

APPLICANTS FOR ADMISSION TO PRACTICE LAW

(a) Prerequisite for Admission. Every person desiring to be admitted to the Bar and the practice of law in Washington must be of good moral character and possess the requisite fitness to practice law, and must qualify for and pass an examination except as provided for in these rules.

(b) Qualification for Lawyer Bar Examination. To qualify to sit for the lawyer bar examination, a person must not be eligible for admission by motion or Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) score transfer and must present satisfactory proof of:

(1) graduation with a Juris Doctor (JD) degree from a law school approved by the Board of Governors; or

(2) completion of the law clerk program prescribed by these rules; or

(3) graduation from a university or law school in any jurisdiction where the common law of England is the basis for its jurisprudence with a degree in law that would qualify the applicant to practice law in that jurisdiction and admission to the practice of law in that same or other jurisdiction where common law of England is the basis of its jurisprudence, together with current good standing and active legal experience for at least three of the five years immediately preceding the filing of the application; or

(4) graduation with a Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree for the practice of law as defined below and either:

(A) graduation with a JD degree from a United States law school not approved by the Board of Governors, or

(B) graduation from a university or law school in a jurisdiction outside the United States, with a degree in law that would qualify the applicant to practice law in that jurisdiction.

“LL.M. degree for the practice of law” means an LL.M. program at a law school approved by the Board of Governors that consists of a minimum of 18,200 minutes of total instruction to include at least 12,000 minutes of instruction on principles of domestic United States law, which must include:

(A) a minimum of 2,080 minutes in United States Constitutional Law, including principles of separation of powers and federalism;

(B) a minimum of 2,080 minutes in the civil procedure of state and federal courts in the United States;

(C) a minimum of 1,400 minutes in the history, goals, structure, values, rules, and responsibilities of the United States legal profession and its members; and

(D) a minimum of 1,400 minutes in legal analysis and reasoning, legal research, problem solving, and oral and written communication.

(c) Lawyer Admission by Motion.

(1) Lawyers admitted to practice law in other states or territories of the United States or the District of Columbia are not required to sit for the lawyer bar examination if they:

(A) file a certificate from that jurisdiction certifying the lawyer’s admission to practice, and

the date thereof, and current good standing or the equivalent; and

(B) present satisfactory proof of active legal experience for at least three of the five years immediately preceding the filing of the application.

(2) *Military Spouse Admission by Motion.* A lawyer admitted to practice law in another state or territory of the United States or the District of Columbia who is the spouse of an active duty service member of the United States Uniformed Services, as defined by the United States Department of Defense, is not required to sit for the lawyer bar examination if the applicant meets the following requirements:

(A) the applicant's spouse is stationed in Washington or will be stationed in Washington within six months of filing the application, and the applicant resides or will reside in Washington as the spouse of that member of the United States Uniformed Services within six months of filing the application;

(B) the applicant does not qualify for admission by motion under APR 3(c)(1);

(C) the applicant does not qualify for admission by UBE score transfer under APR 3(d);

(D) the applicant files a certificate from each jurisdiction in which the applicant is admitted certifying the applicant's admission to practice and the date thereof, and current good standing or the equivalent; and

(E) the applicant has no lawyer disciplinary sanctions or pending lawyer disciplinary or incapacity matters in any jurisdiction in which the applicant has been admitted.

(d) Lawyer Admission by UBE Score Transfer. Persons with a UBE score earned in another state or territory of the United States or the District of Columbia are not required to sit for the lawyer bar examination in Washington if they:

(1) file a transcript demonstrating that the applicant received a UBE score that is equal to or higher than the score required to pass the UBE in Washington, and it has been not more than 40 months since the date of the administration of the UBE in which the score was earned; and

(2) file a transcript demonstrating that the applicant received a Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE) score equal to or higher than the score required to pass the MPRE in Washington, and the score was received no earlier than three years prior to and no later than 40 months after the date of the administration of the UBE in which the applicant received the UBE score.

(e) Qualification for Limited License Legal Technician (LLLT) examination. To qualify to sit for the LLLT examination, a person must;

(1) be at least 18 years of age and

(2) have the following education, unless waived through regulation:

(A) an associate level degree or higher;

(B) 45 credit hours of core curriculum instruction in paralegal studies pursuant to APR 28 Regulation 3 with instruction to occur at an American Bar Association (ABA) approved law school, an educational institution with an ABA approved paralegal education program, or an educational institution with an LLLT core curriculum program approved by the LLLT Board; and

(C) in each practice area in which an applicant seeks licensure, instruction in the approved practice area based on a curriculum developed by or in conjunction with an ABA approved law school, covering the key concepts or topics and the number of credit hours of instruction required for licensure in that practice area, as determined by the LLLT Board.

(f) Qualification for Limited Practice Officer (LPO) Examination. To qualify to sit for the LPO examination, a person must be at least 18 years of age.

(g) Pro Bono Admission. A lawyer, LLLT, or LPO admitted to practice law in Washington State may apply for pro bono status when the lawyer, LLLT, or LPO is inactive or otherwise fully retired from the practice of law. A pro bono status lawyer, LLLT, or LPO shall provide legal services in Washington State only for a qualified legal service provider as defined in these rules.

(1) To apply, the lawyer, LLLT, or LPO shall:

(A) file an application in such form and manner as prescribed by the Bar;

(B) file a certification from one or more qualified legal services provider(s) that the applicant's practice of law will comply with the terms of this rule;

(C) comply with training requirements prescribed by the Bar; and

(D) furnish whatever additional information or proof that may be required in the course of investigating the applicant.

(2) Upon approval of the application by the Bar, the lawyer, LLLT, or LPO shall pay the current year's annual license fee in the amount required of inactive lawyers, LLLTs, or LPOs, whichever is the applicable license type. This fee shall be waived if the pro bono status lawyer, LLLT, or LPO provided at least 30 hours of pro bono service through a qualified legal service provider in the previous calendar year. Pro bono status lawyers, LLLTs, or LPOs are subject to annual license renewal as provided by the Board of Governors.

(3) Upon admission under this section, the practice of law by a lawyer, LLLT, or LPO shall be limited to:

(A) providing legal service for no fee through a qualified legal services provider; or

(B) serving as an unpaid governing or advisory board member or trustee of or providing legal counsel or service for no fee to a qualified legal services provider.

The prohibition against compensation for pro bono status lawyers, LLLTs, or LPOs shall not prevent a qualified legal services provider from reimbursing a pro bono status lawyer, LLLT, or LPO for actual expenses incurred while rendering legal services under this rule. A qualified legal services provider shall be entitled to receive all court awarded attorney fees for any representation rendered by the pro bono status lawyer, LLLT, or LPO.

(4) Pro bono status lawyers, LLLTs, or LPOs shall pay to the Bar an annual license fee in the amount required of inactive lawyers, LLLTs, or LPOs, whichever is the applicable license type. This fee shall be waived if the pro bono status lawyer, LLLT, or LPO provided at least 30 hours of pro bono service through a qualified legal service provider in the previous calendar year.

(5) The practice of a lawyer, LLLT, or LPO admitted under this section shall be subject to the applicable Rules of Professional Conduct, disciplinary rules, and to all other laws and rules governing lawyers, LLLTs, or LPOs admitted to the Bar.

(6) Pro bono lawyers, LLLTs, or LPOs shall be exempt from compliance with APR 11 concerning mandatory continuing legal education.

(7) Pro bono admission shall be automatically terminated and converted to inactive status when the lawyer, LLLT, or LPO fails to comply with the terms of this rule.

(h) Withholding Approval or Permission to Take Examinations. The Bar may, in its discretion, withhold approval of an application or withhold permission to take an examination for an otherwise qualified applicant, until the applicant establishes that all requirements have been met or until completion of an inquiry into the applicant's character and fitness.

(i) Applications; Fees; Filing.

(1) Every applicant for admission shall:

(A) Execute and file an application, in the form and manner and within the time limits that may be prescribed by the Bar;

(B) Pay upon the filing of the application such fees as may be set by the Board of Governors subject to approval by the Supreme Court; and

(C) Furnish whatever additional information or proof may be required in the course of investigating the applicant's qualification for admission or licensure, and investigating the applicant's good moral character and fitness pursuant to APR 20-25.6.

(2) Refunds of any application fees shall be handled according to policies established by the Bar.

(3) Transfers of applicants from administration of one examination to administration of another examination shall be handled according to policies established by the Bar.

[Adopted effective February 12, 1965; Amended effective August 1, 1968; September 27, 1968; March 10, 1971; July 1, 1976; September 1, 1984; May 10, 1990; September 1, 1992; October 1, 2002; September 1, 2005; September 1, 2006; January 1, 2014; September 1, 2017; September 1, 2019; September 10, 2020; October 7, 2020; June 27, 2023.]