

3.1 Admissions Update and Discussion and Possible Adoption of Recommendation to Extend Fee Waivers for Test Takers Impacted by February 2025 Exam through 2026



The State Bar of California

Update from the Office of Admissions & Extension of Time to Use Fee Waiver

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Board of Trustees Meeting, May 9, 2025

Admissions Update: February 2025 Bar Exam

CBE Recommendation (4/18/25) Reflected in Petition (4/28/25)	Supreme Court Order
Imputation of “Missing Data” for Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQs), Essay, and Performance Test (PT)	✓ To include where test taker had no access to PT file and library
Minimum Raw Passing Score of 534 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 114 / 171 MCQs• 420 / 700 points on essay & PT	✓ ✓ ✓
	Use the MBE for the July 2025 in person administration



Admissions Update: February 2025 Bar Exam Recent Focus

- 200 MCQs
 - 117 developed by Kaplan
 - 54 from the unused bank of FYLSX questions
 - 29 developed by ACS using AI
- November Special Session – 49 MCQs
 - 35 developed by Kaplan
 - 14 developed by ACS using AI
 - 11 carried over to February Exam
- All Questions, Regardless of Source, Subject to Content Validation Process
- Lack of Transparency about Question Source



Admissions Update: February 2025 Bar Exam Key Statistics

General Bar Exam

- Overall pass rate: 55.9%
- Pass rate for first time takers: 62.1%
- Pass rate for repeat takers: 53.2%

Attorneys

- Overall pass rate on Attorneys' Exam: 76.5%
- Attorneys barred in other states taking the GBX: 88%

Imputation of Scores and Scoring Adjustments for GBX Test Takers

- Essay/Performance Test: 45
- MCQ imputations: 382
- November adjustments: 527



Admissions Update: July 2025 Bar Exam

Region	Standard Test Sites	Test Sites for Applicants with Certain Accommodations
Sacramento	@the Grounds	
		Hilton Sacramento Arden West
San Francisco	Oakland Convention Center	Oakland Convention Center
		Golden Gate University
Los Angeles	Anaheim Convention Center	
		Hotel Fera Anaheim, Orange
	Ontario Convention Center	Ontario Convention Center
	Pasadena Convention Center	Pasadena Convention Center
		CA State Bar Office in Los Angeles
San Diego	Chula Vista Elite Athlete Training Center	
		Sheraton Mission Valley San Diego Hotel

- Cost: \$1.7 million
- LA State Bar Office (@160 test takers) – reduced distraction, semi-private rooms, private rooms



Admissions Update: July 2025 Bar Exam

- Registrants
 - Projected as many as 10,000
 - As of May 5, 2025, at 1 pm (w/o unsuccessful Feb 2025 test takers) 7,420
- Proctors
 - Projected need for as many as 1,400+
 - Over 1,000 interest proctors already connecting with staff expressing interest



Admissions Update: July 2025 Bar Exam

April 29, 2025, Contracts Committee approved:

- Up to \$1.5 million for Proctor Payment and Services
- Up to \$250,000 for additional proctors through temp agency
- Additional \$93,750 to continue the Productive Mindset Study

Other Cost Information

- MBE – \$72 per applicant (estimated at \$720,000) – to the Board May 22
- Reduction in contract with ExamSoft by @\$100,000 (from \$110 per applicant to \$100 per applicant for not delivering the MCQ on the platform)
- Five-year contract with Kaplan Exam Services; will continue to incur costs despite return to MBE for July 2025



Resolution Adopted by Board in February

- That the Board of Trustees approves \$3.1M in the budget to support fee waivers for the July 2025 bar exam to eligible February 2025 bar exam takers and authorizes staff to develop the eligibility framework with general parameters being those who withdrew from the February 2025 bar exam or fail the February 2025, after good faith efforts.



Recommendation Adopted by CBE May 5

RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD:

- That the Committee of Bar Examiners recommends that the Board of Trustees extend the existing fee waiver for applicants who were unsuccessful on or withdrew from the February 2025 California Bar Exam to allow them to use the waiver for the July 2025, February 2026 or July 2026 administration
- That applicants who have already applied for the July 2025 bar exam with the fee waiver be allowed to withdraw from the exam before the final filing deadline of June 2, 2025, and apply the fee waiver to one of the 2026 administrations of the bar exam.

ADDITIONALLY, NOT REQUIRING BOARD ACTION

- The Committee of Bar Examiners directs staff to request that the Supreme Court allow the scaled score adjustment for participation in the November study to be applied to the multiple-choice portion of the General Bar Examination on whichever of the 2025 or 2026 administrations of the General Bar Examination they attempt first.



Proposed Board Resolution

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves extending the fee waivers to sit for the July 2025 bar exam approved at the February Board meeting, such that the Board approves \$4.9 million in the budget to support fee waivers for whichever of the following administrations of the bar exam that those who withdrew from the February 2025 bar exam or were unsuccessful on that exam sit for first: July 2025, February 2026, or July 2026; and it is

FURTHER RESOLVED, that applicants who have already applied for the July 2025 bar exam with the fee waiver be allowed to withdraw from the exam before the final filing deadline of June 2, 2025, and apply the fee waiver to one of the 2026 administrations of the bar exam.

