



The State Bar of California

Update on 2025 Bar Exam Planning and Action on Remote Administration of Bar Examinations for Examinees Electing to Test Out-of-State

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Committee of Bar Examiners, October 11, 2024

Multiple-Choice Question Evaluation and Validation

- Multiple-Choice Question Evaluation and Validation
 - First batch of questions provided to staff, second batch expected later this month.
 - Panel of attorneys, newly admitted attorneys, and law school faculty reviewing questions.
 - Minimum competency.
 - Free from bias.
 - Legally sound.
 - Meetings planned between October and December 2024.



Study Guides

- Draft faculty guide provided to staff.
 - 25 sample questions.
 - All seven bar exam subject areas.
 - Annotated information on all responses.
- Draft faculty guide under review by panel.
 - Expected to be released later this month.
- Student study guide to follow the same review process.



Agreement with Meazure Learning

- Working to finalize an agreement beginning with the February 2025 bar exam.
- Parties have agreed to high-level terms.
 - Customer service
 - Exam delivery
 - Security protocols
- Committee volunteers to provide feedback.



California Bar Exam Experiment

- Field test 49 new multiple-choice questions.
- Operationally test the Measure Learning platform.
 - Remote with live proctors
 - In person at test centers
- Additional date added: November 8 and 9.
- Over 4,200 applications received to date.
- Q&A sessions with law school administrators and applicants.
 - Webpage and FAQs enhanced in response to questions and feedback received.



February 2025 Bar Exam Application Open

- Successfully opened on time on October 1.
- Proposed bar exam changes pending Supreme Court approval.
- Applicants select their preferred exam modality: remote or in person at a test center.
- Bar Exam FAQs updated to provide as much information as possible.
- Staff will notify applicants, update webpages, and revise FAQs upon a decision by the Supreme Court.
- Bar Exam Strategies and Stories program available.





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Support Programs for Applicants

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Committee of Bar Examiners, October 11, 2024

Support Programs for Applicants and Test Takers

- ADHD Programming
 - Motivational Regulation
 - Working Memory
 - Emotional Regulation
 - Planning and Problem-Solving
 - Inhibition and Impulse Control
 - Self-Awareness
- Overcoming Imposter Syndrome Toolbox
 - Resources for attorneys, law students, and employers.
 - Available on the State Bar website.
- Bar Retaker Support Program



Reset: Bar Retaker Support Program

Origin

- *LAP statutory mission*: To protect the public and profession through supportive and preventative programs for attorneys, bar applicants, and law students.
- *Identified need*: Bar retaker's prior failed attempt is the strongest predictors of future failure, indicating the necessity for targeted support.
- *Expert-led sessions*: Recognizing the need for mental health and study skills-focused support for retakers.

Objectives

- *Expand support*: Increase resources available to bar exam retakers.
- *Promote access*: Support underrepresented groups such as first-generation law students and historically marginalized groups, over-represented among retakers.
- *Complement existing programs*: Provide interactive, mental and study skill-building sessions to complement the Strategies & Stories program.



Reset: Bar Retaker Support Program

Jul '24 Pilot Program Impact

- *Participation:* Supported 115–176 retakers per session, with approximately 279 total unique attendees.
- *Focus areas:* Four (4) evening 60-minute sessions addressed resilience, score report, multiple-choice question preparation, essay writing, PT, and self-care in May and June. Mental skills sessions separate from study skills.
- *Positive impact:* Evaluations indicated improved mental and study skills.
- *Engagement:* Interactive Q&A allowed for some participant engagement.

• Feb '25 General Bar Exam Reset Program

- *Participation:* Expect increased participation through **expanded cross-promotion by law schools.**
- *Focus areas:* **Five (5) evening 90-minute sessions** in December and January with increased time to address subjects; **mental skills interleaved with study skills**
- *Determining impact:* Will issue **redesigned program evaluations prior to each session end** to increase completion rate.
- *Engagement:* Building a **library of pre-recorded material** for multiple uses, including asynchronous content engagement.





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Considerations

- 22% of February 2024 and 20% of July 2024 approved bar exam applications were from applicants with out-of-state addresses.
- Important benefit of new administration approach is reduction in cost and burden for applicants:
 - July 2024 bar exam survey findings:
 - One-third spent over \$1,000 for travel and lodging.
 - One-quarter traveled over 250 miles from their residence.
- Measure Learning global exam administration experience:
 - Secure browser
 - Remote access and application detection
 - ID checks and live proctor
 - Collusion detection
 - Registration restrictions and policies



Recommendations



Applicants outside of California be allowed to take the bar exam remotely.



Applicants outside of California be allowed to take the bar exam at test centers outside of California.



Participants in Phase One and Phase Two of the California Bar Exam Experiment be allowed to do the same.



Questions?

