The State Bar of California

OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS

JULY 2026 CALIFORNIA BAR EXAMINATION: INFORMATION FOR UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

If you did not achieve a passing score on the General Bar Exam, once results are released on October 30, you will be able to view the following information through your Applicant Portal: the raw scores for your answers to the five essay questions and the performance test (PT) (referred to as your written scores), your total raw and scaled written scores, your scaled score on the 200-item Multistate Bar Exam (MBE), and your total scaled score, which combines the written section and the MBE. Also reported for the MBE will be local (State of California) and national percentile rank information, which indicates the percentile rank for your performance in the seven MBE content areas and the MBE total score.

If you took the Attorneys' Exam, you will be able to view the following information through your Applicant Portal: the raw scores for your answers to the five essay questions and the one PT, your total raw and scaled written scores, and your total scaled score.

If you participated in the November 2024 special session and answered at least 28 of the 49 multiple-choice questions correctly, a scaled score adjustment of 40 points was applied to the multiple-choice section of your General Bar Exam. This adjustment translates to a 20-point increase in your total scaled score.[1] The adjusted scaled score was used to calculate the final total score reflected in your result letter. The score adjustment is applied only to your first attempt at the General Bar Exam since the November 2024 special session. Emails are sent the same day that results are released to those who received this scaled score adjustment.

To pass the exam, an applicant must have a total scaled score of at least 1390 out of a possible 2000 points.

Your written scores for each question are reflected by reference to the following question numbers:

- Question 1: Professional Responsibility
- Question 2: Wills and Succession / Community Property
- Question 3: Remedies
- Question 4: Business Associations
- Question 5: Evidence
- Question 6 (PT): Prepare Letter to Client – Torts

[1] Please note that this is the same way the score adjustment has been calculated for all applicants awarded a score adjustment based on the November 2024 special session.

SCALING INFORMATION

The State Bar's Committee of Bar Examiners uses a scoring procedure designed to ensure the level of difficulty of the exam remains consistent with previous administrations of the exam. The statistical technique, called scaling, converts scores on the written section to the same units of measurement used for the MBE scaled score. This adjusts for possible differences in average question difficulty and grading across different administrations of the exam. This adjustment is used to ensure that an applicant's likelihood of passing is not affected by any variation across administrations.

On the written section of the exam, applicants could earn up to 700 points. Each of the five essay questions and the PT is worth up to 100 raw points, with the PT grade doubled when calculating the total raw written points. The raw written score is translated to the 2000-point MBE scale using the formula described below.

Applicants who took the Attorneys' Exam have their scores placed on the same scale of measurement used for the General Bar Exam, but, as they are exempt from the MBE, their pass/fail status is based solely on the written section.

Calculate Your Written Scale Score

Double the assigned PT grade and add the resulting value to the sum of your five raw essay grades. The total is your raw written score. Insert this value into the following formula:

Written scaled score = (Raw written score x 4.3800) - 476.7100

If you took the Attorneys' Exam, your total scaled score is equal to your written scaled score. If you took the General Bar Exam and wish to calculate your total scaled score on your own:

Total scaled score = (MBE scaled score x .50) + (Written scaled score x .50)

PHASED GRADING

All written answers are graded at least once before pass/fail decisions are made. After this first reading, an applicant passes if they earn a total scaled score of at least 1390 points out of 2000. Those with total scaled scores below 1350 after the first reading fail the exam. If the applicant's total scaled score after the first reading is at least 1350 but below 1390, all of their answers are read a second time by a different set of graders. The scores from the two readings are then averaged. If the applicant's averaged total scaled score is 1390[2] or higher, they pass the exam. Applicants with an average below 1390 fail the exam.

[2] To prevent applicants from failing by less than one point, following the calculation of the total scaled score after the second read, pursuant to CBE policy, any score between 1389.0001 and 1389.9999 is rounded to 1390 and deemed a passing score.

ACCESS TO EXAMINATION ANSWERS

Unsuccessful applicants may access their essay and PT answers through the Applicant Portal once results are released on October 30. You may save or print a copy for your records. The answer files will be removed from the Applicant Portal on November 27, 2026.

The MBE portion of the California Bar Examination is a secure exam owned by the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE). The NCBE does not permit the review of MBE questions, answers, or the answer sheets completed by applicants. Only scaled MBE scores and percentile rank information are provided to the State Bar. Raw scores are not available.

CERTIFIED LAW STUDENT PROGRAM — TERMINATION OF CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to State Bar rule 3.9, an applicant may no longer continue in the Certified Law Student Program once the results from the first bar exam for which they are eligible are released.

TRANSFER OF MBE SCORES TO OTHER JURISDICTIONS

The NCBE will transfer your MBE score to admitting authorities in other jurisdictions upon request and payment of a fee. An MBE Score Transfer Request may be completed and submitted online through the NCBE's website.

BAR EXAMINATION STUDY AIDS

"Selected Answers" are exam answers that were assigned high grades during grading and were written by actual applicants who passed the exam after the first phase of grading. They are published following the release of results for each administration of the exam. Essay Questions, Performance Tests, and Selected Answers for the past several administrations of the California Bar Examination are available free of charge on the Past Exams webpage.

Selected answers will be available on the Past Exams webpage, where they can be viewed, downloaded, and printed at home. They are posted in June for the February exam and in December for the July exam. The past practice of allowing hard copy orders of the selected answers has been discontinued.

MBE study aids are available for purchase online through the NCBE. Additional information is available on the NCBE's website.

APPLICATION TO TAKE THE FEBRUARY 2027 CALIFORNIA BAR EXAMINATION

The administration of the February 2027 California Bar Examination is scheduled for February 23–24, 2027. If you were unsuccessful on the July 2026 exam, you may register for the February exam as an "immediate repeater" as soon as results are released on October 30. Deadlines for registration for immediate repeaters are available on the February 2027 California Bar Exam webpage.