WASHINGTON STATE
BAR ASSOCIATION

Admissions Policies of the Washington State Bar Association

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Under the authority of, and consistent with, the Washington Supreme Court's Admission and Practice Rules (APR), the Board of Governors of the Washington State Bar Association (Bar) has adopted the following Admissions Policies in administering those rules. These policies apply to individuals seeking reinstatement under APR 25 or admission to the Bar as a lawyer, limited practice officer (LPO), house counsel or foreign law consultant. These policies supplement APR 3-5, 8(f), 14 and 20-25. Any discrepancy or conflict between these policies and the APR is unintentional and will be resolved in favor of strict compliance with the APR.

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS AND DEFINITIONS

A. Applications

Applications for admission to practice law in Washington must be completed and submitted online or as prescribed by the Bar's admissions staff.

B. Definitions

"Attorney Applicant" means a person applying for admission as a lawyer under APR 3 or a person petitioning for reinstatement under APR 25 who, at the time of filing the application, has ever been admitted to practice law as a lawyer (or the equivalent for that jurisdiction) in any jurisdiction other than Washington.

"Foreign Law Consultant Applicant" means a person applying for licensure as a foreign law consultant under APR 14.

"General Applicant" means a person applying for admission as a lawyer under APR 3 who, at the time of filing the application, has never been admitted to practice law as a lawyer (or the equivalent for that jurisdiction) in any jurisdiction other than Washington, or a person petitioning for reinstatement under APR 25 who has been admitted to practice law in Washington only.

"House Counsel Applicant" means a person applying for licensure as house counsel under APR 8(f).

"Law school approved by the Board of Governors" is a law school either (1) approved or accredited, or provisionally approved or accredited, by the American Bar Association (ABA) at the time the degree was conferred or (2) approved or accredited by a state or territory of the United States or the District of Columbia and a state or territory of the United States or the District of Columbia accepts the Juris Doctor (J.D.) from that law school as meeting the education requirement to be eligible to sit for the bar exam in that jurisdiction at the time the J.D. or LL.M. degree for the practice of law was conferred. An applicant who graduated from a law school not approved or accredited by the ABA bears the burden of demonstrating to the Bar that the law school is approved or accredited by a state or territory of the United States or the District of Columbia and a state or territory of the United States

or the District of Columbia accepts the J.D. as meeting the education requirement to be eligible to sit for the bar exam in that jurisdiction or otherwise meets this definition.

"LPO Applicant" means a person applying for admission, or petitioning for reinstatement under APR 25, as a limited practice officer.

II. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Application Submission Policy

All applicants must submit electronically, within the filing deadlines specified below, the following:

- a completed application in the form required by the Bar including any required supplemental documentation;
- two Certificates of Good Moral Character, dated within 6 months prior to the application date and completed by two lawyers admitted to practice law in any U.S. jurisdiction or the foreign jurisdiction in which the applicant is admitted to practice law. For LPO Applicants the certificates may be completed by LLLTs or LPOs admitted to practice in Washington; and
- an Authorization and Release form. The form must be signed and notarized within 6 months prior to the application date.

In addition, Attorney Applicants must submit:

- a Certificate of Good Standing from each jurisdiction in which the applicant has ever been admitted (including federal courts and tribal courts). Certificates of Good Standing (or similar document) for Attorney Applicants admitted to practice law must be issued by the admitting authority (e.g., State Bar or highest state court) in each jurisdiction where the applicant has been admitted. If the applicant is no longer admitted in the jurisdiction, the applicant must submit a letter from the jurisdiction that includes the dates of admission and status history. The certificate or letter must be signed and dated within 6 months prior to the application date.

All documents must be in English or accompanied by a certified English translation.

B. Exam Application Filing Deadlines

Only applications for an exam (excluding petitions for reinstatement under APR 25) have a filing deadline. Applications for admission by bar exam are accepted beginning February 1 for the summer bar exam and September 1 for the winter bar exam. Applications for admission by LPO exam are accepted beginning June 15 for the fall LPO exam and December 15 for the spring LPO exam. Filing deadlines for applications to take an examination are as follows:

Bar Examination	Applications Accepted	First Deadline	Late Filing Deadline	Deadline for Applicants Who Did Not Pass Immediately Preceding WA Exam With No Late Fee
Summer Exam	February 1	March 5	April 5	May 5
Winter Exam	September 1	October 5	November 5	December 5

LPO Examination	Applications Accepted	First Deadline	Late Filing Deadline
Fall LPO Exam	June 15	July 15	August 15
Spring LPO Exam	December 15	January 15	February 15

The deadline will be the next business day when a deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday.

Late filing requires payment of a late filing fee as provided in the fee schedule. No applications will be accepted after the late filing deadline except for applicants who failed the immediately preceding Washington bar exam and are applying for the following Washington bar exam; those applicants are not required to pay the late filing fee and the deadline will be May 5 for the summer bar exam and December 5 for the winter bar exam.

Applications, including payment, must be submitted online by 11:59 P.M. (PST/PDT) the day of the deadline. Applications, or payments, submitted after the first deadline will incur a late filing fee.

Exam applications not submitted by the late filing deadline will be deleted.

C. Non-Exam Application Deadlines

Applications without a filing deadline (non-exam applications and petitions for reinstatement under APR 25) that are incomplete or missing payments, authorization and release forms, or certificates of good moral character will be disqualified if not remedied by 60 days from the submission date. When an application is disqualified for this reason, the applicant will receive a partial refund as set forth in Section III.G.

Applications not submitted within six months of starting the application online will be deleted.

D. Other Deadlines

Request testing accommodations on bar exam ..... by applicable late filing deadline.*
Request testing accommodations on LPO exam ..... by late filing deadline for the LPO exam.
File all requested and/or additional items ..... 18 days prior to first day of exam.
Character and fitness resolution ..... 18 days prior to first day of exam.
Special requests for exam room ..... 18 days prior to first day of exam.
Pay Technology Fee via NCBE Account ..... 4 days prior to first day of exam.

Withdraw from exam with partial refund of WSBA application fee... 18 days prior to first day of exam.
Withdraw from bar exam with NCBE Exam Fee refund only..... 4 days prior to first day of exam.

*Requests for testing accommodation must be submitted by April 5 for the summer bar exam and by November 5 for the winter bar exam; except, applicants who did not pass the immediately preceding bar exam in Washington must submit requests for testing accommodation by May 5 for the summer bar exam and by December 5 for the winter bar exam.

E. Other Non-Exam Deadlines

UBE Score Transfer Applications ..... No deadline, may apply at any time.
Admission by Motion Applications..... No deadline, may apply at any time.
House Counsel Applications ..... No deadline, may apply at any time.
Foreign Law Consultant Applications ..... No deadline, may apply at any time.
Petitions for Reinstatement (after disbarment) under APR 25..... No deadline; see APR 25 et. seq.
Withdraw a non-exam application with partial refund..... One year from date of application.

III. FEES

A. Application Fee Schedule

1) Bar Exam Applications
   a. WSBA Application Fee
      i. General Applicants..... $595
      ii. Attorney Applicants $645
   b. NCBE Exam Fee ..... See Section C below
   c. Technology Fee ..... See Section D below
   d. Investigation Fee..... See Section E below
   e. Late Filing Fee (See II.B above) $300

2) UBE Score Transfer Applications
   a. WSBA Application Fee
      i. General Applicants..... $595
      ii. Attorney Applicants $645
   b. Investigation Fee..... See Section E below

3) LPO Exam Applications
   a. LPO Applicants $200
   b. Late Filing Fee (See II.B above) $100

4) Admission by Motion Applicants..... $970 + Investigation Fee

5) House Counsel Applicants ..... $970 + Investigation Fee

6) Foreign Law Consultant Applicants ..... $970 + Investigation Fee

B. WSBA Application

All applicants must pay a WSBA application fee and, if applicable, a late filing fee as set forth in the fee schedule above. The WSBA application fee and late filing fee will be collected when submitting the application. Additional fees may be required as set forth in Sections C – E below.

C. NCBE Exam Fee

The WSBA will collect from each bar exam applicant an exam fee as assessed to the WSBA by the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE). The NCBE exam fee will be collected when submitting the application. 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.

D. Technology Fee

All bar exam applicants are required to pay a Technology Fee through their NCBE account. The Technology Fee pays for the Internet Testing Systems (ITS) exam software which all bar exam applicants must purchase and download no later than four (4) days prior to the first day of the exam. 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.

E. Investigation Fee

The following applications are referred to a third-party selected by the WSBA that conducts application investigations 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). These applicants are required to pay a nonrefundable investigation fee to the third-party conducting the application investigation. The WSBA will notify applicants of the name of the third-party completing their investigation and provide instructions for payment of the investigation fee. See Section V of these policies for the investigation requirements.

F. Forms of Payment and Payment Deadlines

All bank card transactions are subject to a separate non-refundable transaction fee of 2.5%. There is no transaction fee for payments by electronic funds transfer (EFT) or check.

For exam applicants, payments by check 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 or postmarked after the late filing deadline.

For exam applicants, if payment by EFT or check is declined, then applicants will have one additional opportunity to resubmit payment within five business days from notification of the declined payment. If payment is not resubmitted within the five business days, a late fee will be assessed for applications

submitted by the first deadline. If the late filing deadline has passed and payment is not resubmitted within five business days from the notification of the declined payment, then the application will not be accepted.

G. Withdrawals and Refunds

For all applicants, the WSBA application fee includes a non-refundable administrative processing fee as set forth below. An exam applicant must withdraw an application at least 18 days prior to the date of the examination for a partial refund of the WSBA application fee. Petitioners under APR 25 and all other applicants must withdraw their applications no later than one year after filing the application to receive a partial refund of the WSBA application fee. The Bar will issue a refund of the WSBA application fee less the administrative fee. The partial refund policy applies to applications that are disqualified. Any late filing fees paid, and any investigation costs are nonrefundable. For exam applications, no refunds of the WSBA application fee will be issued for withdrawals or disqualifications made less than 18 days prior to the date of the exam. A bar exam applicant will receive a refund of only the NCBE Exam Fee if the application is withdrawn by 4:00 p.m. PT the Friday before the first day of the exam. Exam applicants forfeit all fees if they do not show up for the exam. Exam applicants cannot transfer their applications or application fees to a different exam.

For all other applications, no refunds will be issued for withdrawals or disqualifications made later than one year after filing the application.

Administrative Fee (nonrefundable portion of WSBA application fee):

General, Attorney, Motion, House Counsel, and Foreign Law Consultant Applicants $400
LPO Applicants $100

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 Bar within 18 days after the exam in order to receive a refund of the NCBE Exam Fee minus the cancellation fee assessed by the NCBE and a partial refund of the WSBA application fee as set forth above. The Bar may require the applicant to submit supporting documentation for the request.

IV. CHARACTER & FITNESS REVIEW

All applicants are subject to a character and fitness review prior to being admitted to practice law in Washington State. The responsibility for full disclosure rests entirely upon the applicant. Permission to sit for the examination or admission to practice law may be withheld pending a hearing before the Character and Fitness Board and a final determination by the Washington Supreme Court 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).

Washington requires resolution of all character and fitness issues at least 18 days prior to sitting for the exam. Exam applicants with unresolved character and fitness issues after this deadline will not be permitted to sit for the exam and will have their application transferred to the next exam. Applicants may choose to withdraw from the exam and receive a partial refund if the request is made at least 18 days prior to the first day of the exam in lieu of transferring to the next exam. Therefore, applicants who disclose any information that may raise an issue of character or fitness are advised to file their applications early in the registration period. Early filing or providing information prior to the 18-day deadline does not guarantee all issues will be resolved 18 days prior to the exam.

All petitions for reinstatement under APR 25 are referred to the Character and Fitness Board for hearing, per APR 25.3(b). Petitioners will be assigned to the next available licensing exam only after receiving Washington Supreme Court approval of their petition.

V. INVESTIGATION REPORT REQUIREMENT

The following applications are referred to a third-party selected by the WSBA that conducts application investigations 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). Applicants who have an application that is referred to a third-party selected by the WSBA to conduct the application investigation will be contacted by the third-party and required to pay an investigation fee and submit authorization and release forms for that investigation. The WSBA cannot finish processing applications until the investigation report is received from the third-party completing the investigation. If work is terminated on an investigation because of the applicant's failure to comply with any requirements, the WSBA may disqualify the application.

Applicants applying for an exam will not be allowed to sit for the exam if the Bar does not receive a complete investigation report from the third-party at least 18 days prior to the first day of the exam; in that case, the application will be transferred to the next exam. These applicants may choose to withdraw from the exam in lieu of transferring to the next exam. Any refunds due will be made according to the Withdrawal and Refunds provision in Section III.G.

Investigation reports are valid for one calendar year from the date the Bar receives the completed report, after which a supplemental or new investigation report will be required.

VI. REQUESTS FOR TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

Any bar exam applicant requesting testing accommodation for a disability must ask for such accommodation through the online admissions site by the applicable late application filing deadline. Any LPO exam applicant requesting testing accommodation for a disability must ask for such accommodation through the online admissions site by the late application filing deadline for that LPO exam. Applicants requesting testing accommodations must provide appropriate documentation of the disability and specify the extent to which they are requesting that the standard testing procedures need to be modified. The

applicant is responsible for demonstrating their need for any requested accommodations. The Bar reserves the right to make final judgment concerning testing accommodations and may have any submitted documentation reviewed by a specialist. See the online admissions site for additional information regarding accommodation requests and required documentation.

Any testing accommodation may not compromise the integrity or security of the examination or affect the standards set for the examination. After the Bar 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 less than 18 days prior to the first day of the examination.

VII. SPECIAL REQUESTS FOR THE EXAM ROOM

For good cause shown, applicants may be permitted to bring otherwise prohibited items into the exam room. Examples of items are pillows/lumbar supports, ergonomic chairs, book stand, wrist rest, medication, external keyboard, and religious attire. In addition, applicants may request a specific seating location in the exam room due to a medical condition.

The Bar will provide a room for nursing people. Nursing people may use the nursing room before and after the exam, during breaks and during the exam. An applicant must be accompanied by a proctor if the nursing room is used during the exam session.

All special requests for an exam must be made on the online admissions site no less than 18 days prior to the first day of the exam. All requests must be supported (if applicable) by a doctor's note.

VIII. LAPTOP USE AND TECHNOLOGY FEE REQUIRED FOR BAR EXAM

A laptop computer is required for all applicants sitting for the bar exam. Applicants for the bar exam must pay a Technology Fee and download ITS exam software through their NCBE account. The ITS exam software must be purchased and downloaded for each administration of the exam, even if used in the past. Applicants must sign a waiver of liability from ITS and the NCBE. Applicants who do not pay the Technology Fee and download the software by 4:00 p.m. PT the Friday before the first day of the exam will not be permitted to sit for the exam. There is no handwriting option available for the NextGen UBE.

IX. EXAMINATION PROVISIONS

A. Exam Security Policies & Exam Site

All applicants for all exams are to abide by the Exam Security Policy and any other exam policies or procedures established by the Bar, the NCBE, or the Washington Supreme Court.

Only applicants, WSBA staff, WSBA volunteers with permission from staff, proctors, WSBA vendors, and exam site staff and vendors are permitted at the exam site. The only exception is for representatives from law schools and WSBA approved programs who may be present in designated areas during the lunch break or at the end of the second day of the bar exam. Law school representatives should notify WSBA in advance and follow instructions from the WSBA. No pets are allowed at the exam site. Service animals may be approved as part of a testing accommodations request.

Applicants must be seated in the exam room prior to the start of exam instructions. Applicants arriving late or who are not in their assigned seat in the exam room at the start of oral instructions will not be permitted to sit for the exam.

B. Grading and Results for All Examinations

1) Grading of examinations shall be anonymous. Graders shall be provided exam answers with only the applicant ID number to identify to whom the answer belongs. Names or other personal information that would identify an applicant is not provided to the graders. All information matching names and numbers of the applicants shall be kept in the custody of the Bar until all examinations have been graded and each examination has been given either a pass or fail grade by applicant number only.

2) There is no review or appeal of final examination results. APR 4(b).

3) Unsuccessful exam applicants may reapply and retake the exam in the same manner as any other applicant.

C. Lawyer Bar Examination

1) All lawyer bar exam applicants must pass the NextGen Uniform Bar Exam (UBE) prepared and coordinated by the National Conference of Bar Examiners. The UBE is administered over one and a half days in accordance with the procedures established by the NCBE and the Bar.

2) The Board of Bar Examiners is responsible for the grading of the written answers on the UBE. In order to assure fairness and uniformity in grading, the Board of Bar Examiners shall follow NCBE prescribed standards for grading to be used by all graders. The Board of Bar Examiners shall, as soon as practicable and within any guidelines prepared by the NCBE, certify the scores on the written portions for all applicants who have taken the UBE.

3) Upon completion of the grading and certification, the Bar shall cause each lawyer bar exam applicant to be notified of the result of the examination. All results shall be reported to the NCBE in accordance with procedures established by the NCBE.

4) All lawyer bar exam applicants will be provided with their final official scaled UBE score and any exam information the NCBE authorizes the Bar to share with applicants; and that same results information will be shared with the applicant's law school. Unsuccessful lawyer bar exam applicants will receive any additional materials authorized by the NCBE to be provided to applicants. No other raw scores, results information, or examination materials will be provided to applicants.

D. Washington Law Component

All applicants qualifying for admission as a lawyer under APR 3 and APR 25 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 Board of Bar Examiners

is responsible for the content of the WLC and shall publish the Washington state specific materials for applicants.

The WLC is self-administered by applicants and is available to applicants online after submitting the application. 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. If after passing the WLC, an applicant fails the UBE, withdraws their application, or their application is disqualified that applicant must retake and pass the WLC after submitting a new application.

X. UBE SCORE TRANSFER APPLICANT PROVISIONS

UBE score transfer applicants must have a qualifying UBE score.

UBE score transfer applicants may apply in Washington as a UBE score transfer applicant while applying in a different UBE jurisdiction to take the UBE, with the intent of transferring a qualifying score from that jurisdiction to Washington. The applicant must notify the Bar of the jurisdiction where the applicant will take the UBE.

Applicants are not permitted to apply at the same time for admission in Washington as both an applicant to take the UBE in Washington and an applicant seeking to transfer a UBE score to Washington.

XI. EFFECT ON BAR EXAM APPLICATIONS AND APR 25 PETITIONS FOR REINSTATEMENT SUBMITTED PRIOR TO FEBRUARY 1, 2026

These Admissions Policies shall not apply to bar exam applications submitted prior to February 1, 2026, or to APR 25 petitions for reinstatement where the applicant or petitioner sat for the bar exam prior to 2026; instead, such bar exam applications and petitions shall be governed by the policies dated September 1, 2024. If an applicant or petitioner for reinstatement later sits for a bar exam in 2026 or later, then these policies shall apply to the application or petition.