

The Louisiana Bar Admissions Application Process

Prepared by:
The Louisiana Supreme Court Committee on Bar Admissions
2800 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Suite 340
Metairie, LA 70002
504-830-5463
www.Lascba.org

Revised August 2023

The Law

- The rule governing the bar admissions process is Louisiana Supreme Court Rule XVII.
- The first step in seeking admission in Louisiana is to read the rule governing bar admissions.
- [https://www.lasc.org/Supreme Court Rules?p=RuleXVII](https://www.lasc.org/Supreme_Court_Rules?p=RuleXVII)

Purpose

Law Student Registration Program benefits a student by allowing him/her to get started early with the ***Character & Fitness screening process.*** If any issues require further inquiry, the applicant may have time to address and resolve these matters ***prior to the time he/she applies to sit for the bar examination.*** Applicants who wait until his/her third year to start the process may be required to address a C&F inquiry while applying to sit and preparing for the bar examination. In addition, admission may be delayed.

Law Student Registration Program

- Pursuant to LA Supreme Court Rule XVII, Section 4(A) students who attend a law school in Louisiana “shall participate in the Law Student Registration Program in the fall semester of his/her second academic year of law school.”
- Pursuant to LA Supreme Court Rule XVII, Appendix (A) any Louisiana law student who fails to participate in the law student registration program will incur a \$350 penalty fee at the time he/she registers for the bar exam.

Law Student Registration

- Law Student Registration is for 2nd year law students who will graduate May 2025 or December 2025.
- Registration period: August 1, 2023 - October 1, 2023
- No Applications will be accepted after October 1, 2023
- Law Student Registration is a two part process:
 - Law Student Registration application must be submitted to the Louisiana Committee on Bar Admissions
 - A completed character & fitness application must be submitted to National Conference of Bar Examiners

Creating an Account with the Louisiana Supreme Court Committee on Bar Admissions

- Step 1: Visit the Committee website, www.Lascba.org
- Step 2: Click “Application Info.”
- Step 3: Click “Louisiana Law Students”
- Step 4: Click “Go to Applicant Portal; Register for an account
- Step 5: Once you have completed the identity portion of your account, an email verification will be sent to you from Web@Lascba.org providing you with a validation code which will expire within 15 minutes.
- Step 6: After your account has been verified, complete the Contact information, Education, Citizen status and Web Account. Once completed, press the submit button.

Howto Apply as a Law Student Registrant

- Step 1: Log in to your LASCBA applicant portal.
- Step 1a: Click on Law Student Registration, click start Law Student Registration
- Step 2: Verify all typed information is correct.
- Step 3: Click on the Authorization & Release link, print, sign, scan and upload the executed Authorization & Release form. Electronic signatures **WILL NOT** be accepted, an original pen to paper signature must appear on the form. Check the box indicating all information provided is true and correct. Click confirm.
- Step 4: Remit the \$150 Law Student Registration fee electronically. Payment must be made through your applicant portal before your application can be finalized.
- Step 5: Click the following link to complete a Character and Fitness Application, <https://www.ncbex.org/character-fitness/LA>. Follow all instructions provided by NCBE.
- Step 5a: Your character & fitness application remains pending until NCBE receives all character & fitness forms and fees.
- Step 6: Email a copy of page 1 of your NCBE finalized application to Application@Lascba.org. Note: these forms must be in a pdf format. Pictures of these forms are not acceptable.

Check List for Submitting Law Student Registration Application

The Committee on Bar Admissions will not process your application until all required documents and payments have been received, as described below.

Committee on Bar Admissions must receive via applicant online portal the following:

- _____ Executed Authorization & Release form with original pen to paper signature.
Electronic signatures are not acceptable.
- _____ Payment of \$150 paid electronically
- _____ A finalized copy of page 1 of your NCBE Character & Fitness Application in a pdf format emailed to Application@Lascba.org.

National Conference of Bar Examiners must receive via secure link to a drop-box where the applicant will upload:

- _____ NCBE signed Authorization and Release form
- _____ Additional release forms, if applicable (medical, law enforcement, etc.)

National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE)

- As part of the screening process, applicants must submit an electronic Request for Preparation of Character Report (aka Character and Fitness Application) to the NCBE (National Conference of Bar Examiners).
- The NCBE conducts the initial investigation based on responses provided by an applicant on his/her C&F Application.
- Upon completion, NCBE forwards the report directly to the Committee on Bar Admissions for review/determination. The Committee may contact the applicant for additional information.

Character and Fitness

- The purpose of the character and fitness screening process is set forth in LA Supreme Court Rule XVII, Sec. 5: . . . to assure the protection of the public and to safeguard the administration of justice.
- The files of applicants and the internal proceedings of the Committee shall be kept confidential. LA Supreme Court Rule XVII, Sec. 1(G).

Good Moral Character & Fitness; Definitions

- **“Good moral character”** includes, but is not limited to, the qualities of honesty, fairness, candor, trustworthiness, observances of fiduciary responsibility and of the laws of the State of Louisiana and of the United States of America, and a respect for the rights of other persons.
- **“Fitness”** includes, but is not limited to, the mental or emotional suitability of the applicant to practice law in this state.

Committee Determination

- An applicant bears the burden of proving the requisite character and fitness.
- The Committee makes a determination as to whether an applicant has shown the requisite character and fitness for admission.
- Once a determination has been made, the Committee will contact the applicant.

Failure to Meet Requirements

- If the applicant fails to establish the requisite character and fitness, the Committee will not certify the applicant to the Court for admission.
- The Committee will notify the applicant.
- The applicant may seek relief from the Court.
- The Court may appoint a Commissioner to conduct a hearing and make a recommendation or it may issue an immediate ruling.

Factors and Considerations

- Arrests or criminal charges;
- Academic, employment, professional, military or criminal misconduct;
- Abuse of the legal process or failure to comply with legal obligations;
- Neglect of financial responsibilities;
- Fraud, deceit, dishonesty or misrepresentation;

See LA Supreme Court Rule XVII, Sec. 5(E), Factors and Considerations

Factors and Considerations

- Evidence of substance misuse, abuse or dependency.
- Evidence of mental or emotional instability is also a factor the Committee may consider when determining if the applicant possesses the requisite fitness to practice law -*See LA Supreme Court Rule XVII, Sec. 5(E)(15), Factors and Considerations.*

Rehabilitation

- Factors which may be considered in assigning weight and significance given to prior conduct:
- Applicant's age, amount of time elapsed since conduct, reliability of information
- Seriousness, factors underlying conduct and cumulative effect
- Applicant's positive social contributions since conduct, candor and cooperation in the admissions process and evidence of rehabilitation

Common Areas of Concern

- Criminal conduct (including DWI's)
- Financial irresponsibility (excessive, unaddressed debt)
- Conduct or behavior related to impairments which call into question current fitness: substance abuse, alcohol abuse, mental, emotional or nervous disorders or conditions.

Candor, Cooperation and Duty to Keep Information Current

- **Candor** [La. Sup. Ct. Rul XVII, Sec. 4(G)]. Applicants shall provide complete and candid responses to all inquiries, whether on the Bar Examination Application, the NCBE Request for Preparation of a Character Report or as part of any bar admissions inquiry, investigation, or proceeding.
- **Cooperation** [La. Sup. Ct. Rule XVII, Sec. 5(I)]. An applicant who fails to cooperate in the investigation may be denied admission due to his/her lack of cooperation.
- **Duty to Keep Application Current** [La. Sup. Ct. Rule XVII, Sec. 4(H)]. Until admitted to the Bar, an applicant is under a continuing obligation to keep his/her application current.

Communication

- The Committee may communicate with applicants via U. S. Postal Service, e-mail message, telephone or through the applicant portal.
- Add the Committee's domain @Lascba.org to your safe sender's list to ensure receipt of any email correspondence forwarded from the Committee.
- It is the Applicant's responsibility to keep all contact information current. Any changes can be made by accessing your individual applicant portal on the www.Lascba.org and www.Ncbex.org.

Requisites for Admission

- 18 years of age
- Citizen, permanent resident or authorized to work in the United States
- Graduate of an ABA accredited law school or foreign equivalent
- Satisfactorily complete examination
- Successfully pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE) with a scaled score of 80 or higher.
- Of sound mind, good moral character and fitness

Applying for the Bar Examination

When it is time for a law student to apply to sit for the bar examination, he/she must file:

- A Bar Examination Application (This is a different application than the law student registration application)
- A new NCBE character and fitness application must be completed at the time you are registering for the bar examination. If you participated in the law student registration program, your fee will be \$120.
- Criminal Background check with the Louisiana State Police Department (applicable when applying for the bar examination).

Registration Period for Bar Examination filing

February Exam: Timely filing: September 1 - November 1
Late Applications: November 2 – December 15
(\$850 additional fee)

July Exam: Timely filing: December 1 – February 1
Late Applications: February 2 – May 15
(\$850 additional fee)

Louisiana Committee on Bar Admissions Fee Schedule

- \$850 Applicants who participated in the Law Student Registration program
- \$975 All applicants other than those that participated in the Law Student Registration program
- \$350 Penalty for not registering as a law student in your second year
- \$850 Additional Late Application Fee

* Fees may be subject to change

NCBE Fee Schedule

- \$395 First Bar Admissions (Examinee)
- \$550 Practicing Attorney
- \$120 Supplemental
- \$925 Foreign Educated

* Fees may be subject to change

Applying for the Bar Examination

- Step 1: Visit the Committee website, www.Lascba.org
- Step 2: Login to individual applicant portal; verify all typed information
- Step 3: Click on the Authorization & Release link, print, sign, scan and upload the executed Authorization & Release form. Electronic signatures **WILL NOT** be accepted, an original pen to paper signature must appear on the form. Check the box indicating all information provided is true and correct. Click confirm.
- Step 4: Remit the requisite fee(s) electronically. Payment must be made through your applicant portal before your application can be finalized.

continued

Applying for the Bar Examination

- Step 5: Click the following link to complete a Character and Fitness Application, <https://www.ncbex.org/character-and-fitness/LA>. Follow all instructions provided by NCBE.
- Step 6: Your character & fitness application remains pending until NCBE receives, all character & fitness forms and fees.
- Step 7: Email a copy of page 1 of your NCBE finalized application to Application@Lascba.org. Note: these forms must be in a pdf format. Pictures of these forms are not acceptable.

Check List for Submitting Bar Examination Application

The Committee on Bar Admissions will not process your application until all required documents and payments have been received, as described below.

Committee on Bar Admissions must receive via applicant online portal the following:

- _____ Executed Authorization & Release form with original signature
- _____ Requisite fee(s) paid electronically through applicant portal
- _____ A finalized copy of page 1 of your NCBE Character & Fitness Application in a pdf format emailed to Application@Lascba.org.

National Conference of Bar Examiners must receive via secure link to a drop-box where the applicant will upload:

- _____ NCBE Authorization and Release form
- _____ Additional release forms, if applicable (medical, law enforcement, etc.)

MPRE

- The MPRE is administered by the NCBE in March, August and November.
- An applicant may take the MPRE anytime after successfully completing his/her required law school course work in legal ethics or professional responsibility.
- A passing MPRE score is 80 or higher and is valid for five years. [LA Sup Ct. Rule XVII, Section 8(D)]
- For additional information click on <https://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre>

Contact the Committee

- Any questions regarding law student registration or the bar exam application process, contact Robyn Sweet at RSweet@Lascba.org, Rhonda Lorig at RLorig@Lascba.org or Denise Swanson at DSwanson@Lascba.org
- Any questions regarding the character and fitness application, contact Naomi Kim at NKim@Lascba.org.
- Any questions regarding the criminal background check, contact Heather Schumacher at HSchumacher@Lascba.org.