

Admission to the bar in Massachusetts by Motion FAQs

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1. Is Massachusetts reciprocal with any other jurisdiction relative to bar admission?

Massachusetts does not have reciprocity agreements with any jurisdiction. Massachusetts offers admission by motion, waiving the bar examination requirement for attorneys licensed in other jurisdictions who meet the requirements set out in [Supreme Judicial Court Rule 3:01, §6](#) and the [Rules of the Board of Bar Examiners](#) .

2. I understand that in some cases, Massachusetts allows Admission by Motion for longstanding attorneys. Where can I find this information?

Information can be found in Section 6 of the: [Rules of the Supreme Judicial Court 3:01](#).

3. May I request advance advisory on my eligibility for Admission by Motion?

Yes, you may submit a letter to the Board of Bar Examiners with any questions regarding your eligibility for Admission by Motion. Follow the guidelines for seeking an [Advanced Determination of Eligibility for Admission on Motion](#) .

4. I am unable to get my MPRE score from NCBE because I took the MPRE prior to 1999. What can I do?

The National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) will no longer provide Multistate Professional Score Reports (MPRE) from tests taken more than 15 years ago. If you sat for the MPRE more than 15 years ago, you may contact the jurisdictions to which you have been admitted to practice law to request a copy of your MPRE Score Report submitted to that jurisdiction, if applicable. That jurisdiction may be able to provide a copy of

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your MPRE score report or may be able to certify your score. If you are unable to obtain this information, please contact the Supreme Judicial Court Clerk's Office at (617) 557-1050.

5. I took the MPRE and my score was lower than the scaled score of 85 required by Massachusetts. My score was sufficient for the jurisdiction of my previous admission. Will Massachusetts accept this MPRE score?

Yes, a passing score for a jurisdiction in which you are admitted will be accepted when Applying for Admission by Motion in Massachusetts.

6. What guidance is available relative to the condition set out by S.J.C. Rule 3:01, §6.1.1 requiring that petitioners for admission by motion be engaged in the active practice of law for five of the seven years immediately preceding the filing of the petition?

The Board of Bar Examiners encourages attorneys to seek an advanced determination of their eligibility for motion admission by submitting a Letter of Inquiry (see [Letters of Inquiry regarding Admission on Motion](#)) prior to filing a petition.

7. When applying for Admission by Motion to the Massachusetts bar, am I required to complete a character and fitness application that is separate from the general application for admission?

In addition to completing the Petition for Admission by Motion, which incorporates character and fitness questions, you may be required to complete, at your own expense, a Request for Preparation of a Character Report from the [National Conference of Bar Examiners](#) (the "NCBE Character Report"). Following initial review by the Board of Bar Examiners (the "Board") of your Petition for Admission by Motion, you will be notified via email by the Board of your requirement to submit to a request for an NCBE Character Report, including instructions on the procedure for requesting the report.

8. Should I submit the NCBE Request for Completion of a Character Report prior to being notified by the Board of this requirement to submit this?

No. You will receive a letter by email from the Board of Bar Examiners informing you of this requirement. You must submit this letter to NCBE with your request for Preparation of a Character Report.

9. The electronic Petition for Admission by Motion asks me to attach "applicable documents" for legal proceedings, attorney complaints, etc. What is considered an applicable document?

An example of the applicable document would be a record that indicates the final disposition, if the matter is over, or the current disposition if the matter is pending. Petitioners may choose to upload other documents that are relevant or material to the disclosure as well.

10. I am having difficulty obtaining records for my older matters. What should I do?

Please contact the official authority that maintains the records and request a letter that states that the records are no longer available. If they will not provide a letter, please detail your efforts to obtain the records in the narrative or statement of details.

11. How many letters of recommendation do I need for Admission by Motion, and what are the guidelines?

Petitioners need between three and five letters of recommendation. Please review these [guidelines](#) for further information.

12. Do I need to indicate whether my legal work is/was full time, part time, or otherwise?

Yes. Please indicate this under the "nature of business" field in your legal employment history on the electronic Petition for Admission by Motion.