



**TO: APPLICANTS TAKING THE FEBRUARY 2020 CALIFORNIA BAR EXAMINATION**

Please carefully read this bulletin prior to the first day of the examination, as it contains important information that you will need to know.

**SCHEDULE OF THE EXAMINATION**

**The General Bar Examination will be administered on Tuesday and Wednesday, February 25 and 26, 2020. The Attorneys' Examination will be administered on Tuesday, February 25, 2020.** Each day, there will be a morning and an afternoon session. Applicants using laptop computers must be seated no later than 8:20 a.m. All applicants must be seated no later than 8:30 a.m. The examination will begin immediately following the instructions. You should plan to arrive at least twenty minutes early to locate your assigned section or room. The afternoon sessions generally begin at 1:30 p.m.; instructions will begin promptly 15 minutes before the scheduled start time. An announcement will be made at the end of the morning session advising you when you are expected to report for the afternoon session. The examination is scheduled to conclude on Tuesday at approximately 5:30 p.m. and on Wednesday at approximately 5:00 p.m. Applicants granted extended time may have different schedules, which are communicated to them individually in advance of the examination.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE EXAMINATION**

The California Bar Examination consists of the General Bar Examination and the Attorneys' Examination. The General Bar Examination consists of three parts: five essay questions, the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE), and one performance test (PT). The parts of the examination may not be taken separately, and California does not accept the transfer of MBE scores from other jurisdictions. The examination is administered in February and February each year during the last week of the month that includes a Wednesday. On Tuesday, applicants will have three hours during the morning session to answer three essay questions; during the afternoon session, applicants will have three hours and 30 minutes to answer two essay questions and one PT. Each essay question is designed to be answered in one hour and the PT is designed to be completed in 90 minutes. The MBE will be administered on Wednesday. Applicants with disabilities granted extended time accommodations will have slightly different schedules.

On the written portion of the examination, applicants are initially graded on a basis of 700 maximum possible raw points. An applicant can earn up to 100 raw points on each of the five essay questions and up to 200 raw points on the PT. The scores obtained on the written portion of the examination are then translated to the 2000-point MBE scale. An applicant's total score is the scaled MBE score multiplied by .50 plus the converted score on the written portion multiplied by .50. Scaling ensures the two portions of the examination carry the relative weights assigned to them: written (50 percent) and MBE (50 percent). The passing score on the examination is 1440.

The Attorneys' Examination consists of the five essay questions and one PT from the General Bar Examination. An applicant can earn up to 100 raw points on each essay question and up to 200 raw points on the PT. Written scores are scaled to the MBE. The passing score is 1440.

If an applicant is absent for any portion of the examination, the applicant will be considered as having not taken the examination; the applicant's written answers will not be graded; and, if the applicant intends to take a future administration of the examination, he/she will be subject to the same application filing deadlines applicable to first-time applicants rather than the deadlines applicable to immediate repeaters.

The Committee of Bar Examiners (Committee) is the judge of the validity of the examination and, at its discretion, may determine that the result of any test or any part of any test or any individual's score is not valid. Should the Committee invalidate any part of the test, or if any individual's test is declared invalid or for any reason any part of the test cannot be graded, the Committee may, at its discretion, decide to make a pass/fail decision on the basis of the valid portion of the applicant's test product available to the Committee.

If you are an attorney who has been approved to take the Attorneys' Examination (1-day examination), the words "1-Day Exam" should be printed on your admittance ticket. If those words are not printed on your admittance ticket, you are scheduled to take the 2-day General Bar Examination. Requests to change from the 1-day Attorneys' Examination to the 2-day General Bar Examination, or vice versa, cannot be honored after the final filing deadline for applications. For attorney applicants with disabilities who have been granted accommodations that include an extended day schedule, the number of testing days will be specified in your Testing Accommodations Notice.

## **EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION RULES AND POLICIES**

Failure to follow oral and written instructions while the examination is in session will result in notice to the State Bar of California (State Bar) of a violation of examination rules in accordance with the provisions of Title 4, Division 1, Chapter 6 of the Rules of the State Bar of California (*Admissions Rules*). Conduct that results in a violation of security or disrupts the administration of the examination, which includes, but is not limited to, bringing unauthorized items into the examination room (such as cell phones, notes, etc.), writing or typing after time has been called, looking at another applicant's papers, talking while the examination is in session, and being abusive to other applicants, staff, proctors and/or other examination personnel, will result in notice to the State Bar of a violation of examination rules or, in some cases, dismissal from the examination test center. Applicants are expected at all times to maintain a professional attitude toward other applicants, staff, proctors and other examination personnel. Behavior that is disruptive will be reported to the State Bar for whatever action it deems appropriate.

Applicants cannot wear hats, caps, hoods or any other type of headwear during the examination. The State Bar, however, will consider petitions filed by applicants seeking exemptions from that policy, which would permit them to wear headwear due to their religious beliefs while in a secure examination test center. Such petitions must be submitted online through the Applicant Portal no later than the final deadline for filing testing accommodations petitions. Upon arrival at the test center, applicants must be prepared to show a letter from the State Bar that permits them to bring the headwear into the examination room and the headwear may be subject to inspection. Applicants attempting to enter the test center wearing headwear who do not have a letter from the State Bar authorizing them to do so will be issued a Chapter 6 Notice and asked to remove the headwear.

**Only the following items are allowed in the examination room without prior approval (all items are subject to inspection):** the admittance ticket with no writing on it; non-digital pens; non-mechanical pencils; silent analog watches, non-digital timers and clocks measuring 4" x 4" or smaller; rulers; paper clips; pen-style highlighters (must not be used on answers); inhalers; eyeglasses (no cases or sunglasses); foam ear plugs (must not be connected to any mechanism or device); feminine hygiene items; prescription medication; diabetes-related equipment (does not include food or drinks); eye drops in single-use vials; government-

issued ID; cash (must not have writing on it), credit/debit cards that might be needed for the lunch break; keys; and disability-related items that have been approved through the testing accommodation petition process. You may also bring: a back support; an orthopedic cushion; a standard-size pillow without a case; one bookstand; one foot rest; splints and braces; crutches; wheelchairs; casts; hearing aids; TENS units; and, the following laptop accessories: separate keyboard, mouse (wired or wireless), laptop riser/stand no higher than 4", and a solid color mouse pad with no writing on it.

**During the MBE sessions, the items listed above are allowed in the examination room, except for pens, rulers, paper clips, highlighters, back supports, orthopedic cushions, pillows, bookstands or foot rests, and any laptop and laptop accessories.**

Applicants who will be handwriting their examination answers, or who are required to handwrite in the event of a laptop/software malfunction, must bring their own standard blue or black ink ballpoint pens. Applicants must also bring their own pencils (several sharpened pencils are recommended) for the MBE portion of the examination. Mechanical pencils are not permitted. Pencil sharpeners and separate erasers will not be allowed into the examination room.

In addition to other items you must not bring into the examination room, please note that **applicants cannot bring wallets, lip balm, tissues, cough drops/throat lozenges, gum, candy, or other food or drinks into the examination room.** Water and tissues will be available nearby.

If you wish to bring items into an examination test center that are not listed above as being allowed for either the essay and performance test or MBE sessions, you must file a petition for testing accommodations using the Committee's forms in conformance with the Committee's policies and deadlines. (This includes pens, back supports, orthopedic cushions, pillows and foot rests during the MBE sessions.) Permission to use specific items will not be granted as a matter of convenience or preference.

**If unauthorized items are brought into the examination room either intentionally or inadvertently, they will be confiscated, you will receive a Chapter 6 Notice and, possibly, additional sanctions imposed by the State Bar. In accordance with the Committee's policies, you will receive a score of zero for any session during which you are found to have brought an unauthorized electronic device, such as a cell phone, digital watch or activity tracker device (e.g., Fitbit), into the examination, as well as any additional sanctions the State Bar may impose.**

## **TEST CENTER ENVIRONMENT**

While every effort will be made to keep the environment of the test center comfortable and quiet, there are times when events, conditions, or actions of third parties occur that are beyond the control of the State Bar or the Committee. For instance, the temperature of the test center may fluctuate due to the weather or the test center's cooling/heating equipment; applicants should be prepared for either warm or cold temperatures. Efforts will be made to keep the test center quiet, but there may be forces outside the control of the State Bar or the Committee so that such an environment cannot be guaranteed. You should come prepared to accommodate noises, such as those made by other applicants taking the examination, proctors carrying out their duties, people entering/exiting the examination room, equipment inside or outside the test center that may make sounds while operating, other meetings or conventions in the same facility, etc. Ear plugs, of the type specified earlier, are strongly recommended.

## LAPTOP COMPUTER USERS

After you have been notified your admittance ticket is available for printing, you are eligible to have your laptop computer certified for use during the examination. The required security software (Examplify) must be downloaded onto your computer and the certification process must be completed by Friday, February 21, 2020. The Laptop Computer Program Bulletin for each examination, which is found on the State Bar's website, contains the details and requirements for participation in the program. Technical assistance will not be available at the test center. You must be prepared to handwrite your examination answers if the software or your computer is not working properly, if electricity is not available, or if some other mishap or problem occurs.

If you are using a laptop computer to take the examination, it is your responsibility to timely upload your exam files containing your answers to the five (5) essay questions and one (1) performance test (1 exam file for each written session for a total of 2 exam files). If you fail to do so by the published deadline, a deduction of ten (10) scaled points will be taken from your total written scaled score. If you fail to upload your answer files within two (2) weeks of the published deadline, you will be given a grade of zero (0) for each answer that is not received by the State Bar's Office of Admissions by the published deadline. Applicants are expected to comply with the published deadlines; there are no waivers of the deadlines or the sanctions that will be imposed as a result of applicants' failure to upload their exam files.

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Your admittance ticket contains your applicant number, your file number, and your NCBE number. **Do not write anything on the ticket.** You will be required to show your ticket to the proctor when you enter the test center (please detach and bring just the bottom portion of the admittance ticket). You must keep it in your possession throughout the examination.
2. If items other than those allowed are brought to the test center, you will be required to leave them at your own risk outside of the examination area. The State Bar, Committee, Office of Admissions staff, and proctors assume no responsibility for the safekeeping of items that you bring to the test center. You are not permitted access to those items while the examination is in session.
3. You should bring any small permitted personal items, e.g., prescription medication, foam ear plugs, pens, etc., into the examination area in a small, clear plastic bag. Larger items, such as pillows, do not need to fit into the clear plastic bag that holds your smaller items.
4. Signs will be posted showing seating assignments by applicant numbers, which number can be found on your admittance ticket. You must occupy the same seating space throughout the examination.
5. Upon arrival at your seat, you will find an identification badge that will be your identification credential during administration of the examination and which you may be required to show at any time. The badge must be fastened so it can be easily seen by the proctors. You will be told to relocate the badge if it is not placed appropriately. The badge must be left at your seat during the lunch break.
6. At some time during administration of the examination, you may be required to provide your fingerprints. If you refuse to provide the required fingerprints, a Chapter 6 Notice will be issued to you.

7. During the examination, you will be required to show a valid, government-issued ID card that has your photograph, such as Driver's License, California Identification Card or Passport, for the purpose of verification of identity. You must carry this photograph ID card at all times during the examination.
8. At the beginning of each written (essays and PT) session of the examination, you will be instructed to write your applicant number, name, and signature in the upper right hand section of each of your answer book covers. Do not write notes, outlines, answers, time schedules or make any marks on the inside or outside of your answer book covers. The answer book covers are used for administrative purposes only. Your personal information will not be provided to any Graders. Applicant answers are identified by a code number only; nothing about an individual applicant is known to the Graders.
9. You are not allowed to make notes from memory prior to the start of the examination session. If you are using your laptop computer, you may not access any notes or other documents on your computer after you have entered the secure examining area. Scratch paper will be distributed for each written session of the examination. Scratch paper is not permitted during the MBE portion of the examination. **You must not make notes or write anything on your admittance ticket. If writing is found on your admittance ticket, the ticket will be confiscated and you will be issued a Chapter 6 Notice.**
10. For handwriters, there is a separate answer book for each written question of the examination, which is numbered to correspond to the number of the question. If you are handwriting your answers, you must be certain that the answer to Question No. 1 is written in the book for Question No. 1, etc. Answers written in a wrong answer book or typed in the wrong answer window while using Exemplify, or more than one answer typed in a text box screen while using Exemplify, require special handling such that the grading of an applicant's answer could be delayed as a result.
11. If you need additional scratch paper or lined paper to write your answers during the examination, raise your hand and a proctor will provide you with what you need. Nothing written on scratch paper will be graded.
12. If you are handwriting, you should do so as legibly as possible. A ballpoint pen, with standard blue or black ink, must be used to write your answers. Answers to the essay and PT questions written in pencil are not acceptable. Only non-mechanical pencils may be used for the MBE portion of the examination. Neither highlighters nor white-out may be used on your answers to the essay and PT questions.
13. All answers to the MBE portion of the examination must be marked on the answer sheets provided. If you have circled or otherwise marked your answers in the question booklet, extra time to transfer answers to the answer sheet will not be granted. Only answers properly marked on the answer sheets will be scored.
14. Examination questions and used scratch paper may not be taken out of the examination room. After completing each session of the examination, all examination questions and used scratch paper must be placed in the envelope designated for that purpose.
15. If you handwrite your examination answers or any part thereof, it is your responsibility to turn in your written examination answers to the proctors. If you have an answer that is partially handwritten because you were unable to complete your answer using your laptop, you must ensure that you complete and submit the form provided by the proctor, which will alert the Grading Department that you have an answer partially handwritten and partially uploaded. You cannot leave the test center with any examination materials, including your answers.

16. The examination is electronically timed and the official time is kept by the announcer. However, you are encouraged to keep track of your own time since wall clocks are not provided. During the instructions at the beginning of each session, you will be advised of the courtesy time warnings that will be given. Any failure on the part of the announcer to give the planned warnings will not affect the outcome of the examination or the grading process, and no extra time or other consideration will be granted.
17. Timing devices, i.e., watches and clocks, brought into the examination test centers are to be used solely for the determination of the passage of time. They cannot have a digital display, must be absolutely silent and cannot be larger than 4" x 4". Timing devices that are digital, programmable, and/or that make noise are not permitted. If found, they will be confiscated, and the applicant will receive a Chapter 6 Notice.
18. Writing and typing of answers must be completed when time is called. Please note that extra time is not granted to any individual applicant for any reason. If you attempt to write anything after time has been called, you will receive a Chapter 6 Notice.
19. Restrooms and water will be available at each test center. You should use the facilities before taking your seat so that you do not miss the instructions prior to the start of each session. Extra time to use the restroom will not be granted. You will not be permitted to use the restroom or leave your seat during the last several minutes of the examination session (5 to 15 minutes depending on the session). After time is called, you will **not** be permitted to use the restroom or leave your seat until all materials are collected and inventoried. If you fail to remain seated after being advised to do so or while the examination materials are being collected and inventoried, you will receive a Chapter 6 Notice.
20. If you are leaving your seat for any reason, you should be considerate of others who are taking the examination. The scraping of chairs, heavy footsteps, or conversation just outside the examination area disturbs others.
21. If you leave the secure examination area during the examination session, you will not be permitted to return for the purpose of completing your examination answers.
22. At laptop computer test centers, laptop computers may not be disconnected from electrical outlets or removed from the examination room while the examination is in session, even if you have completed the examination for that session. You must wait until the examination session has concluded and applicants are dismissed before retrieving your computer.
23. The proctors' chief function is to proctor the examination; however, if asked, the proctors will attempt to assist with any problems that may arise.
24. If there is an emergency of any kind, you should remain seated and wait for instructions on how to proceed.

## **NO SMOKING**

Smoking is prohibited at the test centers that do not allow smoking in accordance with city ordinance. Regardless of whether smoking is prohibited, any applicant who exits the secure examination area in order to smoke while the examination is in progress will not be allowed to re-enter to complete the examination.

## **EXAMINATION ATTENDANCE POLICY**

If you do not attend a required, scheduled examination session, you will not be permitted to attend the remaining examination session(s). For instance, if you are absent for the Tuesday morning session, you will not be allowed to take any remaining sessions of the examination. If you are absent for any portion of the examination, you will be considered as having not taken the examination and your written answers will not be graded. Applicants must make a good faith attempt to complete each session of the examination for which they are present. Failure to do so may lead to receipt of a Chapter 6 Notice and being prohibited from attending any remaining examination session(s).

## **LATE ARRIVAL TO TEST CENTER**

If you arrive at the test center after one (1) hour of testing time has elapsed, you will not be permitted to enter the test center.

## **MORAL CHARACTER**

The *Admissions Rules* require a positive moral character determination before the Committee may recommend that an applicant be admitted to practice law. The process is initiated by the filing of the Application for Determination of Moral Character. The processing of these applications generally takes a minimum of 180 days and sometimes longer to complete. If you have not already filed a moral character application, you should do so now to avoid delays in your admission to practice law if you are successful on the California Bar Examination. The application must be filed online through your Applicant Portal.

## **ADMISSION APPLICANT PORTAL**

Applicants are able to log into the Admission Applicant Portal (Applicant Portal) through the Admission Information Management System at <https://admissions.calbar.ca.gov/s/login/?startURL=%2Fs%2F&ec=302>.

## **DUPLICATE ADMITTANCE TICKET/CHANGING TEST CENTERS**

Your admittance ticket will be emailed to you. You will be able to re-print a duplicate admittance ticket directly from your email. You also may change your assigned test center from your Applicant Portal, although space may not be available at your preferred test center. The last day to change your test center is February 3, 2020.

## **FURTHER COMMUNICATION**

For particular questions regarding your status or the other requirements for admission, you should contact the State Bar's Office of Admissions in writing. Email communications are not permitted and a response will not be forthcoming if you send an email to the Office of Admissions concerning your file. If you need to contact the office, however, the following telephone numbers are provided:

Los Angeles  
213-765-1500

San Francisco  
415-538-2300

## **CALIFORNIA BAR EXAMINATION RESULTS**

Results from the February 2020 administration of the California Bar Examination are scheduled to be released to applicants on May 8, 2020. The contact information on file will be used to communicate your examination results. Please note that applicants will not be able to change their contact information after May 1, 2020 until after results are released.

You will be able to determine whether your name appears on the pass list through the [State Bar's website](#) at 6:00 p.m. (Pacific Time) May 8, 2020. You will need your File Number and Applicant Number, which are listed on the admittance tickets and ID badges, to access the pass list.