

WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR LAWYER ADMISSION TO THE WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION (WSBA)

Any discrepancy or conflict between these Instructions and the Admission and Practice Rules (APR) or WSBA Admissions Policies is unintentional and will be resolved in favor of strict compliance with the APR and the Admissions Policies.

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I. Application Checklist

1. NCBE Number: You will be asked when registering for a User Account to provide your NCBE number. Request an NCBE number online at <https://accounts.ncbex.org/>. NCBE number is not required for APR 3(c)(2) Military Spouse Admission by Motion applicants.
2. Voluntary Confidential Demographic Information: When registering for a User Account, you will be required to respond to demographic questions. Providing demographic information is completely voluntary. A response is required to each inquiry, but you may choose the “I choose not to respond” option. Individual applicant responses will not be public and will have no impact on your application.

The WSBA collects applicant demographic data to:

- a. assess impacts of Washington legal professional Admission policies and programs on applicants in the aggregate, members in the aggregate, and on the public;
- b. help inform WSBA admission policy, Washington Supreme Court rule reform, and other efforts to support diverse membership; and
- c. track trends in admissions.



Individual gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and other information collected will be kept strictly confidential, and collected data will be used only in the aggregate for demographic analysis as stated above. Aggregate data will be made available at www.wsba.org. To update or edit your individual, confidential demographic information, click on your name in the upper-right corner of your user home page, and select “Edit Personal Info”.

3. **Application and Required Forms:** The WSBA admissions application must be completed and filed online. Your application will not be accepted and reviewed until you have completed and submitted the application, uploaded all required documents, and paid your application fee. Applications will not be considered received until payment is received and processed. All documents must be in PDF. Please convert all documents to PDF using a “Print to PDF” function prior to upload. A “Save as PDF” or “Export as PDF” conversion can leave some content not readable in the document that might cause an error or delay in processing your application.
 - a. **Authorization and Release Form:** Signed and notarized within six (6) months prior to the date the application is submitted to the WSBA. Electronic notarization is accepted.
 - b. **Two Certificates of Good Moral Character:** Signed within six (6) months prior to the date the application is submitted to the WSBA. You must have two lawyers who are in good standing in any U.S. jurisdiction sign your Good Moral Character certificate. If you are admitted in a foreign jurisdiction only, the certificate may be signed by two lawyers admitted in the same jurisdiction as you are. More than two lawyers are not necessary. The lawyers must be in good standing and may be active or inactive lawyers, judges or relatives. The length of time the lawyers have known you is not critical. If there are issues in your application that you think might require a character and fitness investigation or hearing, you should inform these lawyers about those issues before they sign and submit the certificate. E-signatures are accepted.
 - c. **For Attorney Applicants – Certificate(s) of Good Standing:** Required from all jurisdictions where you are or have ever been admitted to practice law, dated within six months prior to the date the application is submitted to the WSBA. Using the Upload Required Forms & Documents widget on the right side of your user home page, upload a certificate of good standing (or equivalent document) from each jurisdiction in which you are or have ever been admitted to practice law. To obtain your certificate, contact the admitting authority (i.e., State Bar or highest state court) in each jurisdiction where you are or have ever been admitted, including U.S. federal courts and tribal courts.
4. **Application Fee:** Review the [fee schedule and filing deadlines](#).
 - a. **Exam Applicants:** Payments must be received or postmarked by the application deadline. Payments received or postmarked, after the first deadline will incur a late filing fee. Applications will not be accepted if payment is received, postmarked, or declined after the late filing deadline. It can take up to six days to receive a notice of a declined EFT payment; please plan accordingly. Exam applications that are not submitted by the late filing deadline will be deleted.



- b. Admission by Motion and UBE Score Transfer Applicants and Petitioners for Reinstatement after Disbarment: No application filing or payment deadlines. However, all applications not submitted within six months of creation will be deleted automatically by the system.
- 5. Electronic Communications & Online Admissions: Important information regarding your application is posted on the WSBA's Online Admissions Site at <https://admissions.wsba.org/home>. The WSBA's primary communication method will be the Online Admissions Site and email. It is your responsibility to ensure emails from the WSBA with the domain names of @admissions.wsba.org and @wsba.org are not blocked by a firewall or filtered as spam or junk. You are expected to regularly check for and read all emails from the WSBA and to visit your home page on the Online Admissions Site to review correspondence, messages, and announcements.
- 6. Rules, Policies, and Instructions: all applicants must adhere to all rules, regulations, policies, and instructions regarding applications. Read the [Admission and Practice Rules \(APR\)](#), WSBA [Admissions Policies](#), and all web pages and [FAQs](#) on the Online Admissions Site to ensure you understand all the requirements for your application.

II. General Information and Requirements

- 1. The WSBA online admissions site is for all applicants applying for full licensure or limited practice licensure.
- 2. The WSBA advises applicants to maintain email security and to not disclose your password to the online admissions site to another individual. This will prevent unauthorized access to confidential and personal information.
- 3. The Authorization and Release form and Good Moral Character Certificates will be available to download and print after you create your online admissions account, located under the Application & Forms section of your user home page.
- 4. Additional documentation supplementing your application must be uploaded electronically under the “Upload Required Forms & Documents” section of your user home page. Attachments should be in as small a file size as possible (low resolution) and must be PDF. Each attachment is limited to 16 MB. Please convert all documents to PDF using a “Print to PDF” function prior to upload. A “Save as PDF” or “Export as PDF” conversion can leave some content not readable in the document that might cause an error or delay in processing your application
- 5. Keep a copy of all application materials filed for your records. You can view previous applications by selecting the “View Your Application History” button on your user home page.
- 6. Applicants are responsible for updating their email address and other contact information. If using a school email address, ensure that access to that email address continues after graduation or provide an updated email address as needed. Changes can be made by logging into your online account, clicking on your name in the upper-right, and selecting “edit personal information”. All official notices, including bar exam results, will be sent by email through your online admissions account.
- 7. All documents must be in English or accompanied by a certified English translation.



III. NCBE Report

1. The following applications are referred to the NCBE for verification and investigation of the information in the application: UBE Score Transfer Applications by General Applicants with a foreign law degree who do not have an ABA JD or did not complete Washington's Law Clerk Program; Bar Exam Applications by General Applicants applying under APR 3(b)(4)(B), House Counsel Applications, Foreign Law Consultant Applications, and all applications by Attorney Applicants, except for applications for military spouse admission by motion under APR 3(c)(2).
2. If you have an application that is referred to the NCBE, you will be contacted by the NCBE directly and required to pay an investigation fee and submit authorization and release forms directly to the NCBE. The WSBA cannot finish processing your application until the NCBE report is received.
3. NCBE investigations may take up to five months or more to complete. Advise references and former employers that the NCBE may be contacting them; this may help decrease NCBE processing time.
4. NCBE reports are valid for one calendar year from the date WSBA receives the completed report from the NCBE, after which a supplemental or new NCBE report will be required. See [NCBE website](#) for fee schedule.
5. Exam Applicants: Applicants will not be allowed to sit for the exam if the WSBA does not receive a report back from the NCBE at least 18 days prior to the first day of the exam. Therefore, applicants who need an NCBE investigation may not be allowed to sit for the exam administration for which they are applying; if the WSBA does not receive a report back from the NCBE at least 18 days prior to the first day of the exam your application will be transferred to the next exam.

IV. Character and Fitness

1. All applicants are subject to a character and fitness review prior to being admitted to practice law in Washington State. The practice of law is a privilege, not a right. Admission may be withheld pending a hearing before the Character and Fitness Board and final determination regarding whether the applicants have met their burden of proving that they are of good moral character, fit to practice law, and have met the Essential Eligibility Requirements. See APR 20-24.3. Factors considered by Admissions staff and Bar Counsel when determining whether an applicant should be referred to the Character and Fitness Board are set forth in APR 21(a).
2. Exam Applicants: Washington requires resolution of all character and fitness issues at least **18 days** prior to sitting for the bar exam. Applicants with unresolved character and fitness issues will not be permitted to sit for the exam. Therefore, applicants who disclose any information that may raise an issue of character or fitness are strongly encouraged to file their applications early in the registration period and promptly respond to all requests for additional information. Early filing does not guarantee all issues will be resolved 18 days prior to the exam.

V. Application Instructions

1. The responsibility of full disclosure rests entirely upon the applicant. Failure to fully disclose as requested in the application may be considered a reflection on the applicant's moral character and may itself result in denial of admission. It is the applicant's duty to advise the WSBA in writing of any changes in or additions to the



information provided in the application. **There cannot be too much disclosure.** All answers and explanations offered by the applicant are kept confidential except as needed to conduct an investigation and for complete consideration of the application.

2. Additional information can be provided to the WSBA after you have submitted the application by using the “Supplement Application” link on your user home page. Through this tool, you can supplement your application to provide additional or new information. If you need to attach documentation or additional narrative information, please use the “upload document” widget on the right side of your user home page. All documents must be in PDF format. Again, email and the online admissions site are the primary communication methods.
3. Read each question carefully, as some questions ask for multiple pieces of information. Answer each question completely. If it is not possible to provide exact information, explain why it is not possible and provide the best information available. If a required field does not apply, enter NA in the field. Incomplete applications will not be processed.
4. **Applications, Authorization and Conduct.** This section asks about admission to practice law. Include all admissions and applications for admission, including any applications for reinstatement after disbarment, to any jurisdiction, including U.S federal court, tribal court, or foreign bar authority. If you made multiple applications to a single jurisdiction (including Washington), complete a separate entry for each time you applied.
 - a. **Licensed Legal Professional Discipline:** If you have ever been disciplined or denied a license as a lawyer or other licensed legal professional contact the appropriate authority and obtain all available documentation. If no documentation is available, obtain written confirmation.
 - b. **Licensed Legal Professional Complaint:** If in the last ten years you have had public or private, formal or informal complaints, charges, or grievances concerning your conduct as a lawyer, contact the appropriate authority to obtain a copy of all available documentation. If no documentation is available, obtain written confirmation. You must report complaints or charges even if they do not appear on your disciplinary history, were dismissed, or are pending at the time of your application submission.
 - c. **Unauthorized Practice of Law (UPL):** Provide the requested information for each case and upload a copy of the associated action or complaint.
5. **Education Section:** To take the Washington Bar Exam, you must meet the educational qualifications stated in [APR 3\(b\)](#). Do not upload your transcripts. The WSBA will contact the law school directly for verification of your degree.
 - a. **Law School Attendance:** Complete a separate entry for each law school you attended even if you did not receive a degree from the law school. List all law degrees received and all attendance in pursuit of such degrees. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.)
 - ii. Juris Doctor (J.D.)
 - iii. Master of Laws (LL.M.) (include completion of additional LLM courses from different Law Schools)



- b. **Law School Actions:** Complete a separate entry for each occurrence. If you have ever been investigated, charged, or disciplined for a violation of any policy by a law school, obtain a copy of all available documentation.
- c. **College/University Actions:** Complete a separate entry for each occurrence. If you have ever been investigated, charged, or disciplined for a violation of any policy by a college or university, obtain a copy of all available documentation.
- d. **Law Office Study/APR 6 Law Clerk Program:** If you are enrolled in the WSBA Law Clerk Program, input your tutor's information in the "firm" section of the question.

6. **Residences Section:** Locations of residences should generally correspond to the locations of your schools and employment. If you are unsure of the exact dates, provide your best estimate. List permanent or temporary physical addresses (no PO Boxes) where you have resided for a period of one month or longer for the last ten years or since age 18, whichever period of time is shorter.

7. **Employment Section:** Complete a separate entry for each position and for each period of unemployment. Provide the current mailing address (street address or PO Box) and valid email addresses. Do not list yourself or your own contact information or a relative as a verifying reference; doing so will delay processing of your application. Do not include third party agencies, e.g., The Work Number, as a resource for verifying employment. To avoid processing delays, confirm all contact information with present and prior employers.

- a. **Employment History:** List your employment and unemployment information for the last ten years or since age 18, whichever period of time is shorter. Do not list yourself or a relative as a verifying reference and do not include third party agencies, e.g., The Work Number, as a resource for verifying employment. Provide valid email addresses. If you have been self-employed or have been a sole practitioner, you may substitute clients or law school professors. Incomplete answers may delay the processing of an application.

For periods of unemployment, provide a short description of your activities (e.g., attending law school, studying for the bar exam, seeking employment, etc.).
- b. **Employment Actions:** If you answer yes, provide associated employment information in the Employment History question (even if it falls outside the time frame of the question).
- c. **Military Service:** If you have ever been in the military, obtain and upload copies of the [DD-214](#) (Certificate of Release of discharge from Active Duty) or the equivalent that will show the character of your service.

8. **Legal Proceedings Section:** Complete a separate entry for each action by selecting the "add more" under the appropriate question. If some of the requested information and documentation is not available, upload a PDF statement describing your attempts to obtain the information and indicate why the information is not available. We may request that you upload written confirmation from the appropriate courts, administrative body, or law enforcement agency.



- a. **Civil Action Question:** Disclose each civil action (of any kind) in which you have ever been a named party, including family law matters (divorce, child support, parenting plans, etc.) and order-for-protection matters. If you are required to pay child or spousal support, obtain a copy of your support payment history or an affidavit from the support recipient confirming that you are current on your payments.
- b. **Administrative Action Question:** Disclose each complaint or action initiated against you in any administrative forum.
- c. **Criminal Action Question:** Include matters that have been sealed or dismissed, expunged, pardoned, subject to a diversion or deferred prosecution program. For matters filed within the last ten years, upload any relevant supporting documentation to your user home page. If some of the information is not available, describe your attempts to obtain the information or indicate why the information is not available.
- d. **Alcohol/Drug Traffic Related Action Question:** Include matters that are currently pending, and matters that have been sealed, dismissed, expunged, pardoned, reduced to a lesser charge, subject to a diversion or deferred prosecution program. For matters filed within the last ten years, upload any relevant supporting documentation to your user home page. If some of the information is not available, describe your attempts to obtain the information or indicate why the information is not available.
- e. **Traffic Violations:** Includes all traffic violations during the past ten years to include matters that have been dismissed, expunged, subject to a diversion or deferred prosecution program, or otherwise set aside. ***Omit parking violations.*** Upload any relevant supporting documentation to your user home page.

9. **Financial Responsibility Section:** Includes but is not limited to debts assigned to collection, subject to garnishment or subject to other court-entered judgments or orders for payment. If a debt has been sent to collections, provide current contact information for the creditor in charge of the debt. Provide full account numbers. Pull a credit report to ensure that your finances are in order. Make a note of the following facts (you must report them even if they do not appear on your credit report):

NOTE: For each debt disclosure, upload documentation of payment in full, payment plan with payments made, or other resolution. If you are currently paying, provide proof of payment arrangements, or payment history showing payments being made. Complete each entry in its entirety. Responses such as “unknown” or “N/A” or “Not on credit report” are not acceptable.

- a. **Revocation:** Disclose any credit card or charge account that was revoked or closed for non-payment in the past ten years that was not resolved in bankruptcy.
- b. **Other Defaulted Debt:** Disclose any debt of \$2,500 or more (including real estate, credit card, charge account, medical, defaulted student loan, etc.) that you have defaulted on (including charged off, sent to collections, or settled for less than the full balance) in the last ten years.
- c. **Past Due Debt:** Disclose any accounts with a debt balance of \$1,000 or more on which you have been more than 90 days late on a payment within the last ten years.
- d. **Tax Debt:** Disclose any past-due taxes within the last ten years. In addition, disclose any tax liens (federal or state income taxes, county or municipal private property taxes, employment taxes, or real estate assessment liens) that have ever been filed against you. Obtain a copy of the lien and its release or a copy of the court docket showing the lien has been released. Include a separate entry for each



responsive amount by tax type and tax year. For federal tax amounts disclosed, upload a copy of your IRS tax account transcript for each tax year for which you owe or have owed past-due taxes. Information on how to obtain tax account transcripts can be found [here](#).

- e. **Bankruptcy:** If you have had a bankruptcy within the last ten years, obtain copies of your bankruptcy documents, including the docket sheet, petition, schedules, and discharge order. If you have a pending bankruptcy, please upload ALL bankruptcy documentation.

VI. Exam Applicants: Laptop Use and Technology Fee

1. A laptop computer, with power cord, is required for all applicants sitting for the bar exam. Applicants may choose to bring a wired mouse. A Bluetooth mouse is NOT permitted.
2. Applicants must register, pay for, and download the ITS software from their NCBE account. Applicants are required to purchase and download the ITS software for each administration of the bar exam, even if they have used it in the past.
3. The technology fee is refundable through the applicant's NCBE account if the applicant withdraws from the exam by 4:00 p.m. PT the Friday before the first day of the exam.
4. Applicants who fail to download ITS exam software and complete the mock exam by 4:00 p.m. PT the Friday before the first day of the exam will not be permitted to sit for the exam.

VII. Exam Applicants: Testing Accommodations

1. Applicants must request testing accommodations for a disability through the online admissions site no later than **80 days prior to the first day of the exam**; including those applicants who have previously been granted testing accommodations and are reapplying for another exam.
2. The WSBA provides reasonable and appropriate testing accommodations for applicants with documented disabilities. Disability means a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of an applicant and that also substantially limits the ability of such applicant, if required to take the examination under standard testing conditions, to demonstrate the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities that the Washington Supreme Court has determined are appropriate requirements for admission to the practice of law in Washington.
3. Applicants requesting testing accommodations must provide appropriate documentation of the disability and specify the extent to which the standard testing procedures need to be modified. The applicant is responsible for demonstrating their need for any requested accommodations. The WSBA reserves the right to make final judgment concerning testing accommodations and may have documentation reviewed by a specialist. Any testing accommodation may not compromise the integrity or the security of the examination or affect the standards set for the examination.
4. Step by step instructions for requesting testing accommodations through an exam applicant's user homepage can be found [here](#).



5. A sample of the online testing-accommodation request questions can be viewed [here](#).
6. The following additional forms are optional but may assist in expediting review and consideration of an applicant's request for testing accommodation for the bar examination. The Washington State Bar Association will still engage the applicant in an interactive process to determine whether the requested testing accommodation(s) for the bar examination will be granted.
 - a. [Certification of Accommodations History Form](#) (Optional)
 - b. [Certification of Qualified Professional Form](#) (Optional)
7. If you submit a testing-accommodation request, please include all accommodations and otherwise prohibited items you are requesting in your testing-accommodation request. Do not submit a separate special request for these items. If you already submitted your testing-accommodation request, please supplement your testing-accommodation request via your user home page, to include any additional items or accommodations that you are requesting for the upcoming exam.
8. After the WSBA provides notice to an applicant of the testing accommodations granted to that applicant, the applicant must acknowledge that they read and understand the accommodations granted no later than 18 days prior to the first day of the examination.
9. Other helpful information regarding testing-accommodation requests can be found in the [FAQ](#) and the [WSBA Admissions Policies](#).

VIII. Exam Applicants: Special Requests for the Exam Room

1. For good cause shown, applicants may be permitted to bring otherwise prohibited items into the exam room. Examples of items are pillow or lumbar support, ergonomic chair, book stand, wrist rest, medication, , and religious attire. In addition, applicants may request a specific seating location in the exam room due to a medical condition.
2. All requests must be made on the online admissions site using the Special Requests for Exam Room tool at least 18 days prior to the first day of the exam. All requests must be supported (if applicable) by a doctor's note. Please reference the Bar Exam Security Policy for information on prohibited items in the exam room.

The WSBA provides a prayer room and a room for nursing at the exam site. Applicants may use the prayer and nursing rooms before and after the exam, during breaks, and during the exam. An applicant must be accompanied by a proctor to use the rooms during the exam. No additional time is granted for using the rooms during the exam.

3. Step by step instructions for requesting special requests for the exam room can be found [here](#).



IX. Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam (MPRE)

1. All applicants seeking admission by exam or by UBE score transfer must pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam (MPRE). Washington's MPRE minimum pass score is 85. APR 4(d)(2).
2. The MPRE is administered separately from the UBE. Information about how to apply for the MPRE is available from the [National Conference of Bar Examiners](#).
3. A passing score on the MPRE must be acquired no earlier than three years prior to the administration date of the UBE in which the applicant achieves a passing score and no later than 40 months after the applicant achieves a passing score on the UBE. Applicants must retake and pass the UBE if a passing MPRE score is not achieved within 40 months of passing the UBE.
4. The WSBA does not provide MPRE score information to your law school so your law school may ask you for your MPRE scores for statistical purposes.

X. Washington Law Component (WLC)

1. All applicants for admission as a lawyer must pass the Washington Law Component (WLC). The WLC is comprised of [online materials](#) and an online multiple choice test based on areas or subjects of law that are specific to Washington State. The WSBA Board of Bar Examiners is responsible for the content of the WLC and publishes the Washington state specific materials for applicants.
2. The WLC is self-administered by applicants and is available to applicants after filing the application. The link to the online exam is located on the bottom right of your user home page. There is no fee to take the WLC. The WLC is an open-book test. Applicants may take the WLC as many times as necessary to achieve the minimum pass score. There is a mandatory waiting period of 24 hours after failing to pass the WLC the first time. Subsequent fails of the WLC require a 72-hour waiting period before retaking the test. The WLC minimum pass score is 80% correct.
3. Exam applicants must pass the WLC no later than 40 months from the date of the administration of the UBE in which you achieve a passing score. If you fail the UBE or withdraw from the UBE after taking the WLC, you must retake the WLC after reapplying for the next UBE administration.
4. Admission by Motion and UBE score transfer applicants must pass the WLC within one year from the date of filing the application.

XI. Acknowledgment, Approval and Exam Results

1. The WSBA may request additional information from you through the "Outstanding Item" widget on your user home page. You will also be notified by email of a pending request. Failure to provide the additional information may result in disqualification of your application.



Exam Applicants:

1. A notification granting permission to sit for the exam will be posted to your user home page after a complete review of your application. Processing and approval times for applications vary greatly amongst applicants. All applicants will be informed of the status of their application no less than 18 days prior to the first day of the exam.
2. After receiving permission to sit, review the Exam Security Policy, Exam Schedule, and any additional information provided in the permission to sit notice. You may have additional tasks to complete such as Exam360/laptop registration.
3. Exam results will be posted to your online admissions account the morning of the day of release.
4. Applicants who take and pass the bar examination must complete the admission process within 40 months from the date of the administration of the bar exam in which the score was earned. APR 5(e)(1).

Admission by Motion/UBE Score Transfer:

1. Admission by motion and UBE score transfer applicants will receive email notification when their application has been approved. At that time, your online admissions page will be updated with the final requirements for admission.
2. Applicants who apply by admission by motion or UBE score transfer must complete the admission process within one year from the date of filing the application in accordance with [APR 5\(e\)\(4\)](#).

XI. Application Withdrawal & Refunds

1. Exam Applicants: For all bar exam applicants, there is a \$400 non-refundable administrative processing fee. An applicant must request to withdraw an application by selecting the “Withdraw” button on your user home page on the Online Admissions Site at least 18 days prior to the date of the examination for a partial refund. The Bar will issue a refund of the application fee less the administrative fee. Any late filing fees paid and any investigation costs are nonrefundable.
2. The NCBE exam fee is refundable if an applicant withdraws their application for the bar exam no later than 4:00 p.m. PT the Friday prior to the first day of the exam.
3. The Technology Fee is refundable through the applicant’s NCBE account if the applicant withdraws from the exam by 4:00 p.m. PT the Friday prior to the first day of the exam.
4. Applicants forfeit all fees if they do not show up for the exam.
5. Exam Applicants: If there are extraordinary circumstances that prevent an applicant from taking the examination (e.g., a serious medical emergency, death in the immediate family, significant health problems, house fire), a written request must be delivered to the WSBA within 18 days after the exam in order to receive a partial refund of the application fee as set forth above.



6. **Other Applicants:** Applicants with an admission by motion, UBE score transfer, house counsel, or foreign law consultant application who withdraw their application will receive a refund less the \$400 non-refundable administrative fee provided the application is withdrawn less than 12 months after filing it. Any investigation costs are nonrefundable.

