South Dakota

NCBE National Conference of Bar Examiners
ncbex.org

South Dakota has announced that it intends to administer the NextGen UBE in July 2027. Visit https://www.ncbex.org/exams/nextgen (/exams/nextgen) to learn more about the new exam.

South Dakota requires the following NCBE exams: MBE, MEE, MPT, and MPRE. Visit Official NCBE Study Aids (https://www.ncbex.org/study-aids) to purchase study aids to help prepare for South Dakota exams.

Bar Admission Agency

South Dakota Board of Bar Examiners
500 E. Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: (605) 773-4898
Fax: (605) 773-8479
Visit Website (https://ujs.sd.gov/)

Character & Fitness Investigations

NCBE conducts investigations for some application types.

MPRE Requirements

MPRE Required **Yes**
MPRE Minimum Passing Score **85**
MPRE Score Time Parameters

Non–Uniform Bar Examination Jurisdictions—MPRE Requirements, MBE Score Transfers, and Attorneys' Exams

Minimum passing MPRE score **85**
Are there any time parameters within which an MPRE score must be earned or achieved? **Yes**
Are MBE scores accepted for transfer from other jurisdictions? **Yes**
Is an Attorneys' Exam offered? **No**
To qualify for the Attorneys' Exam, must an applicant be a graduate of an ABA-approved law school? —
Attorneys' Exam fee —

Bar Exam Eligibility, Deadlines, and Fees

ABA-Approved Law School J.D. Required **Yes**
Foreign Law Graduate Eligibility **Yes**

Foreign Legal Education

Are graduates of foreign law schools eligible for admission by examination? **Yes**
If graduates of foreign law schools are eligible for admission by examination, what additional requirements pertain?
Admission in another US jurisdiction
If a foreign law school graduate obtains an LLM or other graduate law degree from an ABA-approved law school, is the graduate then eligible to take the bar exam on this basis alone?
No

Bar Exam Application Filing Deadlines

Non–Uniform Bar Examination Jurisdictions—Bar Examination Application Deadlines and Fees

July 2026: First filing deadline **May 1**
July 2026: Late filing deadline —
February 2027: First filing deadline **Nov. 1**
February 2027: Late filing deadline —

Bar exam fee for first-time takers (non-attorneys) **$450**
Bar exam fee for attorneys **$450**
Bar exam fee for repeaters **$450**
Fee for laptops, if permitted **$100**

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Score Portability

Accepts Legacy UBE Score **No**
Accepts NextGen UBE Score **Yes**
Minimum NextGen UBE Score **620**
Date First Acceptance NextGen UBE Score **July 2026**
Jurisdiction-Specific Requirement **No**
Accepts Transferred MBE Scores **Yes**

Non–Uniform Bar Examination Jurisdictions—MPRE Requirements, MBE Score Transfers, and Attorneys' Exams

Minimum passing MPRE score **85**
Are there any time parameters within which an MPRE score must be earned or achieved? **Yes**
Are MBE scores accepted for transfer from other jurisdictions? **Yes**
Is an Attorneys' Exam offered? **No**
To qualify for the Attorneys' Exam, must an applicant be a graduate of an ABA-approved law school? **—**
Attorneys' Exam fee **—**

Bar Exam

NextGen UBE **Yes**
Date First Administration **July 2027**
Minimum Passing Score **TBA**
NextGen UBE Jurisdiction-Specific Requirement **TBA**
Legacy UBE **No**
Jurisdiction-Drafted Exam **Yes**

Non–Uniform Bar Examination Jurisdictions—Admission by Examination

Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) **Yes**
Multistate Essay Examination (MEE) **Yes**
Multistate Performance Test (MPT) **Yes**
Jurisdiction-drafted exam (essay, multiple-choice, or performance test) **Yes**
How many times may an applicant take the exam without special permission? **3**

Minimum Passing Score **—**

Non–Uniform Bar Examination Jurisdictions—Grading and Scoring

Average grading/reporting period (February/July exams) **both 6–8 weeks**
Are both the MBE and a written component administered? **Yes**
Is the written component scaled to the MBE? **No (see suppl. remarks)**
Are the MBE and written component scores combined? **No**
% MBE weight (of combined score) **—**
% MEE and/or local essay weight (of combined score) **—**
% MPT and/or local PT weight (of combined score) **—**
% Local component weight (of combined score) **—**
Minimum passing standard for total bar exam score based on reported score scale **—**
Minimum passing standard for total bar exam score based on 200-point scale **—**
MPRE minimum passing standard (on scale of 50 to 150) **85**

Admission on Motion

Rules Provide for Admission on Motion **Yes**

Admission on Motion—Years of Practice and Definition of Practice

Do the rules provide for admission on motion? **Yes**
What is the number of years of practice required for admission on motion? **3 of past 5**
What does the definition of practice for purposes of admission on motion include?
Gov't agency, military, in-house corporate, judicial court of record, sole practitioner, member of law firm
Are there any time parameters within which an MPRE score must have been earned or achieved? **Yes**
Admission on motion fee **$650 (plus other fees)**

Legal Education and Reciprocity Requirements

Admission on Motion—Legal Education and Reciprocity Requirements

Must an applicant for admission on motion be a graduate of an ABA-approved law school? **Yes**
Is admission on motion based on reciprocity (that is, is it limited to candidates from some or all jurisdictions offering admission on motion)? **Yes**
Is an attorney initially admitted by diploma privilege eligible for admission on motion? **Yes**

Number of Years of Practice Required **3 of past 5**

Disclaimer

Since jurisdiction rules and policies change, NCBE strongly advises consulting the jurisdiction's bar admission agency directly for the most current information.