APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADMISSION TO THE WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

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I. Application Filing Deadlines

1. Applications are accepted beginning March 1st for the July exam and September 1st for the February exam. Original documents and payments must be postmarked or delivered to the WSBA by the application deadline. Applications must be filed electronically online by 11:59 p.m. the day of the deadline.

2. The first filing deadline for all applicants is no less than **120 days** prior to the first day of the examination. Authorization and Release forms and payments must be postmarked or received by the first filing deadline or the applicant will be assessed the $300 late filing fee.

3. The late filing deadline for all applicants is no less than **90 days** prior to the first day of the examination. Late filing requires payment of a **$300 late filing fee**. Authorization and Release forms and payments postmarked or received after the late filing deadline will not be accepted and the application will be rejected.

4. **The WSBA will not accept any applications that are filed less than 90 days prior to the first day of the exam. The WSBA will reject all applications for which payment and authorization and release forms are received or postmarked less than 90 days prior to the first day of the exam.**

5. See the WSBA website for exact dates of all deadlines.

6. Reciprocity and UBE score transfer applicants may apply at any time. UBE score transfer applicants must have an acceptable UBE transfer score at the time of application. Applications from UBE score transfer applicants will not be processed until the WSBA receives a UBE Score Transcript from the NCBE. Both reciprocity and UBE score transfer applicants must complete the admission process within one year from the date of filing the application.

II. 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 and fit to practice law. 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 24.2(a).

2. Washington strongly favors resolution of all character and fitness issues prior to sitting for the bar exam. **Applicants with unresolved character and fitness issues may not be permitted to sit for the exam.** Therefore, applicants who answer yes to questions 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 19, 20A, 21, 24, and/or 25 on the application or disclose any information that may raise an issue of character or fitness are strongly encouraged to file their applications early in the registration period.

III. Applicant Types

1. Applicants who, at the time of filing the application, have never been admitted to the practice of law anywhere in the world are considered **General Applicants**.

2. Applicants who, at the time of filing the application, have been admitted to the practice of law in any U.S. jurisdiction are considered **Attorney Applicants**.

3. All Attorney Applicant applications are submitted to the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) for verification of the information provided in the application. Advise references and former employers that the NCBE may be contacting them.

4. The WSBA Character and Fitness Board will not consider applications from attorney applicants who are currently under disciplinary suspension from another jurisdiction in which they are admitted to practice.

5. Any applicant who has ever sat for the Washington State Bar exam and must retake it is considered a **Repeat Applicant**. Applicants who have previously transferred their application fees but have never actually taken the exam are not considered Repeating Applicants.

IV. General Information and Requirements

1. The WSBA admissions application is for both those applicants applying to sit for the Washington State Bar Examination under APR 3 and those applying for reciprocal admission under APR 18.

2. The WSBA admissions application must be completed and filed online.

3. All applicants are required to have an email address. **The WSBA's primary communication method will be via email and the online admissions site.** It is your responsibility to be sure that emails with a wsba.org domain do not get filtered out by your junk or spam software.

4. The WSBA advises applicants to maintain email security and to not disclose your password to the online admissions account to another individual. This will prevent unauthorized access to confidential and personal information.

5. In addition to the application, all applicants must deliver, or have postmarked, by the application filing deadline to the WSBA Admissions Department:
    - three (3) original signed and notarized Authorization and Release forms. Do not alter these forms. Applications will not be processed until we receive the Authorization and Release forms; and
    - two (2) original signed Good Moral Character certificates. You must have two lawyers who are in good standing in any U.S. jurisdiction sign your Good Moral Character certificates. If you are admitted in a foreign jurisdiction only, the certificates may be signed by two lawyers admitted in the same jurisdiction as you are. More than two lawyers is 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 certificates. They must be signed and dated within 5 months of the application date; and
    - if paying the application fee by check, the payment form with the check made payable to the WSBA; and
    - if an Attorney Applicant, an original certificate of good standing from each jurisdiction to which the applicant is admitted (Federal and Tribal Courts excepted). To obtain your certificate, contact the admitting authority (i.e., State Bar or highest state court) in each jurisdiction where you are admitted.

6. Authorization and Release forms and Good Moral Character Certificates will be available to print after you create your online admissions account and are also available on the WSBA website.

7. Additional documentation supplementing the application may be attached electronically with the application or may be delivered, or postmarked, to the WSBA Admissions Department by the application filing deadline. Electronic attachments should be in as small a file size as possible (low resolution) and preferably PDF. Each attachment is limited to 25 MB. All documentation delivered to the WSBA must include the applicant's Applicant ID number.

8. All information submitted in applying for admission to the WSBA must be dated within 5 months of the application date.

9. Keep a copy of all application materials filed for your records.

10. All Attorney Applicants, whether first time takers or repeaters, are required to pay an investigation fee to the National Conference of Bar Examiners. Complete the NCBE payment form available through the online admissions system and mail payment with the form directly to the NCBE. The NCBE will not begin review of your application until payment is received, and, exam results will not be released if we do not receive a report back from the NCBE by that time.

11. Applicants are required to update their contact information. Changes are made by logging into the applicant's online account. All official notices, including results, will go to the current information on file with the WSBA. Again, email is the primary communication method.

V. Application Instructions

1. <u>The responsibility of full disclosure rests entirely upon the applicant.</u> Failure to fully disclose as requested in this 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 Admissions Department of any changes in or additions to the information provided in the application. <u>There</u>

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 Supplemental Information link on the online admissions site. Through this tool, you can submit additional narrative information and attach additional documentation. Again, email and online admissions site is the primary communication method.

3. Read the entire application carefully. 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. If a required field does not apply, enter NA in the field. Incomplete applications will not be processed.

4. Question 6 asks about admission to practice. Include all admissions and applications for admission to any jurisdiction. You are not required to include Washington's APR 9 Legal Intern admission or any similar program in another jurisdiction. If you are including admission to a tribal court, please indicate that it is not a foreign jurisdiction; also, answer "Yes" to the question, "Is this a U.S. Federal Court or tribal court."

5. Question 23.B. asks: 'Have you ever defaulted on any other debt?' This question seeks information about debts, other than student loans, that are or were assigned to collection or that are or were subject to garnishment or other court-entered judgments or orders for payment.

VI. Application Fees

1. The required application fee must be paid at the time of filing your application. It may be paid online or by submitting a check with a payment form obtained after completing your online application. Application fees paid by check (with the payment form) must be received or postmarked by the appropriate application filing deadline. Applications are not accepted until the application fee is received and will be rejected if payment is not made timely.

   GENERAL APPLICANTS (not admitted to practice in any jurisdiction) **$585**
   ATTORNEY APPLICANTS (previously admitted to practice in any jurisdiction) **$620**
   (plus NCBE Investigation fee)

   NCBE INVESTIGATION FEE
   All Attorney Applicants, whether first time takers or repeaters, are required to pay an investigation fee to the National Conference of Bar Examiners. Complete the NCBE payment form and mail payment with the form directly to the NCBE.

   LATE FILING FEE – Applicants may file the application after the 120 day filing deadline but must pay an additional **non-refundable $300** late filing fee. Late applications must be filed no later than **90 days** prior to the first day of the examination. **No application will be accepted after this final deadline**. See the WSBA website for dates of deadlines.

VII. ADA Reasonable Accommodation Requests

1. Applicants must request reasonable accommodations through the online admissions site not less than **40 days prior to the first day of the exam**; including those applicants who have previously been granted accommodations and are reapplying for another exam. Additional information will be

provided at the time the request is made. Notification of approval will be made after the 40 day deadline owing to the fact that the WSBA must ascertain the number of ADA applicants for logistical purposes.

2. The Washington State Bar Association provides reasonable and appropriate 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 bar examination under standard testing conditions, to demonstrate the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities that the Washington State Supreme Court has determined are appropriate requirements for admission to the practice of law in Washington.

3. Qualified applicant with a disability means an applicant with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification of rules, policies, or practices; the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services; meets the essential eligibility requirements for admission to the practice of law in Washington.

4. Test accommodations are adjustments to the testing activity for an individual with a disability in order to ease the effect of the disability on the testing process. Reasonable accommodations vary according to the type and degree of disability. Accommodations will be made on an individual basis and depend on the nature and extent of the disability, documentation provided, and the requirements of the examination. The Washington State Bar Association will provide qualified applicants who have documented disabilities with appropriate accommodations that do not fundamentally alter the measurement of the skills or knowledge the examination is intended to test.

5. The reasonable accommodations that are granted are based on our experience of those applicants with a similar or same condition who have applied in past examinations. The reasonable accommodations that will be provided will not compromise the integrity or the security of the Washington State Bar examination or affect the standards set for the examination.

6. Applicants requesting reasonable accommodations because of disabilities must provide appropriate documentation of the disability and specify the extent to which the standard testing procedures need to be modified. The burden of proof is on the applicant to show the need for any reasonable accommodations. The Washington State Bar reserves the right to make final judgment concerning testing accommodations and may have documentation reviewed by a medical specialist, psychologist or learning disability specialist.

VIII. Laptop Use and ExamSoft

1. Applicants requesting to use a laptop computer for the exam must register, pay for, and download software from ExamSoft. ExamSoft registration begins approximately six weeks prior to the exam. You will receive an email from Examsoft with your username, password, and instructions at the start of the registration period.

2. After you download the software, the fact that you did so will generally appear on your online record one or two business days later.

3. Fees paid to ExamSoft are nonrefundable and nontransferable. Go to ExamSoft for more information.

IX. Acknowledgment, Approval and Exam Results

1. The WSBA Admissions Department will send a letter acknowledging receipt of each application approximately three to six weeks after receiving the authorization and release forms. Documents received by the WSBA will be noted online approximately one week after receipt.

2. The WSBA may request additional information from you through a supplemental request tool on the online admissions site. You will be notified by email of a pending request. Failure to provide the additional information at least 18 days prior to the first day of the exam will result in your withdrawal from the exam.

3. For those sitting for the exam, a notification granting permission to sit for the exam will be emailed to you after receipt of all required materials and a complete review of your application. At that time, your online admissions page will be updated with important information about the exam. Processing and approval times for applications vary greatly amongst applicants. All applicants will be informed of the status of their application no less than 15 days prior to the first day of the exam.

4. Reciprocity applicants not required to sit for the exam 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.

5. Exam results will be posted to your online admissions account at midnight the day of release.

X. 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: pillows/lumbar supports, ergonomic chairs, book stand, wrist rest, medication taken by injection, external keyboard or mouse, and religious headgear. 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 request 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.

XI. Application Withdrawal

1. WITHDRAWAL AND REFUNDS: The WSBA Admissions Department charges all applicants a **$300 non-refundable** processing fee. If the WSBA Admissions Department receives notification through the online admissions system of an applicant's request to withdraw at least **18 days prior to the first day of the examination**, the applicant may receive a refund of the fee paid less the $300 processing fee. Late filing fees, fees paid to ExamSoft, and, fees paid to NCBE are nonrefundable.

2. 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 refund as set forth above.

3. If you do not show up for the exam, you forfeit all fees.

XII. 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.

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 one year after the applicant achieves a passing score on 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.

XIII. Washington Law Component (WLC)

1. All applicants must pass the Washington Law Component (WLC). The WLC minimum pass score is 80% correct.

2. 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.

3. The WLC is self administered by applicants and is available to applicants through the online admissions site after filing the application and paying the application fee.

4. Applicants must pass the WLC within one year of passing the UBE.