



**OPEN SESSION**  
**AGENDA ITEM 3.1**  
**DECEMBER 2024**  
**COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS**

**DATE:** December 6, 2024

**TO:** Members, Committee of Bar Examiners

**FROM:** Natalie Leonard, Principal Program Analyst

**SUBJECT:** Action on Major Change Request - Add JD Division Allowing Graduation in 2.5 Years in Extraordinary Circumstances - University of La Verne College of Law and Public Service

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The University of La Verne College of Law and Public Service (La Verne) has filed an application (Attachment A) seeking the Committee of Bar Examiners' (committee) approval to add a JD Division that will allow students to complete the full-time JD program in 2.5 years in extraordinary circumstances, while continuing to offer the 3-year full time division. The law school requests permission for this option to take immediate effect.

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**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

It is recommended that the committee grant permission for the law school to add a new JD division effective immediately that will allow students to complete the full-time JD program in 2.5 years in extraordinary circumstances, as set forth in Attachment A.

**DISCUSSION**

La Verne is a California Accredited law school located in La Verne, California. The law school offers two JD divisions: a full-time three-year JD division and a part-time, four-year JD division.

Rule 4.165(A) requires that a law school "adding a new division, full- or part-time . . . must notify the Committee and obtain that approval at least 180 days before making the change. The notice must explain in detail any effect the change might have on the law school's compliance with these rules [for accredited law schools]."

Here, the law school seeks to add an additional full-time JD division of 2.5 years in length, which is an allowable length under the Accredited Law School Rules. Rule 4.160(B)(12)(a) specifies that JD programs must take place over no less than 24 months and should generally be completed within 84 months.

The application also demonstrates how La Verne plans to maintain compliance in this division as well as the law school's other two JD divisions.

The law school projects that the three-year full-time JD and four-year part-time JD will remain the main programs, but students may petition to transfer into a 2.5-year division in extraordinary circumstances such as "when a student's circumstances are such that they may have to pursue summer study or otherwise enroll in additional units to graduate a semester early for career, personal reasons, health considerations."

The proposed division's program will utilize the same courses and similar progression to the current three-year JD division. As a result, all required elements will be included. No additional course sessions will need to be offered, so no significant additional expenditures are expected. Under ABA approval, La Verne has previously offered a JD division of 2.5 years available in extraordinary circumstances, so it already has some experience with this curriculum path.

La Verne sets forth a clear plan for achieving the program's goals. Students will be able to complete the requirements in 2.5 years by adding summer study, which is normally optional for full-time students. If needed, they may also add an additional course in some of the other semesters.

Students must apply, either immediately this semester or at the end of the first- or second-year in the future. They will need to have a 2.3 GPA or better, complete an application, and propose a plan that will fulfill all JD requirements within 2.5 years. Because bar preparation is offered in both the fall and spring terms, graduation during either semester will not compromise State Bar exam preparation.

Staff recommends that the committee grant La Verne's request for immediate approval of a 2.5-year full-time JD division. As part of the implementation, the law school should be directed to provide interested students with the terms of the program as soon as possible and to incorporate the division's requirements into the student handbook for the 2025 Spring semester. By January 31 2025, the law school should send a copy of the manual to the State Bar of California. La Verne should also include an update as to the utilization, retention, and licensure rates for each of its programs as part of the law school's periodic compliance report each year until further notice, consistent with the committee's practice. The need to continue to provide such reports can be reevaluated at the law school's next inspection.

## PREVIOUS ACTION

[Committee of Bar Examiners' Meeting, August 20, 2021, Item V.F.](#)

[Open Session Minutes, Committee of Bar Examiners' Meeting, August 20, 2021, Item V.F.](#)

## AMENDMENTS TO RULES

None

## STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

None – core business operations

## RESOLUTION

If the Committee agrees with this recommendation, the following resolution is suggested:

**RESOLVED** that the Committee of Bar Examiners approves University of La Verne College of Law and Public Service's request to add a full-time JD division of 2.5 years in length as set forth in Attachment A effective immediately.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the law school provide the State Bar with an updated copy of the manual describing the program by January 31, 2025.

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the law school be required to submit progress reports as to the utilization, retention, and licensure rates of those students in the 2.5-year full-time division as compared to its three-year full-time division and part-time division, and to include those reports with its annual periodic compliance report until further notice.

## ATTACHMENT LIST

**Attachment A:** University of La Verne College of Law and Public Service – Request for Major Change – Add Full-Time 2.5-Year JD Division Available in Extraordinary Circumstances