



**INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION OF MORAL CHARACTER AND
APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION OF DETERMINATION OF MORAL CHARACTER**

Please carefully read these instructions. Each applicant is required to be aware of all requirements that follow and to comply with each one that is applicable. APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED ONLINE. Applications may be submitted in hard copy upon the applicant's request. If submitted in hard copy, the completed application form must be typewritten or legibly printed in ink.

In answering questions appearing on the Application for Determination of Moral Character, applicants should consider the following:

Rule 4.40, Title 4, Division 1, Chapter 4 of the *Rules of the State Bar of California (Admissions Rules)* states:

- (A) An applicant must be of good moral character as determined by the State Bar. The applicant has the burden of establishing that he or she is of good moral character.
- (B) "Good moral character" includes but is not limited to qualities of honesty, fairness, candor, trustworthiness, observance of fiduciary responsibility, respect for and obedience to the law, and respect for the rights of others and the judicial process.

Rule 4.41(A) of the *Admissions Rules* states:

"...An attorney who is suspended for disciplinary reasons or disbarred, has resigned with disciplinary charges pending or is otherwise not in good standing for disciplinary reasons in any jurisdiction may not submit an application."

RULES OF THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA

The Application for Determination of Moral Character and Application for Extension of Determination of Moral Character will be processed in accordance with the *Admissions Rules*. Current *Admissions Rules* are available on the State Bar website at <http://calbar.ca.gov/Admissions> or upon request from the Office of Admissions.

IF SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION IN HARD COPY

The completed and signed application form, fingerprint cards or a completed *Request for Live Scan Service* form, any necessary attachments, and correct fees in the form of a credit card, personal check, cashier’s check, or money order payable to the State Bar of California, must be mailed in an envelope to the following address:

Office of Admissions
The State Bar of California
845 South Figueroa Street
Los Angeles, CA 90017-2515

REGISTRATION

Applicants submitting an Application for Determination of Moral Character must have registered as a law student or as an attorney applicant with the State Bar **prior** to submitting the application. If an applicant has not done so, registration may be completed through the Applicant Portal at <https://admissions.calbar.ca.gov/>.

FEES AND FILING INFORMATION

- Application for Determination of Moral Character \$551.00
- Application for Extension of Determination of Moral Character \$265.00

THE FEES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

FEE PAYMENT WHEN SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS IN HARD COPY FORM

Make a personal check, cashier’s check, or money order payable to the State Bar of California or complete the Credit Card Authorization Form, which is at the end of this application. A Mastercard, Visa, personal check, cashier’s check, or money order payment is required for submission and acceptance of this application. For credit/debit card payments, a processing fee of 2.5 percent will be added to all charges. If your credit/debit card transaction is denied, you will not be able to submit your application until you provide another Mastercard or Visa.

To pay by a personal check, cashier’s check, or money order, you must mail the payment to the Los Angeles Office of Admissions. Your application will not be considered complete until payment is received. If the personal check, cashier’s check or money order is returned for insufficient funds, your payment will not be considered valid. Late charges may be applied and/or the application deadline will be enforced if the payment is not received within the published deadlines. There is no processing fee associated with personal check, cashier’s check, or money order payments.

APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION

When an Application for Determination of Moral Character is about to expire, in order to avoid completing the determination application again, an applicant must submit an Application for Extension of Determination of Moral Character. An Extension Application must be filed by an applicant no sooner than every 30 months and no later than every 36 months after an initial determination of good moral character has been made by the State Bar, and after each subsequent determination, until such time as the applicant is certified for admission to practice law in California. The Extension Application must be accompanied by the fee specified in the schedule of fees published by the State Bar and by two sets of fingerprints for out-of-state applicants. Applicants who reside in California must submit fingerprints via Live Scan technology. If submitted online, requests for Live Scan Service forms will be emailed to applicants after their applications have been submitted. The Extension Application must be submitted in substantially complete form as defined by the State Bar, and must be uploaded or otherwise received in the Los Angeles Office of Admissions **on or before** the expiration date.

REAPPLICATION SUBSEQUENT TO RECEIPT OF AN ADVERSE MORAL CHARACTER DETERMINATION OR WITHDRAWAL UNDER CHAPTER 4 OF THE ADMISSIONS RULES

Following the expiration of the designated time period, applicants who have received an adverse moral character determination or withdrew their application under Chapter 4 of the *Admissions Rules* must file a complete Application for Determination of Moral Character form with two fingerprint cards or a completed *Request for Live Scan Service* form and the appropriate fee. If submitting a hard copy application, the completed form and fee must be forwarded to the Los Angeles Office of Admissions.

COMPLETION OF INVESTIGATION

Applications for Determination of Moral Character and Applications for Extension of Determination of Moral Character generally will be processed in a **minimum of 180 days**, and the process may take additional time if there are issues in an applicant's background that require further investigation and/or review by the State Bar.

Applicants who are in their last year of law study are encouraged to file their Application for Determination of Moral Character at the beginning of their last year of law study, and all applicants are encouraged to file at least eight to ten months prior to the date they wish to be licensed to practice law in California.

Failure to file your Determination Application or Extension Application in a timely manner could delay your admission to practice law.

During the course of each moral character investigation, the State Bar routinely contacts many sources and outside agencies; therefore, staff is not in a position to provide information on the

status of the investigation until approximately 120 days have elapsed. If in the course of the investigation staff requires further information or documentation, applicants will be contacted prior to the completion of the investigation. Applicants will be notified when the investigation has been completed.

Any questions regarding the status of an application after the lapse of 120 days should be made via the applicant portal. If submitting a hard copy application, status requests may be submitted in writing or via the applicant portal.

COMPLETION OF APPLICATION

All questions on the application must be answered accurately; otherwise, the application will be considered incomplete. Before submitting an application, applicants should check to ensure that all questions have been answered, all applicable forms have been completed and uploaded (or attached if the application is submitted in hard copy form), and the application is signed. The application must be signed, the correct fee included, and a completed *Request for Live Scan Service* form or two completed fingerprint cards. Any application not meeting these requirements is considered incomplete, and will not be considered filed until it is brought to a complete status. If submitting the application in hard copy form, the application must be received in the Los Angeles Office of Admissions **within 30 days** of the date the application was signed. If it is not received within 30 days of the date the application was signed, the application will be returned to the applicant with a blank Authorization and Release form **that the applicant will be required to complete, sign, and return to the Office of Admissions, along with the application.**

If you are submitting the application in hard copy form and the application does not provide sufficient space for the response to a question, the response should be continued on a separate piece of paper and attached to the back of the application.

If you are submitting the application in hard copy form, you should retain a copy of your completed application for reference in the event that another application must be filed in the future.

APPLICATION, ATTACHMENTS, AMENDMENTS, AND APPLICATION ABANDONMENT

ATTACHMENTS

All supporting documents must be uploaded via the applicant portal.

For hard copy applications, all supporting documents must be attached to the back of the application. Other letters or requests of any kind must be sent under separate cover.

PROOF OF ADMISSION (All Attorney Applicants)

Applicants must submit an original Certificate of Good Standing (CGS) as proof of admission from each U.S. jurisdiction (except federal courts), and each foreign jurisdiction in which the applicant has

been admitted. The CGS must be issued by the jurisdiction within six months of the date the moral character application is submitted online, or received by the Los Angeles Office of Admissions for applications submitted in hard copy form.

A CGS from each domestic and foreign jurisdiction must be submitted with the initial moral character application and with each subsequent Application for Determination of Moral Character (Determination Application), and each Application for Extension of Determination of Moral Character (Extension Application). Domestic and foreign attorneys on inactive status must submit an original letter from the jurisdiction confirming no disciplinary action is pending or related to the “inactive” status. The letter must be issued by the jurisdiction within six months of the application submit date. Submission of foreign-language documents must include a certified English translation.

DRIVER’S LICENSE

Applicants issued a California driver’s license or California identification card must report the license or identification number in the application. Additionally, applicants issued a driver’s license from a state other than California, or foreign jurisdiction, must report the name of the issuing jurisdiction and license number, and submit an original and certified copy of the driving record from each of the non-California jurisdictions. The driving record should include at least five years of driving history, or for the length of time you were licensed in that jurisdiction, and must be issued by the jurisdiction within six months of the application submit date. Driving Records from the non-California jurisdictions must be filed with the initial moral character application and with each subsequent Application for Determination of Moral Character, and each Application for Extension of Determination of Moral Character. Submission of foreign-language documents must include a certified English translation.

APPLICATION AMENDMENTS

Changes to previously submitted information on your online application must be sent via the applicant portal and include a signed Amendment form, the applicable forms, and any supporting documentation. Changes to hard copy applications must be submitted in writing and include any applicable forms and supporting documentation.

APPLICATION ABANDONMENT – ONLINE APPLICATIONS

Once an application is submitted, it will be reviewed and the application status will be changed to Pending Applicant status if the application is deemed to be incomplete. The applicant will receive an email communication advising of the deficiency. Moral character applications that are not brought to complete status within 60 days of the Pending Applicant status date will be deemed abandoned (Rule 4.43 of the *Admissions Rules*). Once the moral character application has been completed, if the applicant receives notice to provide additional information or documentation but does not provide such information or documentation within 90 days of the request, the application will be abandoned. No refund of fees will be paid in the event a moral character application is deemed abandoned.

APPLICATION ABANDONMENT – HARD COPY APPLICATIONS

If an application is received and deemed incomplete, the applicant will receive a letter describing any deficiencies. If the application is not brought to a complete status within 60 days of written notification to the applicant, the application will be deemed abandoned (Rule 4.43 of the *Admissions Rules*). This includes the lack of requisite fees, signature, or either two completed fingerprint cards or a completed *Request for Live Scan Service* form. Once the moral character application has been completed, if the applicant receives notice to provide information or documentation but does not provide such information/documentation within 90 days of the request, the application will be abandoned. No refund of fees will be paid in the event a moral character application is deemed abandoned.

APPLICANT'S DUTY TO UPDATE APPLICATION

Applicants for admission to practice law in California have a continuing duty to update responses to questions on the application whenever there is an addition to or change in information previously furnished. The applicant will not be eligible for certification until the application is current.

REFERENCES

Confidential Questionnaires will be sent by the Office of Admissions to references, employers, licensing agencies and law schools listed on the application. In order to decrease the likelihood of a possible administrative delay in admission, all confidential questionnaire responses must be returned to the Office of Admissions as soon as possible.

Please note: Contacting employers is part of the administrative screening process required of all applicants pursuant to Chapter 4 of the *Admissions Rules*. You submit your application with the understanding that you are willing to have your employers contacted.

APPLICATION ACKNOWLEDGMENT

An application acknowledgement email will be sent following submission of the application for applications submitted online and in hard copy. All applicants are encouraged to check the application status via the Applicant Portal. Hard copy applications will not be considered completed and filed until the hard copy application and all required documents have been received. If an applicant submitting the hard copy application prefers to opt out of email communications, he/she must state communication via US mail is preferred. Otherwise, all communication regarding the Determination or Extension Application will be sent via email and through the applicant portal.

LAW SCHOOL DECLARATION

A Law School Declaration form will be sent by the Office of Admissions to each law school an applicant has attended.

WITHDRAWAL OF APPLICATION

Withdrawal of Determination or Extension Applications and requests for refunds received within 30 days of the online submission date or after receipt of the hard copy application will be honored with a 60 percent refund of all fees paid in conjunction with the application. Withdrawal requests received after 30 days will not be entitled to a refund.

An applicant may withdraw their application at any time prior to being notified that a determination of moral character cannot be made because of the need for further inquiry and analysis. An applicant may withdraw their application after receipt of such notice only with the consent of the Office of Admissions.

FINGERPRINTS

Section 6054 of the California Business and Professions Code mandates that the State Bar of California:

. . . require that an applicant for admission or reinstatement to the practice of law in California, or may require a licensee to submit or resubmit fingerprints to the Department of Justice in order to establish the identity of the applicant and in order to determine whether the applicant or licensee has a record of criminal conviction in this state or in other states. The information obtained as a result of the fingerprinting of an applicant or licensee shall be limited to the official use of the State Bar in establishing the identity of the applicant and in determining the character and fitness of the applicant for admission or reinstatement, and in discovering prior and subsequent criminal arrests of an applicant, licensee, or applicant for reinstatement. . . .

An Application for Determination of Moral Character or Application for Extension of Determination of Moral Character will not be considered complete without the appropriately processed fingerprints. Section 6054 also requires: "All fingerprint records of applicants admitted or licensees reinstated, or provided by a licensee, shall be retained thereafter by the Department of Justice for the limited purpose of criminal arrest notification to the State Bar." Fingerprint records submitted in connection with an admission application will be maintained by the California Department of Justice for the limited purpose of compliance with the statute.

Pursuant to California Penal Code section 11105.2(f), the State Bar shall immediately notify the California Department of Justice when an applicant is denied admission to the State Bar, in order for the Department of Justice to terminate arrest notification services and cease retention of the applicant's fingerprint records.

LIVE SCAN PROCESSING

Applicants who reside in California must submit fingerprints via **Live Scan technology** to be processed by both the California Department of Justice and the FBI. Requests for Live Scan Service

Forms will be emailed to online applicants after their applications have been submitted. A Live Scan Form will be provided to the applicant with the hard copy application form. Please see **Fingerprint Instructions for California Residents**.

FINGERPRINT CARD PROCESSING

Applicants residing outside of the State of California must submit prints on **fingerprint cards (FD-258)**. Please see Fingerprint Instructions for Out-of-State Residents.

FINGERPRINT INSTRUCTIONS FOR CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS (LIVE SCAN TECHNOLOGY)

Live Scan technology replaces the process of recording an individual's fingerprints on fingerprint cards. Online applicants must make **one additional copy of the Live Scan Form, and applicants submitting a hard copy application must make two additional copies that are to be taken to an agency providing Live Scan services with a valid photo identification (expired photo identification cards will not be accepted)**. The Live Scan operator must complete the last section of the *Request for Live Scan Service* form on all copies. The Original Copy is retained by the Live Scan operator, the Second Copy is attached to the completed hard copy Determination Application or the completed Extension Application. Online applicants must upload the completed Live Scan Form via the applicant portal. A copy is to be retained by the applicant. The list of agencies providing Live Scan fingerprinting services in California may be obtained through the Office of the Attorney General-California Department of Justice website at <https://oag.ca.gov/fingerprints/locations>.

If an applicant's prints are rejected because of poor quality, the applicant will be asked to return to the original live scan location for reprinting. The applicant is to take their copy of the *Request for Live Scan Service* form and a copy of the rejection notice sent to them by the Office of Admissions. The printing agency will scan new prints and forward them to the Department of Justice for processing. The reprinting service fee will be waived. Failure to provide the two stated documents will result in a service charge for reprinting.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE REQUEST FOR LIVE SCAN SERVICE FORM

Note: The Application for Determination of Moral Character or Application for Extension of Determination of Moral Character must be submitted and received within 90 days of the date you complete the Live Scan process. Otherwise, your moral character application will be considered incomplete, and you will be required to complete the fingerprint process again.

FINGERPRINT INSTRUCTIONS FOR OUT-OF-STATE RESIDENTS (FINGERPRINT CARDS (FD-258))

Effective July 1, 2005, the California Department of Justice only processes fingerprints through the Live Scan Fingerprinting System unless an exemption is granted. Since only Live Scan Fingerprinting Agencies located in California are utilized, applicants who do not reside in California are required to submit, with their application, two fingerprint cards on form FD-258. At times, there are delays in processing fingerprint cards by criminal justice agencies or delays due to fingerprint card rejection by

those agencies, for which the Office of Admissions is not responsible. These delays may impact the time needed to process an Application. The fingerprints must be taken by a law enforcement agency (e.g., police department, sheriff's department) or by an agency that requires an applicant to provide appropriate identification. If the official taking the fingerprints has difficulty obtaining prints of acceptable quality because of the physical condition of the applicant's fingers (e.g., dermatitis), the official should be requested to explain in writing why the prints are of the best obtainable quality. That explanation should accompany the fingerprint cards. Fingerprints will be forwarded to the California Department of Justice and FBI for a record check.

To obtain fingerprint cards (FD-258), contact your local law enforcement agency. Your law school may be able to recommend a local police or sheriff's office. You may also obtain fingerprint cards by contacting the State Bar at 800-843-9053.

Two original and completed fingerprint cards must be mailed to the Los Angeles Office of Admissions. Submission of the fingerprint cards via the applicant portal is not acceptable.

Applicants must complete identifying information required on the fingerprint cards using only the abbreviations listed below. Failure to provide all correct information will result in a delay in processing the application, along with the return of the fingerprint cards for completion.

HAIR COLOR	EYE COLOR	WEIGHT (WGT)	HEIGHT (HGT)	SEX	
Bald	BAL	Black BLK	Express in pounds.	Express in Feet and Inches	Male M
Black	BLK	Blue BLU	(Do not use fractions;	(Do not use fractions;	Female F
Blonde or		Brown BRN	round off to nearest pound.)	round off to the nearest inch.)	
Strawberry	BLN	Gray GRY			
Brown	BRN	Green GRN	Examples: 94 lbs.	Examples: 5'11"	
Gray or Partially	GRY	Hazel HAZ	186 lbs.	6'0"	
Red or Auburn	RED	Maroon MAR		7'0"	
Sandy	SDY	Pink PNK			
White	WHI				

Questions regarding race, citizenship, OCA number, FBI number, armed force number and miscellaneous number on the fingerprint cards are optional and do not require a response.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

It is the applicant's responsibility to inform the State Bar of any address changes within 30 days. Online applicants must submit address changes via the applicant portal. Applicants without access to the internet must submit address changes in writing to the Los Angeles Office of Admissions. All correspondence to applicants will be emailed or mailed to the current address on file.

Online Applicants: To change your address, email, or telephone number on an online application, you must log into the State Bar of California Applicant Portal at <https://admissions.calbar.ca.gov/>. Then click on your name at the top right and proceed to select the "My Profile" option from the dropdown list. From the "My Profile" page, you will be able to update all of your contact information, and the changes will be effective immediately.

FURTHER COMMUNICATION

An official record of all communications is required; inquiries should be submitted through the applicant portal or in writing if internet access is not available. Address written inquiries to the Office of Admissions and send them to the appropriate address listed below. This will enable the staff to review your file prior to responding, and provide for precise rather than generalized responses. If your inquiry relates to a genuine emergency and requires immediate attention, call the telephone number listed below.

800-843-9053

845 South Figueroa Street
Los Angeles, CA 90017-2515

-or-

180 Howard Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-1639

The State Bar's Office of Admissions is open for the transaction of business between the hours of 8:45 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, holidays excepted.

IMPORTANT

Before mailing your hard copy paper application, please check the following:

- Is the **correct** fee included?
- Is the copy of *Request for Live Scan Services* form, which has been completed by the live scan operator, included? **OR**
- Are the two fingerprint cards enclosed and **completed** in accordance with the instructions?
- Are all necessary attachments and **forms** fastened to the application? The fingerprint cards, or the *Request for Live Scan Services* form, are considered part of the application and **must** be submitted with the application. Supporting documents, other than the required **forms**, may be submitted separately.
- Is each question answered fully and completely?
- Is the application signed and currently dated?
- Are you mailing the application more than 30 days after you signed the declaration? The application must be received within 30 days of the date it is signed or it will be returned.