

WASHINGTON LAWYER BAR EXAMINATION
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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I. Qualifications and Application Types

1. Who should take the Washington Bar Examination?

Bona fide applicants applying for admission to the practice of law in Washington, who are eligible under [Washington Supreme Court Admission and Practice Rule \(APR\) 3](#), may sit for the Washington Lawyer Bar examination.

2. What are the qualifications to sit for the Washington Bar Examination?

To take the Washington Bar Exam, you must meet the qualifications stated in [Washington Supreme Court APR 3\(b\)](#). You cannot take the bar exam if you qualify for admission by motion or admission by UBE score transfer. In all cases, you must establish that you possess good moral character and the requisite fitness to practice law. To qualify to take the lawyer bar exam, you must have:

- a. Graduated from an ABA-accredited law school; or
- b. Completed the Washington Supreme Court APR 6 Law Clerk Program; or
- c. Graduated from any U.S. law school and earned an LLM degree from an ABA-accredited law school that meets the requirements of Washington Supreme Court APR 3; or
- d. Graduated from a university or law school outside the U.S. with a degree in law that currently qualifies you to practice law in that jurisdiction and earned an LLM degree from an ABA-approved law school that meets the requirements of Washington Supreme Court APR 3; or
- e. Been admitted to the practice of law in any jurisdiction where the common law of England is the basis of its jurisprudence and have active legal experience for at least three of the five years immediately preceding the filing of the application.

3. I am applying as an Attorney Applicant; do I need to submit a certificate of good standing?

Yes, you must submit a certificate of good standing from each jurisdiction to which you are or have ever been admitted to practice. You may submit your certificate of good standing using the supplemental application information tool on the online admissions system. The certificate must be signed and dated within six months of the application date.



4. **What is the definition of a “foreign applicant”?**

The term “foreign applicant” means a person who has ever been admitted to the practice of law in any foreign jurisdiction, or who has a law degree, not earned in the United States, that would qualify the person to practice law in that jurisdiction

5. **I obtained my first degree in law from a foreign country. That degree does not qualify me to practice law in that country; however I received an LLM from an ABA-approved law school. Can I take the exam?**

No, you are not eligible to take the lawyer bar exam in Washington because your foreign law degree does not qualify you to practice law in that jurisdiction.

II. Filing Deadlines and Fees

6. **What are the deadlines to apply for the Bar Exam?**

General and U.S. Attorney Applicants:

Examination	Applications Accepted Beginning	First Deadline	Late Filing Deadline (With Late Fee)	Failed Previous WA Exam Deadline With No Late Fee
Summer Exam	February 1	March 5	April 5	May 5
Winter Exam	September 1	October 5	November 5	October 5

Foreign Applicants:

Examination	Applications Accepted Beginning	First Deadline	Late Filing Deadline (With Late Fee)	Failed Previous WA Exam Deadline With No Late Fee
Summer Exam	September 1 (year prior)	October 5	November 5	May 5
Winter Exam	February 1 (year prior)	March 5	April 5	October 5

See [Application Instructions](#) for more information.

7. **What are the application fees?**

General Applicants: \$585

Foreign Applicants graduating from foreign law schools (not admitted in any jurisdiction): \$585

U.S. or Foreign Jurisdiction-Licensed Attorneys: \$620

A separate [NCBE investigation fee](#) is required for all Foreign and Attorney Applicants.

8. **Is there a separate fee for the background investigation?**

All eligible Attorney Applicants and Foreign Applicants are required to pay an investigation fee to the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE). After review of your application by the WSBA office, the NCBE will contact you and provide you with NCBE payment and authorization and release forms that will need to be executed by you.

9. **How long is my NCBE report good?**

Attorney Applicants and Foreign Applicants may use completed NCBE reports for the next two consecutive exam cycles, after which a new NCBE investigation will be required.



III. Application Process

10. When will I receive approval to sit for the Bar examination?

If you are approved to take the bar exam, you will receive an email notification granting permission to sit no less than 18 days prior to the first day of the exam.

11. How do I amend my application with additional documentation?

Please log on to your online application dashboard and click the “Create Supplemental Request” link in the Supplemental Application Information section in the lower right hand corner of your dashboard. A text box will appear and you will be able to enter a message and upload documents. You may use this tool at any time to make amendments to your application or to provide any additional information or documentation.

12. I moved and would like to change my address.

You may update your address by logging on to your online account.

13. How do I transfer my MPRE scores to Washington?

After you submit your online application please ask the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) to forward your score transcripts to the Washington State Bar Admissions Department. You can request a score transfer by going to the NCBE [MPRE Score Reporting Services](#) website. We will not accept a score transfer directly from an applicant.

14. Can I transfer my MBE score to Washington?

No. We do not accept score transfers for the individual test components. Washington is a UBE jurisdiction, to which only official UBE scores are transferrable.

15. When can I take the Washington Law Component (WLC) online test?

You’ll have access to the WLC after you submit your online application and fee. You can take the test at any time.

16. If I fail the WLC, can I take it again?

If you fail the test, you must wait 24 hours before retaking the test. If you fail more than once, you must wait 72 hours before retaking the test. There is no limit on how many times you can take the WLC.

17. Does the WSBA issue advance admission tickets?

No, we do not issue advance admission tickets. You will register at the bar exam site the day of the lawyer bar exam and receive your seating card with your seat location.

18. Can I have scratch paper at the exam?

WSBA provides two pieces of scratch paper for both the MEE and MPT. No scratch paper is permitted for the MBE. You may not bring *any* paper into the exam room.

19. My laptop is broken. How do I re-download ExamSoft to my new laptop?

You may purchase and download Softest to the laptop you will use for the exam. If your laptop fails, you must obtain special permission from the Admissions Department to download Softest to an alternate laptop. Send all requests to admissions@wsba.org. You will be notified by return email if your request has been granted. ExamSoft will assess a \$50 fee for each additional download.



20. **I used ExamSoft in law school, do I need to purchase and download ExamSoft again?**
Applicants using a laptop are required to purchase and download the ExamSoft software for each administration of the lawyer bar exam, even if they have used Examsoft at law school or a prior bar exam. ExamSoft registration begins approximately six weeks prior to the exam. ***Please note that there is a \$50.00 fee for each re-installment of Softest.*** Applicants using a laptop or Surface Pro to take the exam must sign a [waiver of liability](#) on exam day. There will be power outlets available at each table for applicants using laptops in the main testing room.
21. **Can I change my exam method from laptop to handwriting?**
You can change your exam method up to 18 days prior to the first day of the exam.
22. **Can I withdraw my application and receive a refund?**
For all applicants there is a \$300 non-refundable administrative processing fee. You must ask to withdraw an application at least 60 days prior to the date of the examination in order to receive a partial refund. The WSBA will issue a refund of the fee less the administrative fee. Any late filing fees paid and any investigation costs are nonrefundable. No refunds will be issued for withdrawals requested less than 60 days prior to the date of the exam.
23. **I am unable to sit for the exam; can I transfer my application to the next exam?**
No. Applications may not be deferred or transferred to future exams. You must withdraw and reapply.

IV. Character and Fitness Determination and NCBE Investigation

24. **I have several DUI's within the last 5 years. Can I still take the Bar Exam?**
All applications for admission to the practice of law in Washington are subject to character and fitness review. We look at each application on a case-by-case basis. Please refer to [Washington Supreme Court Admission and Practice Rule 24.2](#), which describes factors to be considered when determining an applicant's character and fitness.
25. **I need to report a speeding ticket I received several years ago but I'm unable to find any documentation or information. What do I do?**
You are required to provide details of any violations, even if you are unable to find any documentation. Please be as accurate as possible with the information you provide in your application. Please answer the question to the best of your ability.
26. **I received a speeding ticket after I submitted my application, am I required to notify the Admissions Department?**
It is your duty to advise the Admissions Department of any changes in or additions to the information provided in the application. Failure to fully disclose in this application may be considered a reflection on your moral character.

V. Reasonable Accommodations

27. **How do I make a request for reasonable accommodations for the exam?**
If you have a medical, physical, or cognitive disability, you may request that the lawyer bar examination be administered under reasonable special conditions to accommodate your needs. You must make your



request via the online admissions application site no less than 80 days prior to the first day of the examination and you must support your request with [medical documentation](#).

28. Can I take my medication into the exam room?

The Bar Exam Security Policy prohibits taking medication of any kind into the exam room. However, a special request can be made for additional items such as pillows, chairs, religious headgear, or special foods or medication that you need to take into the exam room, or for use of the nursing room. Make your request online at least 18 days in advance of the bar exam and support it with a doctor's statement (if applicable). See [Lawyer Bar Exam Security Policy](#). Note: A nursing room is provided onsite for all exams.

VI. Exam Administration/What to Expect at the Exam

29. Does the WSBA have any information on Bar Review courses?

The Washington State Bar Association does not endorse, approve, recommend, or rate any bar review courses. Please do not contact us for information or names of course providers.

30. Are there any hotels near the exam site that offer special room rates for examinees?

The following hotels have given special rates to applicants taking the Washington State bar Examination. You should make your arrangements should be made as soon as possible, because space is limited. When making your reservations, you must mention that you are a Washington State Bar Exam Applicant, in order to receive the special rate.

[Hotel Murano](#)

1320 Broadway Plaza
Tacoma, WA 98402
253-238-8000
Mention "WA Bar Exam Block" When making reservations

[Courtyard Tacoma Downtown Hotel](#)

1515 Commerce Street
Tacoma, WA 98402
253-591-9100

[Best Western Tacoma Dome](#)

2611 East E Street
Tacoma, WA 98421
253-272-7737

[Holiday Inn Express & Suites – Tacoma Downtown – *Not available for the Winter 2020 Exam*](#)

2102 South C Street
Tacoma, WA 98402
Phone: (253) 272 2434

[La Quinta Inn & Suites Tacoma](#)

1425 E 27th St.
Tacoma, WA 98421
Phone: (253) 383-0146
Group code: WSBA



31. Are there places at the exam site to plug in my laptop?

There are power outlets available at each table in the testing room for applicants using laptops.

32. Does the ExamSoft software allow spell-check?

No, spell-check is not permitted for the MEE and MPT, because hand writers do not have spell-check.

33. What if my laptop fails during the exam?

If your laptop fails, you will be given the opportunity to continue by handwriting the exam. No additional time will be given due to laptop malfunctions or software problems.

34. Do you allow pens and highlighters for the MBE?

No, only wooden, soft lead no. 2 pencils and pink block erasers are allowed for the MBE. No other types of erasers or pencils are permitted.

35. Can I bring food into the exam room?

No. If you need to eat during the exam, you must retrieve the food item outside the exam room in the company of a proctor.

36. Can I bring earplugs into the exam room?

You cannot bring your own earplugs into the exam room. The following items are provided at the exam site at no cost: Tissue/Kleenex, ear plugs, beverage cups and coffee, tea and water; and feminine hygiene products are available in coin operated vending machines at the main exam site.

VII. Examination Results

37. After the exam is over, how do I upload my answers to ExamSoft?

Go to a location with internet access (the exam site does not have access available for this). Turn on your computer, connect to the internet and follow the on-screen instructions. You may upload your answers any time after the session and before the deadline.

38. How will I know my answers have been uploaded?

A visual 'progress status' (blue bar) is displayed as the upload takes place. When the upload is complete, a 'successful' message is displayed and you will have the option to view your exam download/upload history. An email confirmation is then sent to the email address you provided when you registered for Examsoft.

39. When will the exam results be announced?

The exam results are typically released to applicants on their online accounts at 8:00 a.m. on the second Friday of April for the winter exam, and September for the summer exam. A press release of the Pass List will be published on Saturday on the WSBA website.

40. Can I receive a copy of my failed exam?

Unsuccessful applicants will receive copies of their written essay answers with raw scores, MEE questions and analyses, and MPT items by mail.



41. Can I appeal my exam score?

Washington Supreme Court APR 4(6) and Admission Policy IX.E; There is no appeal of final examinations results.

42. I need to retake the lawyer bar exam; do I need to submit a new application?

Yes, you will have to submit a new application, along with a new good moral character certificate signed by two attorneys and a new authorization and release form if your previous release was signed more than six months from submitting your application.

VIII. Licensing and Bar Admission

43. I passed the exam. How long do I have to complete the admissions process?

You must complete the admission process within 40 months from the date of the administration of the lawyer bar exam in which the passing score was earned.

44. I live in another state and don't know anyone in Washington who could serve as my agent of service. What do I do?

Your agent for service is not required to be a Washington lawyer; you may designate a friend or family member, or your firm's branch office, as long as the agent is within the state of Washington. If you can't find an individual you may designate a service organization. Neither the Secretary of State nor the WSBA may be designated as an agent of service. We cannot recommend any businesses or services, but an internet search should provide several options. Please note that you must provide your agent's street address, **not** a post office box or other private mailbox location.

45. What type of judge can swear me in?

The Oath of Attorney must be taken before an elected or appointed judge, excluding judges pro tempore, retired judges and administrative law judges, sitting in open court. See Washington Supreme Court APR 5(f) for more information.

46. Can a judge in another state swear me in?

Yes if it would be impossible or impractical for you to get sworn in Washington. Make your request via your online account with the required out of state information. We will forward your request to the Supreme Court. If approved the Court will issue an order conferring jurisdiction on the judge you have chosen. Upon receipt of the order, the WSBA Admissions Department will send your copy of the order to be used at the swearing in ceremony. Return the original Oath of Attorney, signed by you and the judge, to the WSBA Admissions Department.

47. Can I fax the Admissions Department my completed oath?

No, we must receive the original oath signed by you and the judge. Please do not upload your completed oath onto your dashboard; we cannot treat that as an original.

48. When will I receive my bar card?

Once you complete all of the [new admittee licensing requirements](#), a recommendation you're your admission is sent to the Washington Supreme Court. It generally takes two to three weeks for the Court to issue an admission order admitting you to the practice of law in Washington. You will be notified by email when you have been admitted and a license number is assigned. Your bar card and certificate will be mailed within two weeks.



49. I want to purchase a Certificate of Admission, where can I order one from?

You may purchase a wall certificate suitable for framing, approximately 16 ½" x 13 ½", by writing to:

Supreme Court of Washington

Temple of Justice

PO Box 40929

Olympia, WA 98504

****The cost is \$25. Please enclose a copy of your WSBA bar card. It may take up to six months for the wall certificate to be completed.***

