

1.2 Adoption of Revisions to Committee of Bar Examiners' 2025 Work Plan



The State Bar of California

OPEN SESSION

AGENDA ITEM

1.2 JUNE 2025

COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS

DATE: June 20, 2025

TO: Members, Committee of Bar Examiners

FROM: Donna Hershkowitz, Chief of Admissions / Legislative Director

SUBJECT: Adoption of Revisions to Committee of Bar Examiners / 2025 Work Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To better balance the expectations and workload for the Committee of Bar Examiners and State Bar staff, this item proposes eliminating or delaying items on the CBE's 2025 work plan. The item also includes new assignments not captured on the April adopted version of the work plan, including work related to provisional licensure and exam development. The CBE is asked to approve this revised work plan.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Adopt the revised 2025 work plan.

DISCUSSION

The Committee and staff have been unable to move forward several items currently on the 2025 Work Plan due to competing responsibilities. Additionally, new responsibilities have been or are likely to be added with the following:

- Expansion of the Provisional Licensure Program
- Expanded role for the Committee in exam administration and exam development
- Implementation of revised special admissions program for servicemembers and spouses
- Pending proposal to amend Title 9 of the California Rules of Court
- Pending proposal to amend Business and Professions Code section 6060.8 requiring the

development of a proposal for expedited licensure for out-of-state licensed attorneys without the need to take the bar exam

Attachment A proposes changes to the work plan, reflected in the final column, with both additions and deletions to better balance the expectations and workload for the Committee of Bar Examiners and State Bar staff.

PREVIOUS ACTION

[April 18, 2025](#): The CBE reviewed changes to the work plan to incorporate CBE responsibility for several facets of exam administration.

FISCAL/PERSONNEL IMPACT

These revisions will provide more reasonable workload expectations for the committee and staff.

AMENDMENTS TO RULES

None

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

None – core business operations

RESOLUTIONS

Should the Committee of Bar Examiners concur, it is

RESOLVED, that the Committee of Bar Examiners adopts the revisions to the 2025 Committee of Bar Examiners Work Plan as reflected in Attachment A and directs staff to implement the changes to the work plan.

ATTACHMENT LIST

- A. 2025 Committee of Bar Examiners Work Plan



The State Bar *of California*

COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS 2025 WORK PLAN

Charge:

The Committee of Bar Examiners is comprised of 19 members:

- Three public members appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly;
- Three public members appointed by the Senate Rules Committee;
- Three public members appointed by the Governor; and
- Ten members appointed the California Supreme Court, including one judge and nine attorneys (one of whom must have been admitted to practice law within three years of their appointment).

The charge of the committee is as follows:

- Examine all applicants for admission to practice law.
- Administer the requirements for admission to practice law.
- Certify to the Supreme Court for admission those applicants who fulfill the requirements.
- Determine the pre-legal and legal education eligibility of applicants.
- Determine whether an applicant possesses the requisite good moral character to practice law.
- Accredite law schools and register unaccredited and correspondence law schools, in accordance with the State Bar Rules, in California.

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Moral Character One-Time Assignments							
Moral Character Rules Revisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review public comment and recommend adoption (pending Supreme Court review and approval) 	June 2024 – Completed	Y / July 2024 – Completed	None – Core business operations				Remove as completed
Moral Character Recurring Assignments							
Conduct administrative reviews of adverse moral character determinations and make final determinations with respect to Applications for Determination of Moral Character	Ongoing	N	None – Core business operations				
Trainings and Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lawyers Assistance Program, Substance Abuse, and Mental Health in Moral Character Determinations 	Tentative Schedule: August 2025	N	None – Core business operations				Record trainings and make available for CBE

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATIO N STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Examinations One-Time Assignments							
Testing Accommodation Rules Revisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze impact of new rules, forms, and processes and produce tracking metrics 	To be determined, pending Supreme Court approval	N	Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to, and Inclusion in, the Legal System	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Increase the number of diverse attorneys in the legal profession through diversity pipeline programs that support aspiring attorneys in graduation from law school and passing the bar exam	Examinations	Move to 2026 work plan (propose to rename subcommittee Testing Accommodations and Eligibility)
Develop recommendations regarding certain components of bar exam delivery: remote v. in person; open book v. closed book; time limit on questions; (informed by the AccessLex Study).	CBE - 2025, at completion of AccessLex Grant	Y/ 2025	Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to, and Inclusion in, the Legal System	Effectiveness		Exam Administration / Exam Development	Remove; Phase 2 of “experiment” postponed indefinitely
Conduct landscape analysis of trends in licensing across the 50 states and Canada, to include assessment of bar exams and alternative pathways to licensure.	Incorporated in development of new exam	N	None – Core business operations				Remove

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
California develop its own bar examination based on the CAPA recommendations related to knowledge, skills and abilities, embark on the development of a new CA bar examination designed with the guiding principles adopted by the Blue Ribbon Commission in mind, including crafting an exam that is fair, equitable, and minimizes disparate performance impacts based on race, gender, ethnicity, disability, and other immutable characteristics.	Timeline to be developed with CBE oversight	Y	None – Core business operations			Exam Development	Revise wording: Embark on the development of a new CA bar examination designed with the guiding principles adopted by the Blue Ribbon Commission in mind.
Explore partnering with the California Lawyers Association to host admissions ceremonies.	December 2024	Y	None – Core business operations				Move to 2027 work plan
Continue with the productive mindset intervention (Bar Exam Strategies & Stories) which attempts to mitigate the harms associated with concerns about potential, belonging, and stress and spur motivation and performance	Scheduled for the February and July 2025 CA Bar Examinations	N	Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to, and Inclusion in, the Legal System	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion			Remove from Work Plan. This has become a regular part of staff work. Committee has not been involved.

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
(Walton & Wilson, 2018). This program was developed to help test takers find productive ways to interpret the challenges, obstacles, and negative psychological experiences associated with preparing for the bar exam. The primary goal was to improve bar applicants' test-taking experiences and exam performance.							
Implement an extension of Strategies & Stories Program aimed to improve bar applicants' test taking experience and exam performance. Stanford University PhD candidate, Kris Evans would like to provide bar exam applicants strategies to improve potential success on the CA Bar exam; these strategies stress mindset work, aim to improve well-being and focus on driving applicants to meet their peak performance, psychologically and physically.	Scheduled for the July 2025 CA Bar Examination	N	Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to, and Inclusion in, the Legal System	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion			Remove from work plan as completed. PEAK performance study launched with registration for July 2025 bar exam. See https://www.stanfordpeakprep.org/

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Examinations Recurring Assignments							
Review testing accommodations requests for review from applicants.	Ongoing	N	None – Core business operations			Examinations	
Provide input on strategies for identifying methods to diversify grader and exam developer pool.	Ongoing	N	Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to, and Inclusion in, the Legal System	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion		Exam Admin	Revise to eliminate references to exam developer pool
Trainings and Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation from the Examination Development and Grading (EDG) Team on the Basics of Essay Question Development • Presentation from Performance Test (PT) Drafting Team Member 	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 2025 Dec 2024-completed	N	None – Core business operations				Record trainings and make available for CBE
Edit and approve final versions of the essay questions and select performance test questions for administration on California Bar Examinations.	Ongoing	N	None – Core business operations				

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Edit and approval of final versions of MCQ questions for administration on California Bar Examinations	Ongoing	N	None – Core business operations			Exam Development	Add
Develop plan to ensure appropriate CBE oversight over Exam Development efforts	August 2025	N	None – Core business operations			Exam Development	Add
Review reports on administrations of the California First-Year Law Students' and California Bar Examinations.	Ongoing	N	None – Core business operations				
Operations & Management: One Time Assignments							
Special Admissions: Multijurisdictional Practice and Foreign Legal Consultant Rules Revisions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review further revisions to the rules and circulate for public comment 	October 2024 – Completed	Y	Goal 2: Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to and Inclusion in the Legal System	Effectiveness			Move to 2027 work plan

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Review revisions of Admissions Rules relevant to Exam Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend rule revisions to the Board to circulate for public comment Review public comment, make revisions as appropriate, and recommend appropriate further action (adoption or circulation for further public comment).	To be Determined	Y	Goal 2: Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to and Inclusion in the Legal System	Effectiveness		Exam Administration	Move 2027 work plan
Eligibility Rules Revisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review further revisions to the rules and circulate for public comment Review the statutory deadlines and those within the Rules of the State Bar	To be Determined	Y	Goal 2: Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to and Inclusion in the Legal System	Effectiveness			Move to 2026 work plan
Practical Training of Law Students (PTLS) Rules Revisions: review possible changes to authorize Law Office Study (LOS) applicants to participate in PTLS	March 2025	Y/ May 2025	Goal 2: Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to and Inclusion in the Legal System	Effectiveness			Revise to reflect pending task, review public comment for next steps.

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review further revisions to the rules and recirculate for a second round of public comment 							Revise date for CBE (August or October 2025), and Board (November 2025)
Law Office Study (LOS) Rules Revisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review further revisions to the rules and recirculate for a second round of public comment. 	March 2025	Y/ May 2025	None- Core business operations				Revise to reflect pending task, review public comment for next steps. Revise date for CBE (August or October 2025), and Board (November 2025)

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Evaluate whether to phase out handwriting options for non-TA applicants on bar exam.	December 2024		None – Core business operations				Revise to reflect need to provide 2-year notice
Provisional Licensure Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review key participation data (including make up of participants and experiences with supervisors) 	December 2025 October 2026	N	None – Core business operations				Add

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATIO N STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Develop rule proposal, if AB 1522 is enacted, outlining a process for expediting licensure to practice law (without an exam) for attorneys meeting the criteria of new B&P 6060.8	October 2025	Y / November 2025	None – Core business operations				Add
Special Admissions: Review of procedures and key statistics for revised servicemember and military spouse special admissions program	December 2025 October 2026	N	None – Core business operations			Examinations	Add

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Operations and Management Recurring Assignments							
Consider petitions seeking waivers of the Committee's examinations-related policies, procedures, and rules.	Ongoing	N	None – Core business operations				
Consider draft reports to the Supreme Court of California on the July and February California Bar Examinations.	January 2025-completed August 2025	N	None – Core business operations				
Participate in selection of vendors related to bar exam administration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing proposals • Meeting with vendors • Developing requirements, RFPs or other documents to identify the scope of work ○ Piloting or Reviewing Product Making recommendations to	Schedule Exam Driver Vendors for In-Person Exam- June 2025 CBE Meeting Vendors Provide Access/ Pilot Test to Staff & CBE for Independent Review	Y / BOT considers CBE Rec for Feb and July 2026 CA Bar Exam Vendors- September 2025	None – Core business operations			Exam Admin	Update Timelines

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATIO N STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
the Board of Trustees	<p>Between June & Aug 2025</p> <p>Discuss Findings from In-Person Exam Driver/ Start Vendor Exploration for</p> <p>Remote Exam Proctor & Driver Vendors – Aug 2025 CBE Mtg</p> <p>Remote Vendors Provide Access/ Pilot Test to staff & CBE for independent review between Aug & Oct 2025</p> <p>Discuss Findings from Remote Exam</p>						

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Receive updates regarding the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admissions budget and fees Other actions of the Board of Trustees and Legislature that may affect Admissions programs and resources Admissions statistics 	Ongoing	N	None – Core business operations				Update following adoption of revised Title 9 Rules of Court
Educational Standards One-Time Assignments							
Revise unaccredited law school rules.	Ongoing; Q4 2025	Y/TBD	Goal 2. Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to and Inclusion in the Legal System	Policy & Systems Change	Collaborate with stakeholders and law schools to improve the law school accreditation process.		Move to 2026 work plan
Explore the need for a mandatory accreditation requirement following effort to review unaccredited law school rules.	Pending timeline for unaccredited law school rules	N	Goal 2. Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to and Inclusion in the Legal System	Policy and Systems Change	Collaborate with stakeholders and law schools to improve the law school accreditation process.		Move to parking lot (to allow time for implementation of unaccredited rules before exploring)

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Assess feedback from law schools regarding the future bar exam as directed by the Supreme Court with a focus on: 1) Licensure requirements and coursework 2) Success of diverse student populations Supporting law schools through change and transition	Pending committee and task force workflow.	N	Goal 2. Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to, and Inclusion in, the Legal System	Effectiveness	Revise admissions requirements to be more relevant to the practice of law in alignment with the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Future of the Bar Exam.		
Explore requirements for California- accredited law schools to require courses regarding the competent use of generative AI; and regulations or rules related to the bar exam and generative AI.	June 2025	Y/July 2025	Goal 4. Protect the Public by Engaging Partners	Policy and Systems Change	Serve as an incubator for innovation, share successes and best practices, and support implementation efforts in other organizations.		Move to December 2025
Explore opportunities to collect enrolled student demographic data that comports with current State Bar- wide	October 2025	N	Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to, and Inclusion in, the Legal System	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion	Increase the number of diverse attorneys in the legal profession through diversity pipeline programs		

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demographic identifiers.					that support aspiring attorneys in graduation from law school and passing the bar exam.		
Educational Standards Recurring Assignments							
Trainings and Presentations: Presentation from institutional accreditor	January 2025	N	None – Core business				
Provide Committee with updated Law School Performance Report.	August 2025	N	Goal 2. Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to and Inclusion in the Legal System	Policy and Systems Change			
Enhance law school engagement, using new approaches based on feedback received from the Committee of State Bar Accredited and Registered Schools (CSBARS) and the Law School Council (LSC). Priority topics include communicating available support to law schools to	Ongoing	N	None – Core business operations				

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enhance compliance and outcomes and State Bar-wide resources to support students.							
Review petitions for registration and accreditation, as well as existing registered and accredited law schools' petitions for changes. Continue implementation of Jointly Accredited Status Application process for qualifying schools.	Ongoing		None – Core business operations				
Review progress reports and waivers submitted with Annual Compliance Reports.	Ongoing	N	None – Core business operations				
Review Minimum, Cumulative Five- Year Bar Pass Rate statistics from accredited law schools for compliance.	August 2025	N	None – Core business operations				
Explore enhancements to annual compliance reports to improve utility and transparency.	August 2025	N	Goal 2. Protect the Public by Enhancing Access to and Inclusion in the Legal System	Policy and Systems Change			

WORK PLAN	DEADLINE	TO BOARD EXCOMM (Y/N) / DATE	STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL	STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION STEP	SUBCOM ASSIGNED (if any)	PROPOSAL
Expand committee member participation in law school inspections with the goal of each member participating in at least one during the current term.	Ongoing	N	None – Core business operations				

WORK PLAN FUTURE ITEMS

Area	Item	Tentative Date
All	Investigate making public comments more easily accessible for Committee members and the public	2026
All	Investigate ways to increase the meeting time available for Committee members to discuss Committee business	Ongoing
Educational Standards	Assess Accredited Law School Rules adopted in 2022 and explore whether further refinement is appropriate	2026
Exam Administration	Explore partnering with the California Lawyers Association to host admissions ceremonies	2027
Examinations	Testing Accommodation Rules Revisions: Analyze impact of new rules, forms, and processes and produce tracking metrics (pending Court approval)	2026
Moral Character	Explore the possibility of video recording informal conferences	2026
Educational Standards	Revise unaccredited law school rules.	2026
Exam Administration	Exam Administration Rules: Review revisions and recommend rule revisions to the Board to circulate for public comment	2027
Examinations (to be renamed Testing Accommodations and Eligibility)	Special Admissions: Multijurisdictional Practice and Foreign Legal Consultant Rules Revisions. Review further revisions to the rules and circulate for public comment	2027

WORK PLAN FUTURE ITEMS

Examinations (to be renamed Testing Accommodations and Eligibility)	Eligibility Rules Revisions: Review further revisions to the rules and circulate for public comment. Review the statutory deadlines and those within the Rules of the State Bar	2027
Examinations Administration	Conduct Standard Setting 4 years after eliminating the essays to ensure its meeting its objective; Review the First Year Law Students Examination Passing Score after sufficient data is available to correlate the score with performance on the California Bar Exam	Start 2028