

**APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR LAWYER ADMISSION  
TO THE WASHINGTON STATE BAR ASSOCIATION**

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**I. Applicant Types**

1. **General Applicant** means a person applying for admission as a lawyer 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 except Washington, and does not meet the definition of a Foreign Applicant
2. **Attorney Applicant** means a person applying for admission as a lawyer who, at the time of filing the application, has ever been admitted to the practice of law as a lawyer (or equivalent for that jurisdiction) in any U.S. jurisdiction other than Washington.
3. **Foreign Applicant** means a person applying for admission as a lawyer who 1) has ever been admitted to the practice of law as a lawyer (or equivalent for that jurisdiction) in any foreign jurisdiction (designated herein as a “Foreign Attorney Applicant” when relevant), or 2) has a law degree from a law school outside the U.S. that would qualify the applicant to practice law as a lawyer (or the equivalent for that jurisdiction) in that jurisdiction and that was received prior to a law degree received in the U.S.
4. 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 applied or transferred their application fees but have never actually taken the exam are not considered Repeating Applicants.
5. All Attorney Applicant and Foreign 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; this will help decrease

NCBE processing time. Completed initial NCBE reports for Attorney Applicants and Foreign Applicants may be used for the next two consecutive exam cycles, after which a new NCBE investigation will be required.

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

## II. Application Filing Deadlines

1. Bar Exam Applications. The bar exam is given in February and July. Filing deadlines for applications to take the Washington Bar examination are as follows:

### 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

The deadline will be the next business day when a deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday. Late filing requires payment of a \$300 late filing fee. No applications will be accepted after the late filing deadline except for applicants who failed the most recent past winter Washington bar exam and are applying for the following summer Washington bar exam; those applicants are not required to pay the late filing fee and the deadline will be May 5.

Applications including payment, Authorization and Release and Good Moral Certificates must be filed online by the application deadline. 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 final deadline.

2. Admission by Motion Applications. Admission by motion applicants may apply at any time. Admission by Motion applicants must complete the admission process within one year from the date of filing the application. After one year, you will need to submit a new application and fee. You may withdraw your application at any time prior to the one year deadline subject to a \$300 non-refundable administrative fee. Fees paid to the NCBE are also non-refundable.
3. UBE Score Transfer Applications. 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. In addition, UBE score transfer applicants must meet the qualifications for the lawyer bar examination under APR 3(b). UBE score transfer applicants must complete the admission process within one year from the date of filing the application. After one year, you will need to submit a new application and fee. You may withdraw your application at any time prior to the one year deadline subject to a \$300 non-refundable administrative fee. Fees paid to the NCBE are also non-refundable.

### III. 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. Washington requires resolution of all character and fitness issues at least **60 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. Early filing does not guarantee all issues will be resolved 60 days prior to the exam.
3. **NCBE Report:** All attorney applicants and foreign applicants will have their applications investigated and verified by the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE). For U.S. attorneys, it generally takes three to four months to receive a report back from the NCBE. For foreign applicants, including foreign attorney applicants, it may take up to nine months to receive a report back from the NCBE. Attorney 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, attorney applicants are advised that they may not be able to sit for the exam for which they applied. Foreign applicants must apply during the application period for the exam prior to the one they want to take (see Application Filing Deadlines) due to the time required for the NCBE investigation.
4. All applicants will be given the option to transfer their registration fees and application to the next exam if the character and fitness review is not complete or the NCBE report is not received by the appropriate deadline. Applicants may also choose to withdraw from the exam and receive a partial refund if the request is made at least 60 days prior to the first day of the exam.

### IV. General Information and Requirements

1. The WSBA online admissions application is for applicants for the Washington State Bar Examination, admission by UBE transfer score and admission by motion.
2. The WSBA admissions application must be completed and filed online. Applications will not be considered received until payment is received.
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 or firewall.

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 upload** the following documents when complete to the online application prior to submitting the application:
  - One (1) signed and notarized **Authorization and Release form**. Do not alter these forms. Retain the original for your records.
  - One (1) signed **Good Moral Character Certificate**. 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. The certificate must be signed and dated within 6 months of the application date.
6. **Certificates of Good Standing for Attorney Applicants and Foreign Attorney Applicants:** Using the Supplemental Application Information tool on the online admissions system, upload a certificate of good standing from each jurisdiction to 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. The certificate must be signed and dated within 6 months of the application date.
7. **Attorney and Foreign Applicants** 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. Mail payment with the form and two (2) original signed and notarized Authorization and Release forms directly to the NCBE. The NCBE will not begin review of your application until payment is received. See I.5 for Attorney Applicants and Foreign Applicants who fail the exam and wish to reapply.
8. Authorization and Release forms and Good Moral Character Certificates will be available to print after you create your online admissions account.
9. Additional documentation supplementing the application may be uploaded 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 5 MB. All documentation delivered to the WSBA must include the applicant's Applicant ID number.
10. All information submitted in applying for admission to the WSBA must be dated within 6 months of the application date.
11. Keep a copy of all application materials filed for your records.
12. Applicants are responsible for updating their email address and other contact information. Changes are made by logging into the applicant's online account. All official notices, including bar exam results, will be sent by email through your online account.

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

## **V. Application Instructions**

1. The responsibility of full disclosure rests entirely upon the applicant. 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. 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 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 are the primary communication methods.
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 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. 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 7 asks for employment history for the past 5 years; the Bar verifies the information by contacting current or past employers by email. Therefore, a valid email address is required for each employer. Do not submit your email address as a reference. Do not include a third party agency, e.g. The Work Number, as a resource for verifying employment. Incomplete answers may delay the processing of an application.
6. Question 20(b): Include any and all moving traffic violations (omit parking 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. Upload any relevant supporting documentation.
7. 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.

<u>General Applicants</u> (not admitted in any jurisdiction) .....	\$585
<u>Foreign Applicants not admitted in any jurisdiction</u> .....	\$585 + <a href="#">NCBE Investigation fee</a>
<u>Attorney Applicants</u> (previously admitted in any jurisdiction) .....	\$620 + <a href="#">NCBE Investigation fee</a>
<u>Foreign Attorney Applicants previously admitted in any jurisdiction</u> ....	\$620 + <a href="#">NCBE Investigation fee</a>

NCBE Investigation Fee

All Attorney Applicants and Foreign Applicants 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 together with **two (2) original** signed and notarized Authorization and Release forms.

Attorney Applicants and Foreign Applicants who fail the exam may reapply for the following two consecutive exams without an additional NCBE investigation.

Late Filing Fee – Late filing requires a **non-refundable** payment of **\$300**. **No application will be accepted after the late filing deadline.** See section I for more details.

**VII. ADA Reasonable Accommodation Requests**

1. Applicants must request reasonable accommodations through the online admissions site not less than **80 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 80 day deadline owing to the fact that the WSBA must ascertain the number of ADA applicants for logistical purposes. **Note: In most cases, you must accept the accommodation agreement at least 60 days prior to the exam.**
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. Applicants using a laptop are required to purchase and download the Examsoft software for each administration of the bar exam, even if they have used it in the past. 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.
4. Applicants who will be using a laptop to take the exam must sign a waiver of liability on exam day. An example can be found on your online application homepage.

### **IX. Acknowledgment, Approval and Exam Results**

1. The WSBA Admissions Department will send an email notification acknowledging receipt of each application approximately three to six weeks after the application is received and processed.
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 disqualification 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 18 days prior to the first day of the exam.
4. 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.
5. Exam results will be posted to your online admissions account the morning of the day of release.

6. 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.
7. 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 (see section II.2 and 3).

#### **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, 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. Please reference the Bar Exam Security Policy for information on prohibited items in the exam room.
3. The WSBA provides a room for nursing mothers at the exam site. Nursing mothers 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.

#### **XI. Application Withdrawal**

1. WITHDRAWAL AND REFUNDS: For all applicants, there is a \$300 non-refundable administrative processing fee. An applicant must request to withdraw an application at least 60 days prior to the date of the examination for a partial refund. The Bar 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, or disqualifications made, less than 60 days prior to the date of the exam. Applicants forfeit all fees if they do not show up for the exam.
2. Applicants with an admission by motion or UBE score transfer application who withdraw their application will receive a refund less the administrative fee provided the application is withdrawn less than 12 months after filing it.
3. 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.

#### **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 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.
5. Review [Admissions Policies](#) for more information.

### **XIII. 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 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. There is no fee to retake 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 an applicant fails the UBE or withdraws from the UBE after taking the WLC, that applicant must retake the WLC after reapplying for the next UBE administration.
3. Bar exam applicants must pass the WLC no later than 40 months from the date of the administration of the UBE in which the applicant achieves a passing score. Admission by Motion and UBE transfer score applicants must pass the WLC within one year from the date of filing the application. Please reference the Admissions Policies for more detailed information.