deadline to timely pay 2018 Bar dues.
 - Deadline to timely earn CLE credits for the 2017 reporting period.

- March 1, 2018**
- Deadline to pay 2018 Bar dues with \$25.00 delinquency fee and interest.
 - Deadline to timely file Certifications of Attendance evidencing satisfaction of CLE requirement for the 2017 reporting period.
- April 1, 2018**
- Deadline to pay 2018 Bar dues with \$50.00 delinquency fee and interest.
 - Earliest day for issuance of Notice of Delinquency to members who failed to comply with CLE reporting requirements for the 2017 reporting period.
- May 1, 2018**
- Deadline to pay 2018 Bar dues with \$100.00 delinquency fee and interest.
- May 2, 2018**
- Earliest day for filing of petitions for suspension of members for non-payment of Bar dues for the 2018 Bar Year.

This request for a blanket extension is not intended to preclude any member from petitioning this Honorable Court (or, if already permitted by rule, the Bar Association) for a greater extension of time. Additionally, members will be advised that any CLE credits earned during the 2018 calendar year to satisfy mandatory CLE requirements for the 2017 reporting period cannot be double-counted to also satisfy requirements for the 2018 reporting period as well.

WHEREFORE, it is respectfully requested that this Honorable Court **GRANT** this petition and extend the deadlines pertaining to Bar dues and mandatory CLE as set forth herein.

December 5, 2017

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Anthony Michael Ciolli

Anthony Michael Ciolli, Esq. (V.I. Bar #1244)

President

VIRGIN ISLANDS BAR ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 224108

St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands 00822

(340) 778-7497

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that the Virgin Islands Bar Association shall distribute to its membership a copy of this petition, together with any order issued by this Honorable Court.

/s/ Anthony Michael Ciolli

Anthony Michael Ciolli, Esq. (V.I. Bar #1244)