

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Board of Bar Examiners**

BAR EXAMINATION INFORMATION

REQUIRED ITEMS ON EXAMINATION DAYS:

- **REQUIRED PHOTO IDENTIFICATION: GOVERNMENT ISSUED PHOTO ID**

Acceptable forms of identification include a U.S. issued driver's license, U.S. military ID, or current government issued passport. You are required to bring an official photo ID and place it on your table, directly below your seat card, bearing your name and applicant number, during each examination session. A non-U.S. citizen who does not possess a U.S. issued driver's license must present a valid passport. **The name on your photo ID must match the name under which you filed your bar application.** Identification will be checked by the proctor prior to the beginning of each examination session.

- **Signed** Examination Regulations and Code of Conduct Agreement for Applicants for the Massachusetts Bar Examination (to be provided at a later date).
- **Pencils and erasers** for the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) Wednesday only: No. 2 pencils are required for the Multistate Bar Examination. Sharpener are **not** provided. Mechanical pencils are **not** allowed.
- **Pens** for the Essay Examination Day on Thursday: Black or blue pens are required for Essay day. Erasable pens are **not** allowed.

EXAMINATION ROOM SEATING:

Applicants must occupy the same assigned seating spaces throughout the duration of the examination.

ABSENTEES:

Applicants absent from the examination and who choose to sit for any subsequent examination will be required to pay the filing fee of \$815 for each application period. **The fee for the bar examination is non-refundable and non-transferable.**

LATE ARRIVALS TO TEST CENTER:

Applicants who arrive at the test site after the examination instructions have been read will only be allowed to take the examination with the approval of the Board of Bar Examiners or its authorized representative. Under **NO** circumstances will extra testing time be allowed.

DRESS CODE, CLOTHING & CLIMATE CONTROL:

The Board of Bar Examiners expects applicants to dress appropriately for the examination. Casual, comfortable clothing is appropriate; revealing clothing is not appropriate. Clothing or any other item with profanity printed on it, clothing of an offensive nature, or inappropriate clothing is prohibited. Overcoats, outerwear including jackets, sweatshirts with hoods or pockets, and neck scarves are not allowed in the Examination Room. Any applicant with these clothing items in the Examination Room will be instructed to remove them and take them from the Examination Room.

Any allowable garment removed during the exam must be stored under your chair. Efforts also will be made to keep the Examination Room quiet, but there may be forces outside the control of the Board of Bar Examiners so that such an environment cannot be guaranteed. In addition, earplugs (without cords) may be used and are strongly recommended if you are sensitive to ambient noise.

Headwear may not be worn during the examination, except for prior approved religious or medical reasons. The Board of Bar Examiners' authorized representative **must** approve any exception **prior** to the examination.

In the interest of security, please be advised that you may be required to demonstrate that your clothing does not contain prohibited items.

Every effort is made to provide an optimum environment conducive to examination testing. It is suggested that you dress in layers to accommodate for temperature variations, as conditions may be beyond the ability of the Board of Bar Examiners to control.

PERSONAL CONTACTS: Family members, friends, colleagues and/or law school professors will not be permitted at any time in the public area adjacent to the examination testing room(s) or within the examination testing room(s).

FACILITIES:

Restrooms and water bubblers are accessible during the examination. It is recommended that applicants use the facilities before the morning and afternoon sessions begin. Applicants may, of course, use the facilities at any time during the examination, but extra time will not be granted for this purpose. Applicants will not be permitted to use the facilities or leave their seats during the last fifteen (15) minutes of each session. After time is called, no applicant will be permitted to use the restroom or leave their seat until all testing materials are collected and inventoried and you are dismissed by the Board of Bar Examiners. Applicants shall not gather in the restrooms or in any areas adjacent to the examination room(s) while the examination is in progress. Smoking is prohibited at the test site.

Applicants must raise their hand and give their testing materials to their section proctor prior to using the restroom.

CLOCKS and WATCHES:

For your convenience, clocks are placed in various and strategic locations throughout the Examination Room. However, the examination is electronically timed and the official time is kept by the Board of Bar Examiners at the podium or proctor's station. Any timing device brought into the test site is to be used solely for the determination of the passage of time. All time pieces brought into the test site must be absolutely silent and are not to exceed the dimension of 4 inches by 4 inches. NO digital watches are allowed.

***FOOD, SNACKS, AND DRINKS:**

You are **NOT** permitted to bring or eat food, snacks, or candy, chew gum or drink liquids of any kind other than water into the Examination Room. Eating at anytime in the Examination Room is prohibited. Water must be in a clear plastic **unlabeled** bottle. Water bottle maximum size is one liter with label removed. Your water bottle must be kept under the table when not being used. Only one clear plastic spill-proof cap clear water bottle is allowed per session. **NO** transparent colored water bottle is allowed.

**Unless a nonstandard testing accommodation request has been approved by the Board's office prior to the exam being held.*

LUNCH:

You are required to leave the Examination Room during the lunch break. There are some fast food outlets at the test site. Keep in mind, however, that traffic at the test site can be heavy and the examination resumes promptly at the time announced.

PERSONAL PROPERTY:

The Board of Bar Examiners is **NOT** responsible for the loss or damage of **ANY** personal property NOR does it have provisions for secure storage of personal items at the test site. It is highly recommended that any such item(s) be left at home, in your hotel room; in your car or that you make other arrangements for storage of your personal property.

EXAM COMPLETION:

Any applicant who finishes an exam session early is permitted to leave the Examination Room until the fifteen (15) minute warning is announced. Applicants must hand in all test materials to the proctor before leaving the Examination Room.

EMERGENCY INCIDENTS:

If there is an emergency of any kind, applicants should remain seated and instructions will be given on how to proceed. In the event of an illness or medical emergency, notify your proctor and appropriate personnel from the test site will be summoned for assistance immediately.

If a personal emergency arises or a personal medical condition warrants emergency treatment you must abide by the decision of the Board of Bar Examiners and/or its authorized representative as to the continuance of the test for your personal well-being and/or its impact on other applicants.

SCORE INFORMATION:

Rule 3:01, 1.3 of the Rules of the Supreme Judicial Court provides: “All petitions for admission shall be referred to the Board of Bar Examiners for a report as to the character, acquirements and qualifications of the applicant.”

In determining “acquirements and qualifications” the Board conducts a bar examination which consists of two parts: the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) and the Essay Examination.

The Massachusetts Board of Bar Examiners has adopted the following scoring method for the bar examination.

The MBE part contains 200 multiple choice questions. Scores are based on the number of questions answered correctly. Applicants are therefore advised to answer every question. The total number of correct answers, adjusted statistically to provide the variations in question difficulties in relation to previous MBE examinations, is an applicant’s MBE Scaled Score.

The Essay Examination part contains ten questions, each question graded on the basis of 0-7 points. The sum of the points obtained on the 10 questions is the applicant’s Raw Essay Score.

In order to combine a Raw Essay Score with an MBE Scaled Score, it is necessary to change (or convert) a Raw Essay Score to a score on the same distribution of scores as the MBE Scaled Score. The Essay Scaled Score and the MBE Scaled Score will be added together for the Total Scaled Score.

A Total Scaled Score of 270 or greater is the passing score on the Massachusetts bar examination.

Before the results of the written law examination become final, the Board will re-read the Essay Examinations of those applicants whose Total Scaled Score is between 265 and 270; the final raw score for such Essay Examinations will be the average of the scores of the two readings. The resulting average after the essay has been re-read could be higher or lower than the original score. **Essay examinations are not subject to any further re-reading.**

N.B. There is no “minimum” or required “passing” scaled score on the MBE part or the essay part of the written law examination. A high score on one part can compensate for a lower score on the other part when the two scores are added together for a total combined scaled score of 270. (See above.)

MULTISTATE BAR EXAMINATION INFORMATION: WEDNESDAY

The Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) consists of two examination booklets, one for the morning session and one for the afternoon session. Each contains 100 questions with a separate answer sheet to be marked with a #2 pencil provided by the applicant.

To find more information on the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE), visit www.ncbex.org.

After introductory directions, you will be given one of two versions of an A.M. sealed test book with an enclosed answer sheet and be requested to read carefully the directions on the back of the sealed test book. When direction is given, you may break the seal on the test book, remove the answer sheet, close the test book and give attention to the instructions for completing the specified blank spaces on the identification part of the answer sheet.

Important Demographic Information for the MBE Answer Sheet

BLOCK A Titled “Jurisdiction Code” – has two boxes for two digits. Place one digit of the Jurisdiction Code for Massachusetts (22) in each box and then blacken the correct circles beneath the boxes.

BLOCK B Titled “Applicant Number” – has five boxes for five digits. Print the number assigned by the Massachusetts Board of Bar Examiners. This is the five-digit number on the white seat card bearing your name and address. If your number has less than five digits add leading zeros as necessary.

BLOCK C Titled “NCBE Number” – has eight boxes for eight digits. **LEAVE THIS BLOCK BLANK.**

BLOCK D Titled “Date of Birth” – has circles beside the months and requires that the circle left of the appropriate month of birth be blackened. Enter the digits for the day and year of birth in the boxes provided and then blacken the appropriate circles beneath. Precede a single digit day with a zero, i.e. 03 for the 3rd.

BLOCK E Titled “Social Security Number” – Enter your social security number and blacken the appropriate circles beneath the numerals.

Instructions and general information will be read by the room supervisor prior to the examination. In the afternoon session, time will be allowed for similar tasks. The time allotted to answer the exam questions is three hours at each session.

Applicants who complete the first day of the examination in less than three hours may leave upon turning in examination materials to the assigned proctor. **However, no applicant will be permitted to leave during the last 15 minutes of each examination session.**

MULTISTATE BAR EXAMINATION (MBE) SCORE TRANSFER:

If you are taking the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) portion of the bar examination in Massachusetts and wish to have your MBE score transferred to another jurisdiction, you must complete the MBE Transfer and Score Advisory Request Form located on the Board's website. This form, along with a fee of \$25.00 payable to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, must be submitted to the Board of Bar Examiners as soon as possible. [Transferring Scores](#)

If you are taking the MBE portion of the bar examination in another jurisdiction on the same day that such examination is given in Massachusetts, you must make arrangements to have your score transferred to Massachusetts. **Please note the Board does not accept the transfer of MBE scores earned from a prior administration of the MBE in another jurisdiction.** To transfer a concurrent MBE score to Massachusetts from another jurisdiction, you must follow the procedures outlined by the jurisdiction. All MBE transfer forms must be completed and required fees paid **prior to sitting** for the essay portion of the Massachusetts Bar Examination. This will ensure that the Board receives the report of the transferred MBE score in a timely manner. The transferred MBE score must be received in the Board's office no later than April 1 following a February examination, and no later than September 8 following a July examination. **Failure to transfer an MBE score to the Board in a timely manner may result in the nullification of an applicant's bar examination scores.**

ESSAY EXAMINATION INFORMATION: THURSDAY

Applicants will be expected to be familiar with the law in the following fields:

Agency	Federal Rules of Civil Procedure
Business Organizations	Massachusetts Rules of Civil Procedure
Constitutional Law	Professional Responsibility
Contracts	Real Property (including Mortgages)
Criminal Law	Torts
Descent & Distribution of Estates	Trusts
Domestic Relations	Unfair or Deceptive Practices (G.L.c. 93A)

Evidence (including Federal Rules)
Federal Jurisdiction

Uniform Commercial Code (articles 1-9)
Wills

SUGGESTIONS ON WRITING THE ESSAY EXAMINATION:

1. **Think before you write.** Read each question carefully; think through the facts, and their necessary implications. Outline the issues or problems; reach your conclusions; analyze your conclusions from the standpoints both of the law and of common-sense; revise them if necessary. Then decide on a logical, orderly, and convincing arrangement for the statement of your views. You are not ready to write until you have done all that.
2. **Do not restate the facts.** The examiners know what the facts are and you have no time to waste.
3. **Do not state abstract or irrelevant propositions of law.** It is usually undesirable to begin an answer with a legal proposition. If the proposition is applicable it will be more appropriate later in the answer, in order to indicate the reason for your conclusion. If it is not applicable, it cannot help you to state it. Although it is seldom necessary to state any applicable rule of law in full detail, make a sufficiently detailed reference to it in your answer so that the examiner will not be in doubt as to your knowledge of it and of the conditions which make its application proper. Do not, by speculating on what the case would have been if the facts had been different, nor in any other way, work into your answer some point of law with which you happen to be familiar, but which is not called for by the question. The examiners are not interested in knowing how many rules of law you have learned, but rather, the way in which you apply the applicable rules to the facts stated.
4. **Discuss as many problems that you can identify.** A grasp of all the issues is essential. For example, if you identify three issues, do not waste time on discussing only one.
5. **Express yourself clearly, as a lawyer should.** WRITE AS LEGIBLY AS POSSIBLE. Avoid ambiguous, meaningless, and rambling statements; verbosity, and long, involved sentences; undue repetition; and flippancy, slang and colloquialism.
6. **The purpose of the bar examination is to test your ability to think and express yourself as a lawyer.** The bar exam is designed to test your ability to apply what you have already learned to the facts of the problems such as those which might arise in your practice. The value of an answer depends not only upon your conclusions, but even more upon the evidence it displays of the elements mentioned above.

GRADING THE ESSAYS:

Each essay examination will be graded by experienced members of the bar under the supervision of members of the Board of Bar Examiners.

EXAM RESULTS:

Result letters of the examination will be furnished to each applicant by mail. While there is no predetermined date for releasing the results of the bar examination, as a general rule, result letters are mailed on or before May 5 and November 5, respectively, for the preceding February and July exams. Applicants who have passed the written portion of the examination (MBE and Essay) will also be listed on the Board's web page at www.mass.gov/bbe.

CONTINUING APPLICATION:

Please be reminded that the Board of Bar Examiners Rule V.1.2 establishes a continuing obligation to disclose changes and updates to information provided on your bar application. This obligation remains in effect until you have been administered the oath of attorney. An applicant's failure to supply information deemed relevant by the Board of Bar Examiners may be grounds for denial of recommendation for admission. If there is any question as to whether you should report something to the Board, immediately contact the Board at 617-482-4466 for guidance.

ADDRESS CHANGES:

If your address changes after filing your application, please note your new address on your seat card. If your address changes after the examination, please complete the official address form by October 1 for the July examination and April 1 for the February examination. The official change of address form is available from the Board's website at www.mass.gov/bbe. Failure to provide a timely change of address may result in a delay of the delivery of your exam results.

LODGING AND DIRECTIONS TO THE TESTING SITES:

Hotel information is available from the Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 4510, Boston, MA 02116, by phone at (800)-227-MASS, by email VacationInfo@state.ma.us or by visiting the website at www.masslodging.com. In addition, a block of rooms has been reserved at the Sheraton Boston Hotel, which is adjacent to the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center, the Boston exam testing site. For more information, visit <https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/booking/reservation?id=1110210139&key=9271F>

DIRECTIONS TO THE TESTING SITES: Please download the directions from the website of your test site.

BOSTON

**JOHN B. HYNES VETERANS
MEMORIAL CONVENTION CENTER**

900 Boylston Street,
Boston, MA 02115
(617-954-2000)

www.massconvention.com/jhcc.html

SPRINGFIELD

**WESTERN NEW ENGLAND
UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW**

1215 Wilbraham Road,
Springfield, MA 01119
(413)-782-1412

www1.law.wne.edu