

July 2021 Pennsylvania Bar Exam Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ will be updated as additional information becomes available. Return to this FAQ and monitor your message center on www.pabarapplication.org for updates.

Does the remote bar exam test the same content as the in-person exam?

The subject matter tested on the remote bar examination will be the same as the content covered on an in-person exam. For more information review https://www.pabarexam.org/bar_exam_information/testsubjects.htm

What is the exam format and schedule?

- The exam will consist of a performance test, six essay questions, and 200 multiple-choice Multistate Bar Exam (MBE) questions administered over a three-day period for applicants testing under standard conditions.
- Applicants must make a good faith effort on each question on the exam. Only applicants seeking admission in Pennsylvania may sit for the exam. Applicants may not take portions of the exam.
- The examination is closed book. Applicants may not access notes, study aids, or any other type of assistance during the exam. Study aids may not be present in the exam room.
- The exam will be on July 26, 27, and 28, 2021.
 - On Monday, July 26, the Board will administer two test sessions. The first will include the performance test. Applicants will have a total of 105 minutes to answer the question. The second session will include two essay questions. Applicants will receive a total of 90 minutes to answer both essay questions in the session. Applicants must provide their answers to each essay question in a separate screen.
 - On Tuesday, July 27, the Board will administer two test sessions. Each session will include two essay questions and applicants will have a total of 90 minutes to complete both questions in the session. Applicants must provide their answers to each essay question in a separate screen.
 - On Wednesday, July 28, the Board will administer the MBE portion of the exam. There will be 200 MBE questions. Applicants may navigate back and forth between questions during each session. The number of sessions and the time of each are the prerogative of NCBE.
 - During the performance test ONLY -- Applicants may take one bathroom break of up to five minutes during this test session, if necessary.
- Each session will require a separate password to begin.
- The schedules for applicants testing with accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act will vary from the standard schedule. Board staff will communicate specific test schedules for applicants approved for accommodations.
- All times communicated by the Board will be Eastern Time (ET). Applicants taking the exam in other time zones must adhere to the Board-issued schedule regardless of their local time (e.g., a session scheduled to start at 10 a.m. must be started at 9 a.m. Central Time).

- At the start of each session, applicants will access a password for the session and complete the login process. Both of these actions will require an internet connection. Only upon successfully advancing to the question content, when internet access will be blocked by the software, will the timer set for the session begin to countdown.
- Standard testing will be according to the following schedule. Each session will require a separate password to begin.

Testing Schedule

Monday	July 26
10:00 a.m.	Login and begin session 1 - Performance Test
Break	
1:00 p.m.	Login and begin session 2 - Essay Q1 and Essay Q2
Tuesday	July 27
10:00 a.m.	Login and begin session 3 - Essay Q3 and Essay Q4
Break	
12:45 p.m.	Login and begin session 4 - Essay Q5 and Essay Q6
Wednesday	July 28
8:45 a.m.	Login and begin session 5 - MBE 1-50
Break	
10:45 a.m.	Login and begin session 6 - MBE 51-100
Break	
1:45 p.m.	Login and begin session 7 - MBE 101-150
Break	
3:45 p.m.	Login and begin session 8 - MBE 151-200

What is the cut score? Will there be a regrade process?

- The required score to pass is a 272. The Board will follow its usual procedures with regard to scaling, as the NCBE will be equating, grading and scaling the MBE. The Board will grade and scale the total of the six answers to the essay examination and the performance test (valued at 1.5 times an essay question) to the scaled MBE. The combined essay and PT scores will be weighted at 55%, and the MBE score will be weighted at 45% of the total scaled score. The Board will combine the scaled scores of the PT/essay examination and MBE to determine if an applicant has attained a scaled score of 272 or higher. Out of an abundance of caution, the Board will expand the pool of answers below the pass line to receive a second review. All applicants receiving a combined score of 262-271 will be included in a re-read process and have their PT and six essay answers re-read and re-graded by a different grader. The re-read graders are not aware of the scores originally given. Through this process, examiners will determine a final grade. Pursuant to Pa. B.A.R. [221](#), the grading of the bar examination answers is final and is not subject to judicial review.

What are the computer requirements for the remote exam?

- Applicants must download and use ExamSoft's Exemplify software with ExamID and ExamMonitor to take all portions of the exam.
- Applicants must take the examination on a computer that meets the ExamSoft's minimum system requirements specified for Exemplify software with ExamID and Exam Monitor enabled and use a functional webcam and microphone during testing.
- Applicants will find information about the minimum system requirements (MSR's) at –
 - o Mac: <https://examsoft.com/resources/exemplify-minimum-system-requirements#mac>
 - o Windows: <https://examsoft.com/resources/exemplify-minimum-system-requirements#windows>
- Applicants may not use more than one computer monitor to take the exam.
- Applicants will need some internet connectivity at the start of each session to retrieve the password for that session's file and upload their photo. A high-speed internet connection is not required. Applicants will not need internet connectivity during the session while the exam file is in use.
- Applicants will need internet connectivity after the exam to upload the completed exam file answers and the audio/video files. The Board does not require that applicants upload the files immediately after each session. The software will automatically suspend and resume the upload process as needed, even if the applicant has multiple files queued to be uploaded. Applicants must upload the files each test day by 11:00 p.m., unless a technical problem prevents them from doing so. In the case of a technical problem, all files are due by 11 p.m. on July 28.
- Applicants may use external standard or ergonomic keyboards and equipment such as a mouse. These items may be wireless. Applicants will likely find that a mouse with a wheel is useful for scrolling through the question.

What are the features of the Exemplify software?

- Exemplify utilizes a component called ExamID to collect your photo through your computer's webcam. Examsoft will use facial imaging to compare this picture with your baseline photo at the start of each exam session to verify your identity.
- Exemplify utilizes a component called ExamMonitor that will use your camera and microphone to record you as you take the exam. After the exam, Examsoft will use artificial intelligence and human proctors to conduct a preliminary review of the audio/video files. ExamSoft will subsequently provide the files to the Board for review.
- Regarding the performance test and essays-
 - o Applicants will have virtual scratch paper by using a "notes" area of the software. Any information applicants write in the notes area will not be recorded as part of an answer or graded.
 - o Physical scratch paper will be permitted ONLY for the performance test. Applicants who wish to use this may have up to four pages of paper at their desk. Applicants using physical scratch paper must show the front and back of the pages to the camera and demonstrate that they are blank at the start of the session. Physical scratch paper is not permitted for any other session.
 - o Spell check will be enabled.

- No content can be printed.
- Applicants will complete at least two mock exams to gain familiarity with the software features.
- MBE
 - Applicants will have virtual scratch paper by using a “notes” area of the software.
 - Applicants will be able to strike through answers that they believe to be incorrect, but must affirmatively indicate the answer they wish to select. Merely leaving a single un-struck choice will not suffice as an answer.
 - Applicants will be able to skip or flag questions to return to them later within a session. Once the session is over, applicants will not be able to revisit that session’s questions.
 - The Board will include sample multiple-choice questions as part of a mock exam so that applicants can practice with these features.
- When the applicant advances to the text of the exam questions, the automated Exemplify timer will begin counting down, marking the duration of the exam. The exam session ends when the applicant exits the exam file or when the Exemplify timer reaches zero, automatically exiting the exam file. The timer will show a seconds indicator when there are five minutes remaining in session.
- Within the exam file, applicants will be able to set a timed reminder in addition to the automated timer.
- Please consult this “Taking an Exam” tutorial from ExamSoft for an overview of how the screens\software works:
 - <https://examsoft.force.com/etcommunity/s/article/Exemplify-with-ExamID-and-ExamMonitor>

Who will have access to my photo and the videos of me testing and for how long?

- The collection of biometric information through ExamID and ExamMonitor is governed by ExamSoft’s privacy policy, available at <https://examsoft.com/privacy-policy>. ExamSoft’s proctoring partners are bound by this policy as well. The information is used only for the purpose of providing the services described above to clients, is never sold, and in the case of the remote bar exam will be retained only until the Board specifies it no longer needs the files. Files available to human proctors are anonymized and no information about the identity of the applicants is available to the proctor.
- Applicants will find ExamSoft’s terms of use here. <https://examsoft.com/terms-of-use>

How will I know when to download the software and how do I check that it works?

- The Board office will message applicants through the Online Bar Application (www.pabarapplication.org) when the software is available for installation.
- Applicants must install and register Exemplify on the computer that they will use to take the exam.
- After installation, applicants will take two mandatory mock exams. If possible, applicants should take the mock exam in the same environment and conditions in which they will take the actual exam.

Why do I see a "Check your passwords" prompt from Google Chrome shortly after registering Exemplify?

- Applicants who utilize Google Chrome's password manager may find that Chrome runs an automated review of their stored passwords. This feature warns the user if any of their stored usernames and passwords are newly found among a collected list of over 10 billion known compromised credentials. This scan is not related to the Exemplify software, though the storage of any new set of credentials, including those used to access the ExamSoft website, may inspire a new automated scan depending on your device, operating system, and Chrome/Google settings. Applicants should feel free to follow the browser-issued instructions regarding safe password management. [ExamSoft has posted some information about this](#), including a link to an article further explaining Google Chrome's notifications.

What is ExamSoft's policy on anti-virus software?

- Internet access is required for a short period before exam start to retrieve the exam password from the ExamSoft-hosted applicant website and also to verify identity via ExamID. Anti-virus software should remain active throughout these steps and be disabled only when internet is no longer needed. This is done automatically by the software while securing the device at exam start; manually disabling anti-virus is not required. However, Exemplify may recommend that you manually disable antivirus and certain other applications. This is done to expedite the security process. If you choose to manually disable your anti-virus software, you may disable your internet connection after locating the password and prior to closing anti-virus or any other applications. If you disable anti-virus manually, we recommend the following common-sense best practices:
 - Disable internet prior to disabling anti-virus
 - Utilize a secure private network
 - Re-launch anti-virus before accessing any websites or applications that utilize the internet
- As with an on-site exam, internet access is required for the upload of exam files, including proctoring video files. This process can be completed at the end of all exam sessions and once anti-virus is re-enabled.

Where may I take the exam?

- Applicants may take the remote exam at their home, law school, a library, or another location of their choice. Applicants will need a quiet room with internet access where they can be alone and uninterrupted during the exam. There should be no personally identifying information in the background.

When will results be available?

- The Board of Law Examiners expects to release results by mid-October 2021.

What if the Board is not able to see my face on the video?

- The Board must be able to identify the applicant taking the exam. If the Board is unable to confirm the identity of the test taker because their face is off camera, the camera has malfunctioned, or some other malfunction has occurred, the Board will not grade the portions of the exam for which the identity of the test taker is not certain. Applicants should check their video at the start of each session, and if they see a black screen should not continue to test, but (without exiting or closing

the exam software) should turn their power off to their computer and call ExamSoft. Additionally, when taking time to think about an answer to a question, applicants should be mindful that their face must remain in view of the camera. Avoid leaning, slouching, or resting your chin on your hand to such an extent that that your face leaves the frame of the camera.

How do I handle an emergency that occurs during the remote bar exam?

- If an emergency arises during any test session warranting an unexpected and urgent need to leave the view of the camera, including imminent illness or need for the restroom or to respond to a safety alarm, make an announcement in the webcam explaining the urgent need to leave before you do. If you are able to return to the test session, do so as soon as the situation permits. Report the incident to the Board by uploading an [Incident Report Form](#) to your [Online Bar Application](#) account. Unless the Board needs additional information from you or finds a concern related to exam integrity following its review of all exam data and monitoring files, it will grade the entirety of your responses from the test session.

When do I file an incident report?

- Applicants must file a report of any irregularity that occurs during the bar exam's administration. Irregularities include any disruption, including (but not limited to) requiring a "resume code," leaving the view of the camera or technical problems. To make such a report, use the [Incident Report Form](#) and upload it through your Online Bar Application account www.pabarapplication.org. You may attach additional pages to the report. All incident reports are due by the close of business on the Friday of the exam week. Board staff will not review these reports until after the exam. Therefore, applicants with critical issues for which the Board may be able to provide assistance during the exam should also call the Board office, 717-231-3350. Be aware that, for an issue with the operation of Exemplify software during the exam, you should address it by taking these steps in this order: explore if turning the computer off and on again addresses the issue (being certain not to exit the software); contact ExamSoft support 888-816-3065; call the Board office.