



## CHECKLIST OF DATES, APPLICATIONS & FEES REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION TO THE CALIFORNIA BAR\* 2025-2026

This document is intended to help students navigate the California State Bar application process. It is not intended as a substitute for your own research.

**\*Note:** information, fees, and links within this document are subject to change without notice. For the latest information, refer to [www.calbar.ca.gov](http://www.calbar.ca.gov). This is separate from any registration dates for exam prep courses and is not intended to substitute for your own research. Guidance is based on information available as of September 4, 2025 and may not be complete.

If you intend to take a bar exam in another jurisdiction, you may obtain the appropriate admissions contact and website from the National Conference of Bar Examiners at: <http://www.ncbex.org/>

### ☐ **Registration with the Committee of Bar Examiners | 1<sup>st</sup> Year Students**

Students must register with the California Committee of Bar Examiners as a law student. You likely did this during the first 90 days of your first year of law school, but if you did not, you can still register. Students can register on-line through the California Bar web site, [www.calbar.ca.gov](http://www.calbar.ca.gov).

<u>When</u>	Within 90 days of starting first year
<u>Cost</u>	\$150
<u>Website:</u>	<a href="http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Requirements">http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Requirements</a>

### ☐ **Application for the Determination of Moral Character | 2<sup>nd</sup> Yr & within 90 days of Fingerprinting**

A positive moral character determination is a prerequisite to being admitted to the bar and practicing law in California. The filing of the moral character application begins the process of character investigation which generally takes eight to ten months, but could possibly take longer. You must register as a law student with the Committee of Bar Examiners **prior** to submitting the application.

<u>When</u>	<b>Now.</b> (Most students file during their 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of law school. The committee recommends that applicants file at least 8-10 months prior to date you expect to practice law).
<u>Cost</u>	\$745
<u>Website:</u>	<a href="http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Moral-Character">http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Moral-Character</a>

**Note:** The Application for the Determination of Moral Character must be filed within 90 days of obtaining Live Scan Fingerprinting otherwise the fingerprinting will be considered invalid. Please be aware that the vendor conducting the fingerprinting only retains the records for 90 days.

### ☐ **Live Scan Fingerprinting: | 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> year & within 90 days of filing for Determination of Moral Character**

The California Bar also requires that all applicants to the practice of law be fingerprinted. Applicants are required to submit fingerprints through the Live Scan system with the application for Moral Character Determination.

A list of agencies providing the Live Scan fingerprinting service can be found at the California Attorney General - Department of Justice website: <https://oag.ca.gov/fingerprints/locations>

**NOTE:** The Office of Admissions of the California Bar strongly advises that applicants file for the Determination of Moral Character within 90 day of fingerprinting. **Please be aware that the vendor conducting the fingerprinting only retains the records for 90 days.**

### ☐ **Multi-state Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE): | 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Students**

This examination is administered by the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) and is one of the requirements for admission to practice law in California (and in all but 3 of the other U.S. jurisdictions). There are typically three test dates per year – March, August, and November.

**NOTE:** It is necessary that you request that National Conference of Bar Examiners report your score to the California Committee of Bar Examiners.

<u>Exam Date</u>	November 13 or 14, 2025, March 24 or 25, 2026, August 11 or 12, 2026
<u>When</u>	Registration is open for the November 2025 dates and the application deadline is September 25. (Recommended date to apply for testing accommodations for the November exam has passed. The recommended date to apply for accommodations for the March exam is November 20, 2025.) Registration for March dates begins December 16, 2025.
<u>Cost</u>	\$160 (2025) or \$185 (2026)
<u>Website</u>	<a href="http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre/registration/">http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre/registration/</a>
<u>Accommodations**</u>	<a href="https://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre/test-accommodations">https://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre/test-accommodations</a>
<u>More Info</u>	<a href="http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Examinations/Multistate-Professional-Responsibility-Examination">http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Examinations/Multistate-Professional-Responsibility-Examination</a>

*\*\*If applying for testing accommodations for the MPRE, you must receive a determination **before** registering for the exam.*

### ☐ **Bar Examination Application: | Year of graduation by the CA Bar application deadline.**

Students graduating from law school must file an application to sit for the bar examination in California.

<u>Exam Date</u>	<b>February 2026 Bar Examination</b>
<u>When:</u>	Application Available – October 1 (expected). Timely filing – November 1 (expected). Final filing deadline – TBD. <a href="https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Examinations/Dates-and-Deadlines">https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Examinations/Dates-and-Deadlines</a>
<u>Cost</u>	\$850 General Applicants
<u>Late Fees:</u>	\$50 Late Filing Fee (typically November 2-29, 2025) \$250 Late Filing Fee (typically November 30 – January 2, 2026)
<u>Exam Date</u>	<b>July 2026 Bar Examination</b>
<u>When</u>	Application Available – March 1 (expected). Timely filing – April 1 (expected). Final filing deadline – June 1, 2026 (expected).

### ☐ **Laptop Certification: | By applicable deadline**

If you plan to use a computer for the essay portion of the exam you must apply for laptop certification. There are a number of steps that you will have to follow in order to register with the exam software.

<u>When</u>	When Registering for the Bar Examination
<u>Cost</u>	\$153 (\$50 late fee, requested after submitting application)
<u>Website</u>	<a href="https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Examinations/California-Bar-Examination/Laptops-for-Bar-Exam">https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Examinations/California-Bar-Examination/Laptops-for-Bar-Exam</a>

### **Testing Accommodations for the Bar Examination: | 2<sup>nd</sup> year, or ASAP by last year (3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>)**

Students who have received examination accommodations while attending law school must petition the Committee of Bar Examiners to receive accommodations for the Bar Examination. Students may petition the Bar any time after having registered with the Bar, and the Committee of Bar Examiners strongly encourages students to file before the beginning of their third year and no later than six months prior to the exam that they wish to take. Petitions generally take anywhere from 60 days to six months to review and approve and may take longer if additional documentation is required. The application for

accommodations must be received no later than the final filing deadline for testing accommodation petitions. Applicants who wait to file their requests near the final filing deadline for the examination they intend to take generally are not able to exhaust all administrative remedies before administration of the exam, such as appealing a denial of some or all of an applicant's request for testing accommodations. **Early filing is strongly encouraged.**

<u>When</u>	<b>Now</b> , if applicable. (2 <sup>nd</sup> year is strongly encouraged <b>but no later</b> than three months prior to the exam that you wish to take).
<u>Website</u>	<a href="http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Examinations/Requesting-Testing-Accommodations">http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Examinations/Requesting-Testing-Accommodations</a>

**Comply with California court-ordered child or family support obligations (if applicable):**

Applicants who have met all other requirements but who have been certified by the State Department of Social Services as being in non-compliance with court ordered child or family support will not be certified to the Supreme Court as qualified to practice law in California unless the appropriate release has been obtained.

<u>When</u>	When filing moral character application (2 <sup>nd</sup> year)
<u>Website</u>	<a href="http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Moral-Character">http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Moral-Character</a>

Helpful Links
<b>State Bar Admissions General Information:</b> <a href="http://www.calbar.ca.gov/">http://www.calbar.ca.gov/</a>
<b>Summary of Requirements for Admission to Practice Law in California:</b> <a href="http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Requirements/">http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions/Requirements/</a>
<b>Applications, Forms, and Bar Examination Information:</b> <a href="http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions">http://www.calbar.ca.gov/Admissions</a>