California

Bar Admission Checklist

Find details on exam dates, registration deadlines, special accommodations, and current fees.

The California bar admissions process is lengthy and intricate, but we're here to guide you. There are many steps involved and as the date of the exam nears, filing fees increase. Start at least a year (or more, if you can) in advance of the bar exam date. Here's what you need to know and do for California Bar admission:

☐ Register as a Law Student With the State Bar | For Important Info

Most applicants attending California Law Schools registered when they first began the study of law. You only need to register once. This will allow you to receive important email notifications from the State Bar of California's Office of Admissions regarding the status of your application and/or admission status at the email address you provide on your application.

If you are applying for an examination, please be advised that you must have an approved registration on file within 10 days of submitting your examination application. Note that the registration application is not an application to take the California Bar Exam.

Scan the QR code above for current application fee.

For more detail and to register, **go to:** calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Requirements

☐ Create an NCBE Account | Before MPRE Registration

My NCBE Number .....

All law students are required to create an NCBE Account that comes with a unique NCBE Number for identification purposes. You will need this number to be able to take the MPRE (see below), which is developed by the NCBE (National Conference of Bar Examiners).

Register with the NCBE at: https://auth.ncbex.org/account/create

☐ Take the MPRE | Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam

It's a good idea to take the MPRE any time during 2L year or as early in your 3L year as possible. A scaled score of **86** (approximately 36 questions correct) on the MPRE is required for admission to the California bar.

All applicants for admission to practice law in California must receive a passing score on the MPRE. It is necessary for applicants to request that their scores be reported or transferred to California.

The MPRE is a two-hour, 60-question multiple-choice exam developed by the NCBE and administered in the spring, summer and fall. When registering for the MPRE, students can select one of two dates offered at a time on a first come, first served basis. **Scan the QR code above for exam dates, accommodation and exam registration deadlines, and current fees.**

The online, on-demand BARBRI MPRE Review course allows you to watch specific lecture segments that correspond with a particular topic module. The course is accompanied by an outline book (hard copy and/or digital), lecture handout, multiple practice exams, and BARBRI's exclusive multiple-choice questions. **You can register for the free BARBRI MPRE Review Course here:** barbri.com/mpre

☐ Secure Your Bar Prep Course | Start Early For Full Advantages

Ready for bar prep? We're here for you. We've spent over 50 years optimizing and investing in legal education and bar review. That's a proven track record. And that's why every minute you spend with BARBRI Bar Review statistically increases your chances of passing.

Most Passes

Nearly 90% of our students who do the average amount of prep pass the bar exam. Don't just take our word for it, though. Ask the 1.435 million lawyers, judges and legal professionals who have passed using BARBRI.

Most Points

Master bar exam content with expert lectures from the best law professors in the country and a bank of 5K+ practice multiple-choice questions. The result? Studies show BARBRI students score more points compared to students who don't study with BARBRI.

Most Personalized

BARPRI is personalized to you from the beginning. ISAAC is the proprietary engine that creates a smart bar prep Personal Study Plan for you from day one. It updates based on time left until your exam, customizations you make, and the most statistically significant topics for passing the bar.

Most Students

The largest pool of students prepare for the bar with BARBRI. In fact, more students prepare with BARBRI every year than all other bar prep courses – combined. For an exam with a curved score, that means you can trust us to analyze your chances of passing before you even sit for the exam.

Enroll early and gain immediate access to 2L/3L Exam Success and early access to Early Start Bar Review. **Enroll at**: barbri.com/pricing.

If you are billing a firm, congratulations! BARBRI has trusted direct billing relationships with over 600 law firms. **Learn more about billing a law firm at:** barbri.com/firm-pay.

If you're going into Public Interest, you may qualify for a BARBRI Bar Review Public Interest Scholarship. **Apply in less than 5 minutes at:** barbri.com/public-interest

☐ Moral Character Application | Start Early

To initiate this intensive background check, you must file an Application for Determination of Moral Character that can be completed at any time after registering as a law student or attorney applicant.

It can take six months or longer to have processed by the State Bar. You'll want to file at least **eight to ten months** prior to the date you wish to be admitted to practice law in California.

The State Bar staff will carefully review your history. The moral character application is a compilation of many details of your life. You will be asked to provide driving abstracts from any state/jurisdiction where you have held a driver's license, as well as disclose details about your academic, work and financial history, as well as any criminal record and civil proceedings. Candor is a significant factor. You will also need to include recommendations and references, final law school transcripts and fingerprints.

Scan the QR code on the front page for up-to-date application fee.

Find additional moral character application details and requirements at: calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Moral-Character/Moral-Character-Statement

☐ Apply For The Bar Exam | Meet Filing Fee Deadlines

It's important to be aware of the bar exam fees and State Bar fee schedules - both in how you plan to pay and if you can meet the timely deadlines, which will help you save money.

In California, there are various fees and timelines to consider. They typically are:

February (Winter) exam*

Timely deadline: **November 1**
First late deadline: November 1 – 30
Final deadline: November 30 – January 1

July (Summer) exam*

Timely deadline: **April 1**
First late deadline: April 1 – 30
Final deadline: April 30 – June 1

Find current bar exam application fees at: www.barbri.com/states/california-bar-exam/ or by scanning the QR code.

* dates refer to the first and last business days of the month.

Find more detail on the California Bar Exam registration at: calbar.ca.gov/admission

☐ Register Your Laptop | No Deadline Extensions

You can use a laptop for the California Bar Exam's essay and Performance Test questions (state specific). Be sure to certify your laptop with Examsoft before the first day of the bar exam and pay the computer fee. Otherwise, you will have to handwrite your essays. Once you apply online, you'll select a laptop test center, ensure your laptop is configured with Internet access and confirm your computer meets the minimum operating requirements.

Scan the QR code on the front page for the current laptop registration and software fee.

Full laptop certification details at: calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Examinations/California-Bar-Examination/Laptops-for-Bar-Exam

☐ Take the Bar Exam | Every February + July / Final Tuesday + Wednesday

The California Bar Exam is a two-day exam that requires **a passing score of 1390** out of 2000. The information in this checklist is subject to change pursuant to future Orders of the Supreme Court of California. Please refer to the State Bar of California's website (https://www.calbar.ca.gov/) for up to date information.

The scores are based on:

- **50%** – Three California essay questions (morning session) and two essays plus a California Performance Test (afternoon session) on day one
- **50%** – 200-question, multiple-choice exam on day two (morning and afternoon sessions)

Essay subjects:
Business Associations, Civil Procedure, Community Property, Constitutional Law, Contracts, Criminal Law and Procedure, Evidence, Professional Responsibility, Real Property, Remedies, Torts, Trusts, Wills and Succession.

Performance test:
"Closed universe" practical questions using instructions, factual data, cases, statutes, and other reference material supplied by examiners

Multiple choice subjects tested:
Constitutional Law, Contracts/Sales, Criminal Law/Procedure, Evidence, Federal Civil Procedure, Real Property, Torts

Helpful tip: Remember to bring an extension cord in case your laptop charger does not reach the provided outlet.

☐ Attorney Oath | After the Bar Exam

Officially, the State Bar releases results in mid-May for the February bar exam and in mid-November for the July bar exam.

Taking the attorney's oath is not just a ritual – it is necessary for admission to practice law in the state. You may take the oath at virtual or in-person group ceremonies, which may be organized by your law school, local bar association, or through another group. The State Bar's Office of Admissions does not hold admission ceremonies. If you do not reside in CA, the oath may be taken out of state, pursuant to state regulations.

If you are unable to attend a group ceremony, you may need to arrange to take the oath one-on-one with an authorized official.

For details, **go to:** calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Examinations/California-Bar-Examination/Attorney-Oath

California State Bar

All information derived from **The State Bar of California website at:** calbar.ca.gov

For questions or to find your school's BARBRI Director of Legal Education, please contact: service@barbri.com.

10.29.25