



BOSTON COLLEGE | LAW CAREER SERVICES OFFICE

BAR ADMISSION

Law Student Registration

We recognize that it is often difficult to plan two days in advance, let alone two years; however, it is important that you start thinking about which bar exam(s) you will take during your first year of law school. In some jurisdictions, a financial advantage will result from registering early in your law school career. Financial penalties may exist for late registration. Requirements regarding registration, application deadlines and costs vary greatly by state. We encourage you to research the requirements, during your 1L year, of the two or three jurisdictions in which you are most likely to seek employment upon graduation from law school.

The following website for the National Conference of Bar Examiners is a comprehensive resource for information on the bar exam: www.ncbex.org/.

The following link provides contact information for each jurisdiction's bar admission agency where you can find information about admission requirements and application forms, as well as "[A Comprehensive Guide To Bar Admission Requirements](#)," which outlines each jurisdiction's requirements, including a chart with bar application deadlines on pages 29 & 30 of the PDF document.

Moral Character and Fitness

In order to be admitted to the bar, you will be required to provide information that attests to your good character and fitness to practice law. Usually, this requires you to identify two or three references who can attest to your character and fitness. You will likely be asked questions regarding criminal convictions, disciplinary actions, and other similar matters. Answer all questions regarding character and fitness accurately and completely. Disclose anything that you think may be relevant. Failure to disclose relevant information may have more detrimental consequences than would have resulted from proper disclosure of the underlying matter.

The Bar Exam: General Information Applicable to All States

The most common format is a two-day bar examination, which consists of one day devoted to the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE), a 200-question multiple choice exam, and another day of substantive essay questions tailored for practice in that particular jurisdiction. The essay questions typically cover a broader range of subject areas than the MBE. Students should research the requirements of their jurisdiction for detailed information about bar exam content. Many jurisdictions post on their websites past bar exam questions or sample bar exam questions that will give you a sense of what you can expect when taking the bar exam. Many jurisdictions are adding other multistate tests to the above-described basic format, such as the Multistate Essay Examination (MEE) and the Multistate Performance Test (MPT).

The National Conference of Bar Examiners, www.ncbex.org, provides the standardized legal examinations, which are discussed in more detail below.

Uniform Bar Examination (UBE): This exam, administered over two days, consists of the Multistate Essay Examination (MEE), two Multistate Performance Test (MPT) tasks, and the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE). The UBE is uniformly administered, graded, and scored by jurisdictions using the UBE and results in a portable score. However, jurisdictions using the UBE continue to set many of their own bar-related policies, including, but not limited to, their own passing scores. (For more information on the discretion retained by jurisdictions using the UBE, see <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/ube/>.) The UBE has been adopted by Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas

(February 2020), Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio (July 2020), Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas (February 2021), Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wyoming and the Virgin Islands. Jurisdictions using the UBE may also require completing a jurisdiction-specific educational component and/or passing a test on jurisdiction-specific law, as well as passing the UBE. For more information on the UBE, see <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/ube/>.

Multistate Bar Examination (MBE): This six-hour standardized exam consists of 200 multiple-choice questions covering six substantive areas of law: Constitutional Law, Contracts, Criminal Law and Procedure, Real Property and Torts. Currently, all but two jurisdictions – Louisiana and Puerto Rico – incorporate this component into their bar exam formats. Further information can be found at <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mbe/>.

Multistate Essay Examination (MEE): The MEE is a collection of six 30-minute essay questions. Each jurisdiction also determines its own policy with regard to the relative weight given to the MEE. The essay questions cover the following areas of law: Business Associations (Agency and Partnership, Corporations, and Limited Liability Companies), Conflict of Laws, Constitutional Law, Contracts, Criminal Law and Procedure, Evidence, Family Law, Federal Civil Procedure, Real Property, Torts, Trusts and Estates and UCC. Some questions may include more than one area of law. Further information can be found at <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mee/> where you can find MEE sample questions, study guides and an information booklet.

Multistate Performance Test (MPT): The MPT consists of two 90-minute skills questions requiring legal and factual analyses, problem solving, resolution of ethical dilemmas, organization and management of a lawyering task, and communication. Further information can be found at <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpt/> where you can find MPT study guides and summaries.

Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE): The MPRE is a two-hour standardized exam consisting of sixty multiple-choice questions, which test the applicant's knowledge and understanding of ethical standards in the legal profession. Most jurisdictions require passage of the MPRE before you sit for the bar, and many states accept MPRE scores from exams taken within two years of successfully passing the bar exam. Students should consider taking the MPRE during the second year or first semester of the third year of law school, but check your jurisdiction's requirements regarding how far in advance of sitting for the bar you may take the MPRE. The MPRE is administered three times each year, in March, August, and November. There are application deadlines for each administration of the MPRE. Registration deadlines and corresponding fees for the MPRE can be found online at <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre/>. You will also find study guides and an information booklet on this site.

DC Bar Admission

There are two ways to gain admission to the bar of the District of Columbia. You may either take the DC bar exam, or be admitted by motion if: (1) you are admitted to practice law in another state, (2) you are in good standing in the state where you are admitted to practice, (3) you received a combined scaled score of 266 (essay scaled score of at least 133 + MBE scaled score of at least 133), and (4) you received a passing score on the MPRE of at least 75. There are no time restrictions for admission to the DC bar. If you meet the requirements for admission, you may apply as soon as you are eligible or any time thereafter.

You must file your bar application for admission to the DC bar within 90 days from the date you begin practicing law in the District of Columbia. You may practice for a period of time up to 360 days during the pendency of your application. Please note that this rule applies to all attorneys, including contract attorneys who practice in the District on a regular basis. Even if you are doing what might be characterized as "paralegal work," such as document review, if you are being held out and billed out as an attorney, you must file your bar application within 90 days of commencing work in the District. (Advisory Opinion 16-05, <https://www.dccourts.gov/sites/default/files/matters-docs/rule49.pdf>)

See the following link for additional information about admission to the DC bar:

<https://www.dccourts.gov/court-of-appeals/committee-on-admissions>.

Patent Bar Exam

Patent attorneys and patent agents may practice patent cases before the [U.S. Patent and Trademark Office](https://www.uspto.gov) (USPTO). Each practitioner must show proof of good moral character and reputation, have the requisite scientific or technical background, and pass the registration examination commonly known as the patent bar exam. You do not have to have passed a state bar exam to take the patent bar. For additional information about the patent bar, visit <https://www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/patent-and-trademark-practitioners/becoming-patent-practitioner>.

Reciprocity

Some jurisdictions offer reciprocal bar admission to practicing attorneys in good standing in other jurisdictions. Most states offering reciprocity require from three to seven years of practice in another jurisdiction before reciprocity is permitted. In some states, reciprocity is not available. You must take an exam, sometimes called an attorney exam, before being permitted to practice in states without reciprocity. The following link provides information about reciprocity in each state:

<http://www.ncbex.org/pubs/bar-admissions-guide/2018/mobile/index.html> (See pages 43-44)

Additional Bar Admission and Attorney Requirements

Several states have recently implemented additional requirements on attorneys seeking bar admission. In New York, prospective lawyers must provide 50 hours of law-related pro bono service before being admitted to the New York State Bar. www.nycourts.gov/attorneys/probono/baradmissionreqs.shtml

In Massachusetts, the Supreme Judicial Court has approved a rule that requires that all newly admitted lawyers to the Massachusetts State Bar take a one-day Practicing with Professionalism Course within 18 months of admission. This course addresses issues of law office management, professionalism and civility, professional ethics, managing the attorney-client relationship, dos and don'ts of social media, and the importance and availability of pro bono opportunities, among other topics. <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/professionalism-course-for-new-lawyers>

Links to Information on State Bar Exams

State	Website
Alabama	https://admissions.alabar.org/home
Alaska	admissions.alaskabar.org
Arizona	www.azcourts.gov/cld/Attorney-Admissions
Arkansas	https://www.arcourts.gov/administration/professional-programs/bar-exam
California	http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Examinations/California-Bar-Examination
Colorado	www.coloradosupremecourt.com/Future%20Lawyers/BarExamination.asp
Connecticut	www.jud.state.ct.us/cbec/
Delaware	https://courts.delaware.gov/bbe/
District of Columbia	https://www.dccourts.gov/court-of-appeals/committee-on-admissions
Florida	www.floridabarexam.org
Georgia	https://www.gabaradmissions.org/home
Hawaii	http://www.courts.state.hi.us/legal_references/bar_application
Idaho	isb.idaho.gov/admissions/bar_exam/bar_examination_information.html
Illinois	https://www.ilbaradmissions.org/appinfo.action?id=1
Indiana	www.in.gov/judiciary/ble/
Iowa	www.iowacourts.gov/For Attorneys/Bar Information Admissions/index.asp
Kansas	http://www.kscourts.org/appellate-clerk/Board-of-Law-Examiners/
Kentucky	www.kyoba.org
Louisiana	http://www.lascba.org/
Maine	www.mainebarexaminers.org
Maryland	https://www.mdcourts.gov/ble/admissionube
Massachusetts	www.mass.gov/bbe/
Michigan	https://www.michbar.org/professional/byexam
Minnesota	www.ble.state.mn.us
Mississippi	https://courts.ms.gov/baradmissions/baradmissions.html
Missouri	www.mble.org
Montana	http://www.montanabar.org/page/AdmissionInfo
Nebraska	http://www.ncbex.org/jurisdiction-information/jurisdiction/ne
Nevada	https://www.nvbar.org/for-lawyers/admissions/
New Hampshire	www.courts.state.nh.us/nhbar/index.htm
New Jersey	www.njbarexams.org/
New Mexico	www.nmexam.org
New York	www.nybarexam.org
North Carolina	www.ncble.org
North Dakota	http://www.ndcourts.gov/court/committees/barbd/information.htm

Ohio	http://test.supremecourt.ohio.gov/AttySvcs/admissions/barExam.asp
Oklahoma	http://www.okbbe.com/Default.aspx
Oregon	http://www.osbar.org/admissions
Pennsylvania	http://www.pabarexam.org/
Rhode Island	https://www.courts.ri.gov/AttorneyResources/baradmission/Pages/default.aspx
South Carolina	https://barapplication.sccourts.org/
South Dakota	http://www.statebarofsouthdakota.com/
Tennessee	www.tnble.org
Texas	https://ble.texas.gov/home
Utah	http://www.utahbar.org/admissions/
Vermont	http://www.vermontjudiciary.org/LC/bbe.aspx
Virginia	www.vbbe.state.va.us
Washington	http://www.wsba.org/Licensing-and-Lawyer-Conduct/Admissions/Application-and-Exam-Information
West Virginia	http://www.courtswv.gov/legal-community/board-of-law-examiners.html
Wisconsin	http://www.wicourts.gov/courts/offices/bbe.htm
Wyoming	http://www.courts.state.wy.us/supreme-court/bar-admission/