

### **3L TIMELINE FOR SUMMER BAR EXAMINATION**

Consider your Bar application process as one of your first official introductions to the practice of law in the real world, such that it is your responsibility to research and familiarize yourself with the rules governing your admission. Understand that each jurisdiction places that responsibility on you, so you must take the time to read through all available information carefully and thoroughly.

#### **August and September**

- Begin thinking about the jurisdiction in which you will take the bar examination in the summer after your graduation from law school, if you do not already know. It is tempting to wait until you have a job offer to think about this, but you should not do that. Make a decision in the fall of your 3<sup>rd</sup> year where you will take your bar examination and if you end up with a job offer elsewhere, then revise your plans.
- Create a bar examination timeline for yourself to guide you as you prepare for the bar exam and to help you keep track of all your various deadlines and obligations. Use resources such as “Pass the Bar!” by Denise Riese and Michael Hunter Schwartz to help you plan.
- Begin thinking about which bar review course you will use to prepare for the bar exam if you have not already done so. Speak with the course representatives about how their courses work and the resources offered. Ask recent graduates about their experiences. Think about how you best learn and then select the course that best complements your learning style. Commit to a bar review course. If you are unsure of the jurisdiction where you will take the exam, speak to the course representatives about whether you can switch jurisdictions later on in the event you secure employment prior to the beginning of the course in a different jurisdiction.
- In many jurisdictions, like Georgia, applicants file their separate “character and fitness” application with the office of bar admission in the fall semester of their 3L year. In others, like NY, applicants take the bar exam first, then apply for through a similar “character and fitness” process. Yet other jurisdictions ask applicants to begin their character and fitness application process BEFORE their 3L year, so be sure to know the requirements of the jurisdiction in which you want to practice. In all circumstances, applicants must pass the character and fitness certification process BEFORE they will be licensed to practice in their jurisdiction.
- For general information about your admission to practice law in select states, see:
  - Georgia: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/admission>
  - New York: <http://www.nybarexam.org/>
  - Florida: <https://www.floridabarexam.org>

Information on other jurisdictions can be found at: [www.ncbex.org](http://www.ncbex.org)

- You will register with the Office of Bar Admissions website for the jurisdiction where you will be taking the bar exam. This is how you will keep track of the status of your application and whether your materials have been received.
- Once you have created your account with your jurisdiction’s Office of Bar Admissions, look up and calendar all relevant deadlines for your character and fitness application, as well as your application to take the bar exam.
- Learn about the format of your jurisdiction’s bar exam. Does it use the Uniform Bar Exam (“UBE”)? Does it use the Multistate Bar Exam (“MBE”) and state specific essays? Does it use the Multistate Performance Test (“MPT”)? Do you need to take and pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam (“MPRE”)? For more information on each of these exams, see <http://www.ncbex.org>.
- Start reading the blog “Emory Law Bar Readiness”. Consider subscribing to it, so you get an email when new information is posted. Make sure you confirm current deadlines on the blog, as archived posts will have prior year’s deadlines. See <https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/emorylawbar/>
- Register to take the November MPRE Exam: the regular deadline is usually in early September

and the late deadline is usually in late September (late fee applies). See <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre/registration/>

- Word of Caution for students needing ADA accommodations for the MPRE: If you wait to apply until too close to the regular deadline, you request accommodations, and your request is initially denied, you may not have enough time to appeal the decision. Read all rules regarding applications for MPRE accommodations and the appeals process very carefully. See <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre/ada-accommodations/accommodations-decisions/>
- Attend the Fall Information session with the Georgia Board of Bar Examiners representatives at Emory Law.
- Begin working on your character and fitness application. Gather information requested in your jurisdiction's character and fitness application.

## **October**

- Continue gathering information needed for your character and fitness application, contacting potential references, and gathering any other information and documentation necessary for your application.
- In early October, conduct an audit of your course credits taken to date to ensure you have sufficient credits to graduate and to verify that you have taken all required courses for graduation. You can do this in OPUS by looking at your unofficial transcript. If you need to speak with someone to verify what you have done and that you are on track, reach out to the Registrar's Office or the Office of Academic Engagement & Student Success. Doing this now will allow you to register for anything you are missing during the October registration period.
- Compare the courses that you have taken so far with the subjects tested on your jurisdiction's bar exam and decide whether there is any particular subject tested that you should take during your last semester in law school. This way, you reduce the number of subjects you are learning for the first time during your bar review course. Examples of excellent bar-focused classes (depending on your jurisdiction's bar exam topics) that are not graduation requirements include: Business Associations, Commercial Law: Sales, Complex Litigation, Constitutional Criminal Procedure: Investigations, Contract Drafting, Family Law, Federal Income Tax: Individuals, Real Estate Finance, Secured Transactions and Trusts & Estates.
- Think about your financial needs for the summer and try to create a budget that will allow you to make your bar study time your ONLY "job", if possible. (You should be aiming for 8-10 hours of study time per day, 6 days per week from mid-May through the end of July.)
- Research available "bar loans" from a small group of lenders, including Sallie Mae. Talk to your campus financial aid advisor to determine availability and application deadlines. See <http://law.emory.edu/admission/tuition-and-financial-aid.html>
- Make hotel reservations for the bar exam dates, if necessary.

## **November**

- Finalize your character and fitness application and consider submitting it this month to avoid the rush at the beginning of December.
- Make sure you are aware of the deadline for filing the character and fitness application and that you meet that deadline.

## **December**

- Make sure you are aware of the regular deadline for filing the character and fitness application and that you meet that deadline to avoid late fees. In Georgia, the deadline is in early December.

In other jurisdictions, the timing may be different, but you can adapt this guide to create an applicable timeline for your jurisdiction.

## **January**

- Begin working on your Bar Examination Application. However, be aware that your jurisdiction's timeline may require different timing than this. Always tailor your deadlines to the requirements of your jurisdiction and confirm them on the official bar admissions website.
- Make hotel reservations for the bar exam dates, if necessary.
- Read your state's licensing rules to ensure you understand everything you need to do to apply for and take the bar exam.
- Register to take the March MPRE Exam: the regular deadline is usually in late January; the late deadline is usually in late January or early February (late fee applies). See <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre/registration/>
- Word of Caution for students needing ADA accommodations for the MPRE: If you wait to apply until too close to the regular deadline, you request accommodations, and your request is initially denied, you may not have enough time to appeal the decision. Read all rules regarding applications for MPRE accommodations and the appeals process very carefully. See <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre/ada-accommodations/accommodations-decisions/>
- Attend MBE workshops, subject-matter review sessions, bar exam information sessions offered at the law school.

## **February**

- Finalize your Bar Examination Application and consider submitting it in this month to avoid the rush at the beginning of March. In Georgia, this is separate from your character and fitness application.
- Assess the degree to which you are at risk for not passing the bar exam. Resources, such as "Pass the Bar!" by Denise Riese and Michael Hunter Schwartz have excellent self-assessment guides to assist with this process.
- Attend MBE workshops, subject-matter review sessions, bar exam information sessions offered at the law school.
- If applicable, make child care arrangements that will allow you to maximize your bar study time in the months of May through July.
- In the coming months, keep an eye out for communications from the Registrar's Office with regard to graduation requirements, applications for graduation, ordering regalia, graduation photographs, graduation announcements, etc.

## **March**

- Make sure you are aware of the deadline for late-filing the character and fitness application and that you meet that deadline, if necessary. (In Georgia, the late-filing deadline is in early March and a late fee will apply.)
- For deadlines in other states, see the Bar website for each given state.
- Attend MBE workshops, subject-matter review sessions, bar exam information sessions offered at the law school. Keep an eye out for communications from the Registrar's Office with regard to graduation requirements, applications for graduation, ordering regalia, graduation photographs, graduation announcements, etc.

## April

- Attend MBE workshops, subject-matter review sessions, bar exam information sessions offered at the law school.
- Plan how you will stay fresh, balanced, and focused while you study for the bar exam. Create a daily schedule for yourself, including a break for exercise or whatever activity offers you a “mental health” escape. Remember your goal is to study 8-10 hours per day, 6 days per week from mid-May through the end of July.
- Reach out to your family and friends and explain to them how they can best support you during your bar exam preparation period.
- Near the end of April, order your transcript to be sent to the Office of Bar Admissions for the jurisdiction where you will be taking the bar exam. **HOWEVER**, make sure that you select the option to HOLD FOR FINAL DEGREE, otherwise the transcript will be sent out without your final grades and will not be accepted by the bar admissions officials. Additionally, it is a good idea that you select the EXPRESS delivery option. It costs more, but it is the only option that will provide tracking information relating to the delivery of your transcript to the bar officials.

## May

- Work diligently on all assignments for your bar review courses, recalling that the bar exam is NOT graded on a curve.
- Create a daily schedule for yourself if you haven’t done that already (see above).
- Begin familiarizing yourself with the rules governing the administration of your bar examination.

## June

- Make sure you are aware of the regular deadline for filing the bar examination application and that you meet that deadline to avoid late fees. Confirm the deadline on the official bar admissions website for your jurisdiction. In Georgia, the deadline is in early June.
- Make sure you are aware of the deadline for filing your transcripts with the Office of Bar Admissions. You must ensure that the transcripts are actually received by the deadline. It is not sufficient for you to ensure that they have been sent, so you should check your online account with the Office of Bar Admissions prior to the deadline to ensure receipt.

## July

- Make sure you are aware of the late/final deadline for filing the bar examination application and that you meet that deadline to avoid late fees. In Georgia, the deadline is in early July.

### Other important Georgia links & Information:

- NOTE: All filings for your Fitness Application and Bar Examination Application must be received in the Office of Bar Admissions not later than 4:00 p.m. on or before the filing deadline.
- NOTE: These links serve as a highlight of the information available on the Georgia Bar website. You are encouraged to spend time reading through all materials available to you through the Georgia Bar to ensure complete information. It is your responsibility to keep yourself informed and on track.
- For the Supreme Court of Georgia RULES GOVERNING ADMISSION TO THE PRACTICE OF LAW (hereinafter the “Rules”), please see: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/rules-governing-admission>. It is strongly recommended that you read these Rules, as they contain detailed information you need to know about your Application for Certification of Fitness to Practice Law, Bar Examination Application, and other aspects of your admission to the Bar.

- For Georgia Fitness Application and Bar Examination Application deadlines and fees see: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/deadlines-and-fees>
- In order to take the Georgia Bar, you must register with the Georgia Bar Office of Admissions and create a personal account. This can be done at: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/displayregister.action>
- Georgia Fitness Application can be found at: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/information-and-applications>
- Fitness Application Instructions: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/appinfo.action?id=2>
- Character & Fitness Considerations: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/admission-to-the-bar>
- Certification of Fitness Fingerprint Requirement: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/fingerprint-requirement>
- Certification of Fitness Information re Processing of the Fitness Application: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/processing-the-fitness-application>
- Certification of Fitness Information re Amendments to the Fitness Application: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/file-an-amendment-to-your-application>
- The Georgia Bar Examination Application can be found at the following site: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/information-and-applications>
- Rules governing the administration of the Georgia Bar Examination: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/exam-rules>
- For FAQs regarding your admission to the Georgia Bar: <https://www.gabaradmissions.org/faq>