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Calif. Real-World Training Rules May Spark National Trend

BB&K Partner Richard Egger Discusses With Law360 the New State Bar Requirement for Pro Bono Work

By Gavin Broady

As young lawyers continue to face a punishing job market, California is poised to implement a bold set of competency requirements tying bar admission to significant real-world training and pro bono work, a move that many states are likely to follow but that some experts worry will do more harm than good.

The first-of-its-kind initiative, spearheaded by the state bar's task force on admissions regulation reform, is designed to close a perceived gap between law school education and the obligations of real-world practice by requiring either 15 units of law school course work focused on practical skills training or equivalent post-graduate work in externships, clerkships or apprenticeships.

New attorneys seeking admission to the 242,000-member California bar would also be required to log 50 hours of legal work for pro bono or modest means clients, as well as 10 hours of mandatory, post-admission training focused on lawyer competency skills.

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The admissions requirements may also have benefits for young attorneys beyond increased marketability in a tough job climate, according to Best Best & Krieger partner Richard Egger, who sees big-picture value in requiring new lawyers to take on pro bono projects.

"At the end of the day, it's a way for people to gain some more basic skills, but at the same time they're gaining an understanding that law as a profession does have some component of service to the community," Egger said. "Having that requirement early might help instill a sense of civic responsibility in young lawyers, and that's not a bad thing."

To read the full article in Law360, which ran Jan. 9, 2015, [click here](#)

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