

2025

NCBE

Year in Review



NCBE National Conference
of Bar Examiners

Building a competent, ethical, and diverse legal profession.

Contents

1	Our Mission, Vision, and Core Values
2	Letter from the NCBE Board Chair
3	Letter from the NCBE President
4	Counting Down to the NextGen UBE
8	2025 Bar Exam Snapshot
10	2025 MPRE Snapshot
11	Jurisdiction Services
14	Serving Jurisdiction Courts
15	Candidate Services
17	Partnering with Law Schools
18	Educational Events
20	Research
21	Publications
21	NCBE Staff and Volunteers
22	NCBE Board of Trustees and Senior Staff



National Conference
of Bar Examiners

Building a competent, ethical,
and diverse legal profession.

302 South Bedford Street
Madison, WI 53703

ncbex.org

thebarexaminer.org

nextgenbarexam.ncbex.org

reports.ncbex.org/comp-guide

 [/ncbexaminers](https://www.facebook.com/ncbexaminers)

 [company/ncbex](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ncbex)

 [/ncbexaminers](https://www.instagram.com/ncbexaminers)



The National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE), founded in 1931, is a not-for-profit corporation that develops licensing tests for bar admission and provides character and fitness investigation services. NCBE also provides testing, research, and educational services to jurisdictions; provides services to bar applicants on behalf of jurisdictions; and acts as a national clearinghouse for information about the bar examination and bar admissions. In 2026, NCBE will launch the NextGen Uniform Bar Examination, ensuring that the bar exam continues to test the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for competent entry-level legal practice in a changing profession.

Our Mission

NCBE promotes fairness, integrity, and best practices in admission to the legal profession for the benefit and protection of the public. We serve admission authorities, courts, the legal education community, and candidates by providing high-quality

- assessment products, services, and research;
- character investigations; and
- informational and educational resources and programs.

Our Vision

A competent, ethical, and diverse legal profession

Our Core Values

NCBE is committed to

- excellence
- fairness
- integrity
- service

Letter from the NCBE Board Chair



Darin B. Scheer
2025–2026 NCBE Board Chair

Welcome to the 2025 *Year in Review*, the 11th edition of a publication that highlights the incredible work of NCBE staff and volunteers over the past year. As you will see, it has been an exceptionally productive year for NCBE. As amazed as I am by all the hard work and progress represented in these pages, I'm most proud of the alignment between those efforts and the mission, vision, and core values of this organization. These concepts are set forth at the beginning of our *Year in Review* for good reason—they inform everything we do at NCBE.

In order to promote fairness, integrity, and best practices in admission to the legal profession, NCBE strives to conduct its own work in accordance with those same principles. NCBE has worked tirelessly to build relationships with each of the constituencies it serves: admission authorities, courts, the legal education community, and candidates. The widespread adoption of NCBE's products and services by jurisdictions across the country reflects not only the quality of the work NCBE does, but the depth and importance of those relationships. It is not easy to build a new bar exam, especially while maintaining the highest level of quality in our existing offerings and services. But it would be impossible to do so without the relationships we have built, the input we have received, and the hard work so many within NCBE and the broader bar admissions community have done. The constituencies we serve have placed their trust in us. It is not something we take lightly, and we strive to be worthy of that trust in everything we do.

The broad array of NCBE efforts reflected in these pages exemplifies NCBE's commitment to excellence, fairness, integrity, and service. Whether in the innovative work underpinning development of the NextGen UBE; the new technology platforms benefitting administrators, graders, and candidates; or the enormous amount of work required to provide our current bar exam materials, MPRE, character and fitness investigations, psychometric services, candidate services, study aids, publications, and ongoing educational events and webinars; I hope you will get a strong sense of NCBE's commitment to furthering a competent, ethical, and diverse legal profession.

None of this would be possible without the hard work of the many dedicated staff at NCBE, together with the enormous number of volunteers and other contributors to these efforts. But hard work, on its own, is not sufficient. These pages are a testament to the results of hard work guided by our ongoing commitment to the mission, vision, and core values of this organization. I could not be prouder to be a part of it, and I hope all involved in this work share in that pride as well.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Scheer', written over a light blue rectangular background.

Darin B. Scheer
2025–2026 NCBE Board Chair

Letter from the NCBE President



Judith A. Gundersen
NCBE President and CEO

The 2025 *Year in Review* marks a milestone: it's the last one we'll publish before the launch of the NextGen UBE. No surprise, then, that 2025 was a year in which we spent hundreds of hours finalizing not only the content for the new exam, but also the systems that will help exam processes run. It was a year in which we rolled out a wealth of new tools and resources, as well, to help jurisdictions, candidates, and legal educators prepare not just for the exam itself, but for the entire exam cycle.

These other aspects of the process are easy to overlook. But the bar exam doesn't begin on the first morning of an administration, and it doesn't end the next afternoon. We want to ensure that long before examinees sit down to take the exam, both they and the educators who work with them have clear, concise information not only about what will be tested, but also about how to register, how to make sure their laptops are ready, and many other practical details. It's equally important for courts to have resources to help them make informed decisions about passing scores and other policy questions. And jurisdiction administrators need support as they manage and update complex processes for tracking candidates, coordinating and overseeing exam administration, and training staff and graders. In 2025, our publications, presentations, meetings, and one-on-one conversations helped provide the information each of these groups needs to be ready for July 2026 and beyond.

2025 was also the year we officially named the exam the NextGen UBE. The name reflects our commitment to fairness and score portability; more broadly, it stands for our commitment to providing high-quality products and services to jurisdictions, courts, law schools, and candidates. That commitment is also reflected in another major project we brought to a close in 2025: a multiyear review and update of our standard character report application, which will help ensure that the questions on the application remain necessary and relevant while supporting a fair and equitable process for all applicants.

Maybe it goes without saying that even as we did all that in 2025, we also continued the rest of our work: producing, shipping, and scoring the legacy bar exam; administering the MPRE; conducting character and fitness investigations; and publishing in-depth stories about important and timely topics in bar admissions and the larger admissions and legal education landscapes.

By the time next year's edition of the *Year in Review* arrives, we'll be looking back on the first administration of the NextGen UBE. 2026 will be a transformative year for bar admissions, and I'm excited for the changes that are coming. But I also know that they are just the latest example of NCBE's ongoing dedication to fairness, integrity, and best practices across the entire cycle of bar admissions.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judith A. Gundersen
NCBE President and CEO

Counting Down to the NextGen UBE

Finalizing Exam and Systems Development

Research testing for the NextGen UBE continued in 2025, with targeted pilot testing in April and August to ensure that exam questions and systems are ready for use. Preparations were also completed for a January 2026 beta test, which was administered to approximately 1,500 participants in five locations, providing an opportunity to test the entire end-to-end exam administration and scoring process prior to the first NextGen UBE administration.

Development of candidate and jurisdiction user portals moved closer to completion in 2025. The candidate portal will provide a central location for eligible candidates to register for the NextGen UBE, track and complete pre-exam requirements, and view and transfer their scores. The jurisdiction portal will allow jurisdiction administrators to track candidate registration, completion of pre-exam requirements, exam progress, and scoring and grading. A preliminary version of that portal was shared with jurisdictions in October. Both portals were used for the January 2026 beta test; the final portals will go live in the spring.

NCBE shared guidance about the recommended passing score range for the NextGen UBE in November. The guidance, which includes a mapping of the NextGen UBE and legacy UBE score scales, provides jurisdictions with an evidence-based framework to guide passing-score decisions for the new exam. It was developed on the basis of data from multiple sources: the October 2024 prototype exam, psychometric scaling, a statistical concordance study, a large-scale standard-setting study held in May, and outcome analyses. The first jurisdictions began announcing their NextGen passing scores in late 2025.



ncbex.org/exams/nextgen

Naming the NextGen UBE

In early 2025, NCBE announced that the official name of the NextGen bar exam will be the NextGen Uniform Bar Examination (NextGen UBE). The name reflects NCBE's commitment to ensuring a fair exam designed to support score portability.

New NextGen Resources Published

NCBE published a wide range of materials in 2025 to help candidates and legal educators prepare for the first administrations of the NextGen UBE, all of which can be accessed via ncbex.org/exams/nextgen:



An updated **NextGen Content Scope, July 2026–February 2027**, which describes the topics and skills that will be tested, as well as the depth at which each topic will be tested, on the NextGen UBE.



The **NextGen UBE Blueprint: July 2026–February 2027**, which provides NextGen UBE exam specifications.



The **Official Examinees' Guide to the NextGen UBE, July 2026–February 2027**, which provides an overview of the exam's structure, timing, content, and grading; details about the exam registration process, pre-exam requirements, and what to expect on exam day; and an attorney admissions road map.



The first three books in NCBE's **Sourcebooks Collection** for the NextGen UBE, published in collaboration with West Academic, which provide legal educators, examinees, and other stakeholders with information about which legal concepts and principles are within the scope of doctrine to be assessed on the NextGen UBE.



A **NextGen exam software tutorial**, which features a full walkthrough of the secure delivery platform that will be used to administer the NextGen UBE, including a set of sample questions with the full functionality examinees will see on exam day.



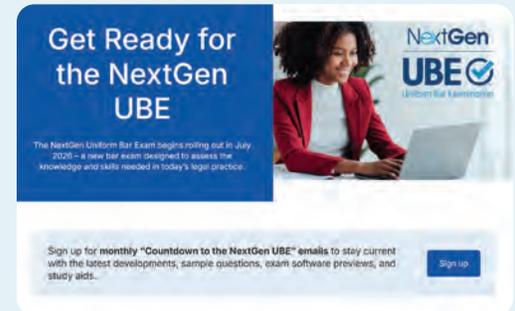
The first two in a **series of short videos** for examinees, "What Is the NextGen UBE?" and "What to Expect on Exam Day."



Additional free **NextGen sample questions**.



Four **NextGen UBE Practice Sets**, offered through the platform on which the actual NextGen UBE will be delivered (available for purchase through the NCBE website).



The NCBE website is a comprehensive resource for candidates, law schools, and jurisdictions preparing for the NextGen UBE. Visit ncbex.org/exams/nextgen for NextGen jurisdiction information, content scope outlines, sample questions, and more.

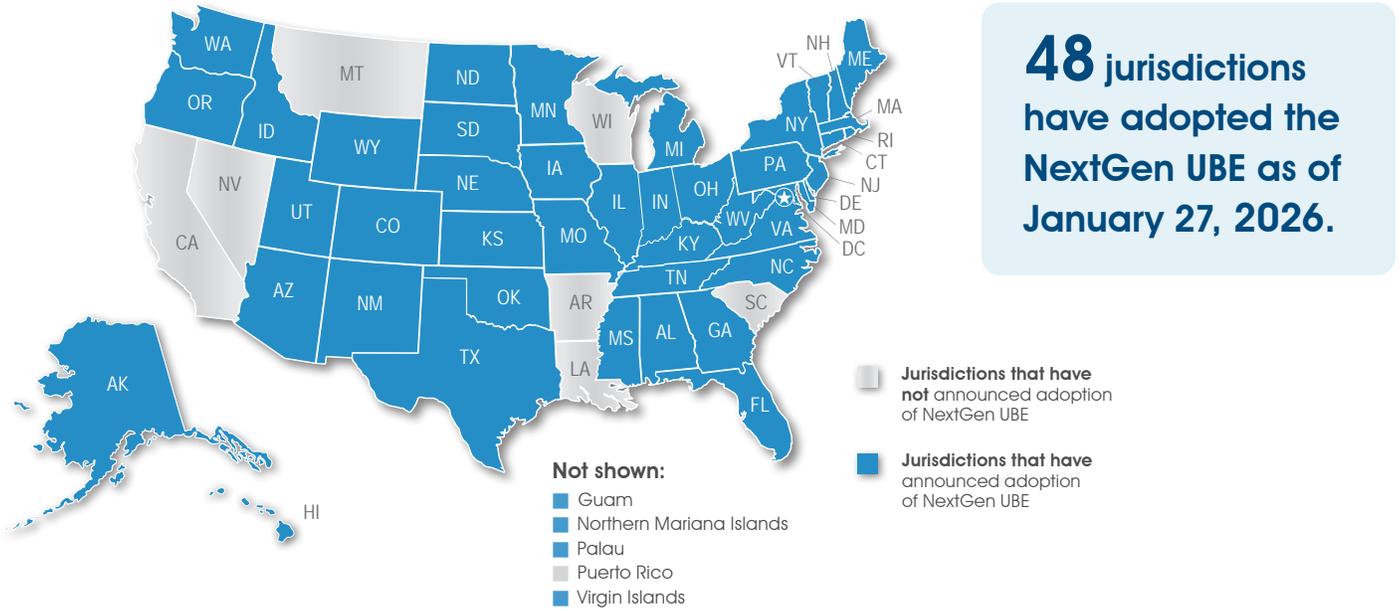
Jurisdiction pages on the NCBE website contain information about each jurisdiction's NextGen UBE policies, including passing scores, jurisdiction-specific admission prerequisites, dates of first NextGen administration and last legacy bar exam administration, and NextGen score transfer policies. NextGen information for each jurisdiction is also available on the *Comprehensive Guide to Bar Admission Requirements* website.

continued >

NextGen Jurisdictions

The NextGen UBE will debut in 10 jurisdictions in July 2026. Additional jurisdictions will begin administering the exam in 2027 and 2028.

An up-to-date list of jurisdictions that have adopted the NextGen UBE is available on the NCBE website at ncbex.org/exams/nextgen.



First Administration Dates of NextGen Jurisdictions



Note: Mississippi's first administration date has not yet been finalized.



NextGen Outreach

NCBE leadership met throughout the year with jurisdiction courts, boards, and administrators, and with law school representatives, to provide information and resources and answer questions about the NextGen UBE. NCBE also hosted monthly onboarding meetings for jurisdictions preparing to administer the exam in 2026 and 2027, and held quarterly online roundtables for jurisdiction high-court justices to discuss emerging topics related to the development and administration of the NextGen exam.

Additionally, NCBE staff spoke at conferences and meetings hosted by other organizations, sharing information and updates about the NextGen UBE to help jurisdictions and law schools prepare.

- Association of Test Publishers Innovations in Testing 2025 (Orlando, Florida, March 24)
- Law School Admission Council Annual Meeting & Educational Conference (Montreal, Canada, May 28–31)
- ConnectED: Ideas. Insights. Impact. Navigating the Next Generation Together (Eagan, Minnesota, June 2–3)
- American Bar Association 2025 Associate Deans' Conference (Salt Lake City, Utah, June 25–27)
- American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting & Conference (Portland, Oregon, July 19–22)
- Conference of Chief Justices Annual Meeting (Rockport, Maine, July 26–30)
- Southeastern Association of Law Schools 2025 Annual Meeting (Amelia Island, Florida, July 27–August 2)
- National Organization of Bar Counsel (Chicago, Illinois, July 31)
- LexCon '25 (Savannah, Georgia, November 5–7)

2025 Bar Exam Snapshot

 **54** jurisdictions required the **MBE**
 **62,309** MBE examinees

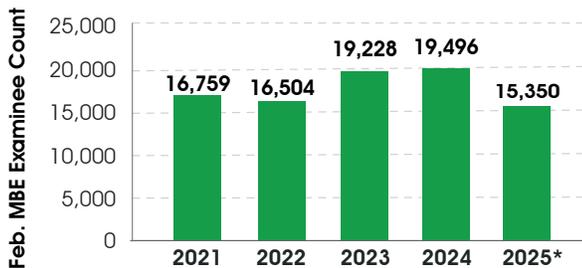
 **48** jurisdictions required the **MEE**
 **47,500** MEE examinees

 **50** jurisdictions required the **MPT**
 **49,491** MPT examinees

Multistate Bar Examination

February 2025 MBE Examinees: **15,350**

Number of February MBE Examinees, 2021–2025



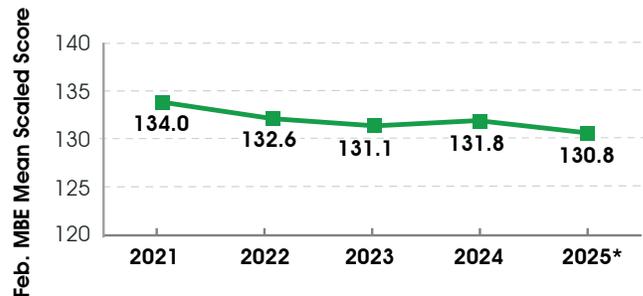
*California did not administer the MBE in February 2025.

Note: 161 additional examinees took a makeup multiple-choice exam in Texas in March 2021 for local admission only.

MBE scores are reported on a scale ranging from 0 to 200. The values reflect valid scores available electronically as of 2/4/26.

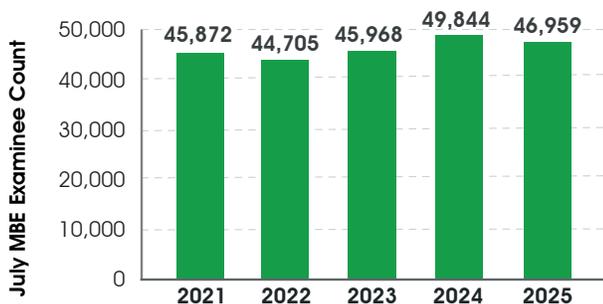
February 2025 MBE Mean Score: **130.8**

February MBE Mean Score, 2021–2025



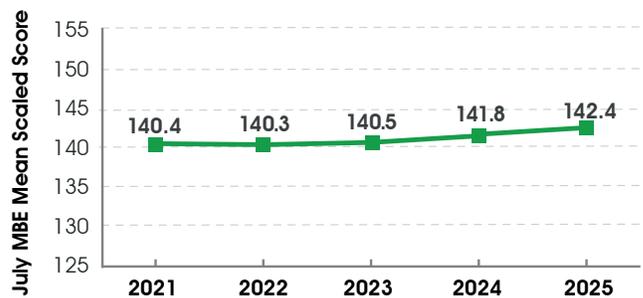
July 2025 MBE Examinees: **46,959**

Number of July MBE Examinees, 2021–2025



July 2025 MBE Mean Score: **142.4**

July MBE Mean Score, 2021–2025

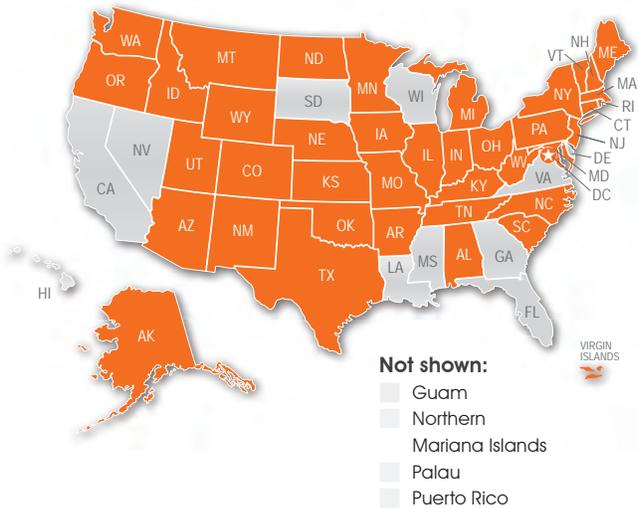


MBE scores are reported on a scale ranging from 0 to 200. The values reflect valid scores available electronically as of 2/4/26.

Uniform Bar Examination

The Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) results in a portable score that can be used to apply for admission in other UBE jurisdictions.

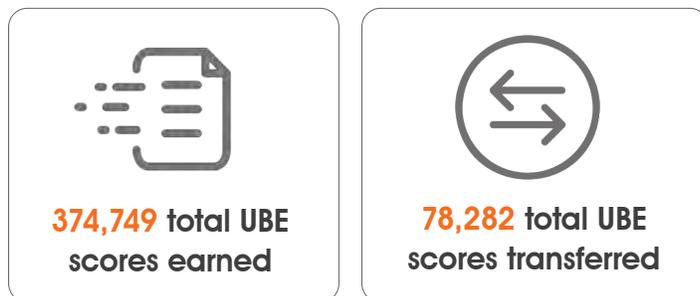
41 jurisdictions have adopted the UBE.



Number of UBE Scores Earned by Year, 2021–2025

Year	Number of UBE Scores
2021	40,502
2022	42,101
2023	45,458
2024	48,579
2025	46,885

Total UBE Scores Earned and Transferred as of January 1, 2026



The Multistate Bar Examination, Multistate Essay Examination, and Multistate Performance Test are administered by user jurisdictions as part of the bar examination in February and July each year.

Most jurisdictions use one or more of the bar exam components developed by NCBE:

The **Multistate Bar Examination (MBE)** is a 200-question multiple-choice exam that assesses the extent to which an examinee can apply fundamental legal principles and legal reasoning to analyze given fact patterns.

The **Multistate Essay Examination (MEE)** is a six-question essay exam that tests an examinee’s ability to identify legal issues, separate relevant from irrelevant material, analyze the issues, and demonstrate an understanding of fundamental legal principles.

The **Multistate Performance Test (MPT)** consists of two performance tasks that test an examinee’s ability to use fundamental lawyering skills in a realistic situation. Each item evaluates an examinee’s ability to complete a task that a newly licensed lawyer should be able to accomplish.

A majority of jurisdictions have adopted the **Uniform Bar Examination (UBE)**, which consists of the MBE, MEE, and MPT and results in a portable score that can be transferred to other UBE jurisdictions.

Starting with the July 2026 administration of the bar exam, jurisdictions will begin replacing the MBE, MEE, and MPT with the NextGen UBE. The final administration of the legacy exams, including the legacy UBE, will be in February 2028.

2025 MPRE Snapshot

 **54** jurisdictions required the **MPRE**
 **60,954** MPRE examinees

The **Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE)** is administered by NCBE through its test contractor three times per year.

Most jurisdictions require the MPRE, a 60-question multiple-choice exam that measures candidates' knowledge and understanding of established standards related to the professional conduct of lawyers.

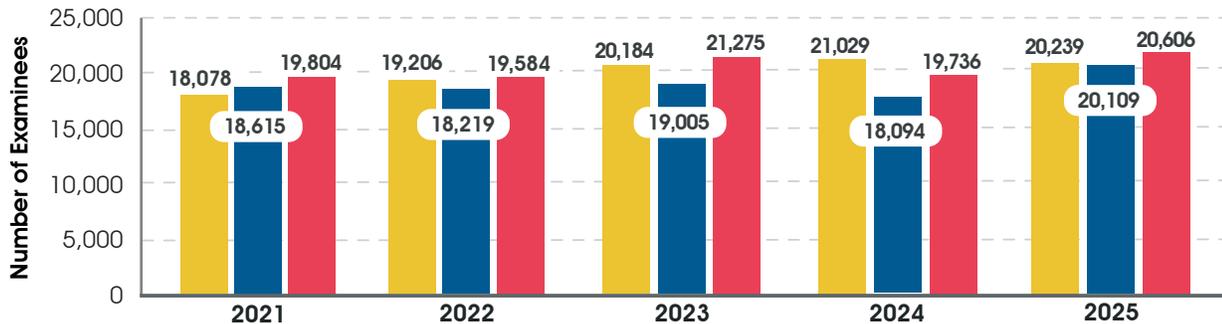


2025 MPRE examinees by administration:

20,239 March examinees **20,109** August examinees **20,606** November examinees

Number of MPRE Examinees, 2021–2025

■ March Exam ■ August Exam ■ November Exam



The values reflect valid scores available electronically as of 2/4/26.

2025 MPRE mean scores by administration:

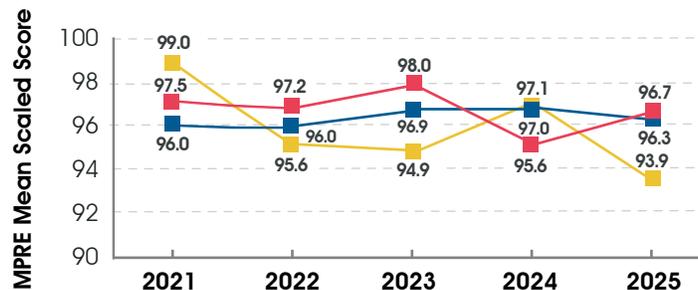
93.9 March mean score

96.3 August mean score

96.7 November mean score

MPRE Mean Scores, 2021–2025

■ March Exam ■ August Exam ■ November Exam



MPRE scores are reported on a scale ranging from 50 to 150. The values reflect valid scores available electronically as of 2/4/26.



Did You Know?

In addition to providing character and fitness investigation services, NCBE offers the following services for jurisdictions:

- an online **Character Report Application** (jurisdictions may use the online application even if they do not use NCBE's investigation services)
- an **Online Verification** system that allows jurisdictions, law schools, employers, and references to electronically receive and respond to NCBE's investigation inquiries
- a **Cross-Reference service** that allows jurisdictions to determine whether applicants have previously submitted any type of application to another jurisdiction

Decisions about the character and fitness of applicants to practice law are made by jurisdiction courts, boards of bar admission, or character and fitness boards, not by NCBE.

Jurisdiction Services

Character and Fitness Investigations

NCBE completed **15,116** character and fitness investigations on behalf of **29** jurisdictions in 2025.

24 jurisdictions used our online Character Report Application in 2025.

53 jurisdictions used our Online Verification system in 2025.

41 jurisdictions participated in our Cross-Reference service in 2025.

NCBE Character Report Application

In 2025, NCBE completed a comprehensive three-year review of the NCBE standard **Character Report Application**, which many jurisdictions use as a guide for their own applications. The review included input from bar admission administrators and boards, legal educators, and NCBE Policy Committee members. A revised application is scheduled to be published in 2026.



Jurisdiction Services continued

Psychometric Services

NCBE performs statistical analysis, equating, and scoring for each MBE and MPRE administration and offers score-scaling services to scale the written components of the bar exam to the MBE.

NCBE also prepares data forensics reports for cases in which examinees are suspected of cheating and conducts additional testing-related research in partnership with jurisdictions. These services are available to all jurisdictions at no charge.



Scoring, Scaling, and Statistical Analysis

In 2025, NCBE scored, equated, scaled, and performed other statistical analyses on **149,568** exams for **55** jurisdictions.

42 jurisdictions used our score-scaling services in 2025.

Research and Cheating Analysis

In 2025, NCBE provided research support (including analyses related to suspected cheating) for **19** jurisdictions.



2025 Diane F. Bosse Award Honoree



Frederick J. Coolbroth has served on the New Hampshire Board of Bar Examiners since 1987, including as its chair from 1996 to 2010. He played a pivotal role in New Hampshire's adoption of the Multistate Essay Examination and Multistate Performance Test, and later of the Uniform Bar Exam. His work was also crucial to the development and implementation of the Daniel Webster Scholar Honors Program at the University of New Hampshire Franklin Pierce School of Law, and he served for many years as a mentor to law students enrolled in that program. He continues to grade questions on the New Hampshire Bar Exam.



Coolbroth served three terms as a member of the Complaint Screening Committee for the New Hampshire Attorney Discipline System and subsequently on the Attorney Discipline System's Hearings Committee. He was a member of NCBE's Multistate Performance Test Committee from 2009 to 2011.

The Diane F. Bosse Award for Excellence and Service in Bar Admissions honors a bar examiner who demonstrates leadership, integrity, professionalism, and a commitment to serving the legal profession through bar admissions in their own jurisdiction and beyond. The award was established in memory of Diane F. Bosse, a former chair of

the New York Board of Law Examiners and NCBE's Board of Trustees, who passed away suddenly in 2024. It is intended to recognize a jurisdiction bar examiner or board member who emulates the ideals that Diane embodied: leadership, vision, integrity, and extraordinary service in bar admissions.



Serving Jurisdiction Courts

NCBE works to serve jurisdiction high courts as a core part of its mission to promote fairness, integrity, and best practices in admission to the legal profession for the benefit and protection of the public. Justices and judges volunteer their time and expertise as members of NCBE's Board of Trustees and its policy and drafting committees, and NCBE leaders consult regularly with members of the courts on topics of mutual interest and concern. NCBE also provides justices-only educational programming targeted to courts' specific interests and needs.

Judicial Volunteers

NCBE's 2025–2026 Board of Trustees includes six current or retired high-court justices and judges; 32 members of jurisdiction courts, including high courts, from 20 jurisdictions serve on NCBE's 2025–2026 policy and drafting committees.

A Justices' Advisory Group met regularly with NCBE leadership in 2025 to discuss issues relating to the development of the NextGen UBE and other topics of concern.

Education and Outreach

NCBE's 2025 Annual Bar Admissions Conference featured exclusive programming for high-court justices, including a justices-only roundtable and breakout sessions on paths to licensure and the NextGen UBE. NCBE also held quarterly justices-only online roundtables in 2025 on topics related to the NextGen UBE, and NCBE's leadership and psychometric experts were available to meet individually with courts to provide additional information and answer questions. NCBE representatives attended the Conference of Chief Justices Annual Meeting in July.



Candidate Services

NCBE provides support to candidates throughout the bar admissions process, supplying information and resources as candidates prepare for the bar exam, register for the MPRE, transfer their scores, and prepare their character and fitness applications. NCBE staff members are dedicated to delivering an outstanding candidate experience at every stage of the process.

NCBE responded to **40,326** support inquiries in 2025.

Score Services in 2025

NCBE Score Services are available for examinees who wish to have their UBE, MBE, or MPRE scores transferred to other jurisdictions or who wish to receive a copy of their scores.

MPRE
Multistate Professional
Responsibility Examination

26,931 MPRE scores transferred to jurisdictions

9,002 MPRE score transcripts released to examinees

UBE
Uniform Bar Examination

12,433 UBE score transcripts transferred to jurisdictions

3,023 UBE score transcripts released to examinees

MBE
Multistate Bar Examination

457 MBE scores transferred to jurisdictions

418 MBE scores released to examinees



Candidate Services continued

Study Aids

NCBE provides authentic, interactive study aids for all its exams. NextGen UBE study aids are offered on the same digital platform that will be used to deliver the new exam. Two new NextGen study aids were published in 2025; NextGen UBE Practice Sets 1–4 are available to purchase individually or as a bundle. Simulated MPRE 3, the latest addition to NCBE’s MPRE study aid offerings, was also published in early 2025. MPRE and legacy bar exam study aids will migrate to a new platform in 2026.

4,422 bar exam study aids and **2,424** MPRE study aids were sold in 2025.

Visit the NCBE Study Aids web page at ncbex.org/study-aids to learn more about NextGen UBE, legacy bar exam, and MPRE study aids.



Improving Access to the Profession

2025 marked the eighth year of NCBE’s ongoing partnership with the Council on Legal Education Opportunity, Inc. (CLEO). The partnership supports the NCBE/CLEO Bar Passage Program, which provides assistance for students from underrepresented communities throughout law school and as they prepare to take the bar exam, with the aim of supporting increased equity and access in the legal profession. More than 900 students have received support from the program since it began.

Partnering with Law Schools

Preparing for the NextGen UBE

Multiple law schools helped recruit participants and generously provided space for ongoing NextGen UBE pilot testing in 2025 and the NextGen beta test in January 2026. With the first cohort of law students preparing to take the NextGen UBE in July 2026, NCBE worked closely with law schools throughout the year to ensure that students and educators will be ready for the new exam.

Faculty webinars provided an overview of the NextGen exam, discussed options for faculty seeking to adapt their courses in preparation for NextGen, and offered expert-led discussion of NCBE's recommended NextGen passing score range. The release of the first three volumes in NCBE's Sourcebooks Collection for the NextGen UBE, available to most educators and students through a West Academic library subscription, provided a powerful new reference tool offering in-depth knowledge about the doctrine that may be tested on the NextGen exam.

A New Resource Hub for Legal Educators

2025 saw the launch of a new page on the NCBE website (ncbex.org/about/legal-educators) dedicated to providing resources for law school faculty and staff about NCBE's exams and services, including information and materials that can be shared with students. The page includes links to a wide range of resources and information, including jurisdiction requirements and contact details, information about NCBE exams and character and fitness services, frequently asked questions about bar admissions and other topics, and a range of other NCBE information.

Reporting Services

Two reporting programs provide bar passage and MPRE data to law schools to help them meet reporting obligations to the American Bar Association. Twenty-seven jurisdictions coordinate with NCBE to disseminate essential bar exam pass/fail reports to law schools, and 160 law schools receive anonymized reports containing aggregated performance data for their students and graduates after each administration of the MPRE.

Bar Examiner Resources for Law Students and Educators

The Bar Examiner published a number of articles in 2025 that provide guidance and information for legal educators, law students, and recent graduates, including a quarterly column that addresses frequently asked questions about bar admissions. These articles are available at thebarexaminer.org:

- [Motivation Metrics: Using Data to Drive Student Motivation and Increase Bar Passage](#)
- [NCBE's NextGen UBE Sourcebook Series: A Powerful Reference Tool for Faculty](#)
- [FAQs About Bar Admissions: Answering Questions About: MPRE Test Accommodations](#)
- [From My Perspective: Successful Outcomes in the Face of Difficult Character and Fitness Issues](#)
- [New to Bar Admissions? Introducing NCBE Services: Bar Passage Report Transmittal from Jurisdictions to Law Schools](#)
- [New to Bar Admissions? Introducing NCBE Services: MPRE Aggregate Score Reports to Law Schools](#)

Educational Events

NCBE sponsors a wide range of educational events for bar examiners, bar admission administrators, legal educators, judges, and justices. NCBE underwrites all or some of the cost of attendance at these events.

NCBE ABAC2025 Annual Bar Admissions Conference

Annual Bar Admissions Conference

NCBE held its 2025 Annual Bar Admissions Conference in Seattle on May 1–4. All 56 US jurisdictions were represented by the 375 attendees, which included 79 first-time attendees and 53 justices from jurisdictions' highest courts. Plenary sessions addressed the evolving pathway to practice from a range of professional perspectives; putting research into action on motivation and support during the legal education and licensure journey; and artificial intelligence in the legal profession.



Webinars

Grading Fundamentals Webinars

These webinars for graders, part of the MEE/MPT Grading Workshops held after the February and July bar exams, provided a comprehensive overview of how to approach grading the MEE and MPT suitable for both new and experienced graders.

Test Accommodations Webinars

This webinar series for bar administrators began in October and continued into 2026. Each webinar focused on an essential topic in test accommodations, such as who receives accommodations and the requirements for disability-based accommodations set out in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Jurisdiction NextGen Updates

Quarterly webinars for bar administrators provided updates about the NextGen UBE, as well as time for questions and answers. Additional jurisdiction webinars in October and December focused on specific NextGen topics, including NextGen passing scores and score services.

NextGen Webinars for Law School Faculty

Summer and winter webinars for law faculty and academic leaders offered deeper insight into the road map of the NextGen UBE and provided an overview of how the NextGen recommended passing score range was developed.



Committee and Board Meetings

NCBE's Board of Trustees and policy committees meet regularly to evaluate current policies and practices and to recommend changes and improvements. Our drafting committees meet two to three times during the year to write and review exam questions.

6 Board of Trustees meetings

37 Policy Committee meetings

27 Drafting Committee meetings

Additional Events in 2025

MEE/MPT Grading Workshops

After every administration of the bar exam, NCBE sponsors a hands-on Grading Workshop for jurisdiction graders. Individual workshop sessions, led by members of NCBE's MEE and MPT Drafting Committees, are held for each question. 648 attendees from 44 jurisdictions participated in the February Grading Workshop, and 600 attendees from 44 jurisdictions participated in the July Grading Workshop.

NCBE/CBAA Annual Meeting

From August 14 to 17, 104 attendees from 40 jurisdictions gathered in Kansas City, Missouri, for the 2025 NCBE and Council of Bar Admission Administrators (CBAA) Annual Meeting. Plenary sessions discussed updates about changes to the NCBE character and fitness application, NextGen UBE updates, ways of addressing increased numbers of accommodated applicants, and updates on alternative education requirements and pathways to licensure.

New Bar Admission Administrators Mini-Seminar

NCBE hosted a seminar on September 15–17 for new bar admission administrators at its Madison headquarters. The seminar's goal was to familiarize the new administrators with the resources and services NCBE offers.

CBAA Fall Meeting

The Council of Bar Admission Administrators held its Fall Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, on November 6–9, with 99 participants from 43 jurisdictions in attendance. Four plenary sessions anchored the program, including two sessions on NextGen UBE updates, one session covering multiple operational and policy topics, and one session featuring St. Mary's University School of Law's online JD program.

NextGen UBE Meetings

In 2025, NextGen committees met to draft and review questions for the NextGen UBE, make NextGen policy decisions, review the results of pilot and prototype testing, and prepare for the January 2026 beta test. NCBE also held quarterly NextGen updates for jurisdiction high court justices and onboarding meetings for administrators from the July 2026 and July 2027 jurisdiction cohorts.

109 NextGen meetings

Research

Members of NCBE's staff conduct original scholarly research that helps maintain the high quality of our exams and contributes to the field of educational measurement. NCBE also supports graduate student and faculty research related to testing and measurement through two annual research awards.

2025 Research Presentations

- **McKinley, D.**, session chair. Restorative Identity Formation in Professions Education. National Council on Measurement in Education 2025 Annual Meeting.
- **Symes, H.** "Comparing rater experiences with two different assessments." National Council on Measurement in Education 2025 Annual Meeting.
- **McKinley, D.**, invited speaker session participant. Pursuing Equity in an Emerging Totalitarian State. National Council on Measurement in Education 2025 Annual Meeting.
- **Zhang, M.** "From time zones to time series: Combining classical and learning-based methods to spot anomalies in real-world testing data." 2025 Conference on Test Security.
- **Schwartz, R.**, session discussant. Predicting and Reporting Outcomes in Higher Education. National Council on Measurement in Education 2025 Annual Meeting.

2025 Research Publications

- Kane, M. & **Kane, J.** "Using Group Differences in True Score Relationships to Evaluate Measurement Bias." *Applied Psychological Measurement* 49(8).

2025 NCBE Research Award Recipients

Covington Award:

Daihui (David) Xiao, Michigan State University. "A Review of Machine Learning-Based Approaches for Detecting Test Fraud."

NCBE's annual Joe E. Covington Award for Research on Testing for Licensure is intended to provide support for graduate students in any discipline doing research germane to testing and measurement, particularly in a high-stakes licensure setting.

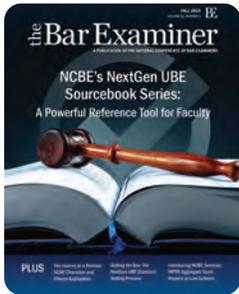
Validity and Fairness Research Award:

Annie Brett, University of Florida Levin College of Law. "Legal Examination Improvement Program (LEIP)."

The NCBE Validity and Fairness Research Award is intended to provide support for graduate students and faculty in any discipline whose research identifies aspects of validity evidence including, but not limited to, scoring, response processes, and the impact of licensure and certification testing.

Publications

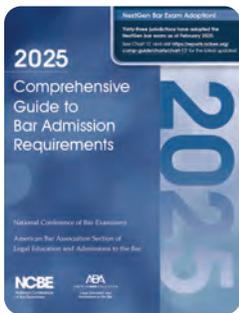
The Bar Examiner Magazine and Website



The *Bar Examiner* website at thebarexaminer.org provides a one-stop resource for news and in-depth articles relating to all aspects of the bar admissions process. *The Bar Examiner* is also published as a quarterly magazine mailed to courts, members of the legal academy, bar admission administrators, and members of bar examining boards and character committees.

95,496 visits to *The Bar Examiner* website

Comprehensive Guide to Bar Admission Requirements



The *Comprehensive Guide to Bar Admission Requirements*, published in collaboration with the ABA Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar, provides information on bar admission requirements in all US jurisdictions, including a directory of jurisdiction bar admission agencies.

The online Guide (reports.ncbex.org/comp-guide) is updated throughout the year; in addition, a print version is published annually and is available for purchase at the NCBE Study Aids Store (store.ncbex.org).

50,497 visits to the *Comprehensive Guide to Bar Admission Requirements* website



NCBE Staff and Volunteers

NCBE continued to add new staff in 2025 to support the development of the NextGen UBE, as well as NCBE's current exams and services. The volunteer members of our Board of Trustees and our drafting and policy committees are practicing attorneys, judges, justices, law professors, and bar admissions staff from jurisdictions and law schools across the country.

- **148** NCBE staff members
- **12** Board of Trustees members from **11** jurisdictions
- **135** drafting committee members from **38** jurisdictions, including faculty members from **68** law schools
- **92** policy committee members from **43** jurisdictions

2025–2026 Board of Trustees



Darin B. Scheer (WY)
Chair



Judith A. Gundersen (NCBE)
President and CEO



John J. McAlary (NY)
Immediate Past Chair



Augustin Rivera, Jr. (TX)
Chair-Elect



Hon. Ann Scott Timmer (AZ)
Secretary



Hon. Scott Bales (ret.) (AZ)



Hon. Arlene Y. Coleman
Romeo (IL)



Timothy Davis (NC)



Hon. Solomon Oliver, Jr. (OH)



Hon. Shellie Park-Hoapili (HI)



Lisa Perlen (TN)



Hon. Mary R. Russell (MO)



Anthony R. Simon (MS)

NCBE Senior Staff

Judith A. Gundersen, JD
President and CEO

Faye McCray, JD, MA
Chief Communications Officer

Vicki L. Millard
Chief Financial Officer

Jake Vizner, MS
Chief Information Officer

Brad C. Gilbert, JD
Chief Operations Officer

Kara Smith, PhD
Chief Product Officer

Ken Kraus, JD
Corporate Counsel

April Southwick, JD
Director of Assessment Development

Racquel Haynes
Director of Candidate Services

Ellen Embertson
Director of Education

Deb Kuranz
Director of Human Resources

Derrick Casper
Director of IT Infrastructure and Cybersecurity

Penelope J. Gessler
Director of Investigations

Dan Capogna, MSED
Director of Marketing

Katie Adrians
Director of Meetings and Events

Jill Remy
Director of MPRE Test Accommodations

Danielle Moreau, LLM
Director of Project Management

Jaclyn Stanislaus, MBDS
Director of User Experience

Joe Fitzgibbon
Editorial Director

Erin Scully, MA
Managing Director of Product

Bob Schwartz, JD, PhD
Managing Director of Psychometrics