

WSR 26-02-027
RULES OF COURT
STATE SUPREME COURT
[December 17, 2025]

IN THE MATTER OF THE NEXTGEN) AMENDED
BAR EXAM AND REDUCTION TO) ORDER
THE PASSING SCORE FOR) NO. 25700-B-747
UNIFORM BAR EXAM) (superseding order of
December 8, 2025)

WHEREAS this Court on March 15, 2024 adopted the National Conference of Bar Examiners' (NCBE) new Uniform Bar Exam (UBE) known as the NextGen UBE, which will replace the legacy UBE beginning in July 2026; and

WHEREAS the Court has reviewed materials provided by the NCBE which resulted in the NCBE's recommendations regarding a range of passing scores (610-620) for the NextGen UBE and a concordance with the legacy UBE, so that this Court can set a passing score for the NextGen UBE similar to the legacy UBE passing score; and

WHEREAS this Court, in consideration of multiple factors including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, had adopted a temporary passing score of 266 for the legacy UBE beginning in July 2020, and subsequently entered Order No. 25700-B-710 adopting that passing score permanently for the legacy UBE; and

WHEREAS Washington State is among the group of states that will be the first to administer the NextGen UBE in July 2026; and

WHEREAS the Washington State Bar Association's (WSBA's) Board of Governors voted to recommend to this Court a passing score of 616 on the NextGen UBE, using the NCBE concordance showing that score is equivalent to a score of 266 on the legacy UBE, while the Deans of the law schools in Washington State recommend a passing score of 610, equivalent to a legacy UBE score of 260, in part due to the fact that examinees will not have the benefit of preparatory materials for the NextGen UBE that are available for examinees taking the legacy UBE; and

WHEREAS the Court seeks parity in setting a minimum passing score between the NextGen UBE and the legacy UBE and recognizes that the NCBE has recommended a minimum passing score of 260 for the legacy UBE, a score used for admission by several states and which is in concordance with a minimum passing score of 610 on the NextGen UBE,

Now, therefore, pursuant to the Court's inherent power over admission to practice law, it is hereby

ORDERED:

That the minimum passing score for the NextGen UBE shall be 610, which is equivalent to the legacy UBE score of 260; and

That the minimum passing score for the final administration in Washington State of the legacy UBE in February 2026 shall be 260; and

That the amendments to Admission and Practice Rule (APR) 4 as attached hereto are adopted; and

That the attached APR 4 amendments will be published expeditiously in the Washington Reports and will become effective upon issuance of this order.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED:

That any examinee who sat for the legacy UBE in Washington State between July 2020 and July 2025 and who received a score of 260-265 is now eligible to apply for admission as a lawyer in Washington State based on that score. All such applications must be filed within one year of the date of this order, and no application fee will be re-

quired. For these applications, all preadmission requirements under APR 5 (a) and (b) must be completed within 12 months from the date of filing the application. For these applications, the WSBA will accept a passing MPRE score of 85 earned no earlier than July 2017 and submitted to the WSBA within 12 months from the date of filing the application. The WSBA will provide detailed application instructions to those who qualify as soon as practicable.

This order provides a new pathway to admission that covers only current and future applications by eligible applicants and does not affect prior applications or result in retroactive admission to practice law in Washington State. Nor does this order affect bar passage statistics for any prior bar exams administered in Washington State. The WSBA may disclose to an applicant's law school and the NCBE, the name of the applicant, along with their legacy UBE score, who is now eligible to apply for admission pursuant to this order.

Application fees will not be refunded for any previously administered UBE in Washington State. Applicants to the February 2026 UBE in Washington State who are eligible to apply for admission under this order and who withdraw from the February 2026 UBE shall be partially refunded in accordance with the terms of the WSBA Admissions Policies.

A legacy UBE score of 260-265 earned in another state or territory of the United States or the District of Columbia may be used for a UBE Score Transfer application consistent with the provisions of APR 3(d). This order does not alter the time limit in APR 3(d) for filing an application within 40 months of earning a qualifying UBE score.

This order amends and supersedes Supreme Court Order No. 25700-B-747, dated December 8, 2025.

DATED at Olympia, Washington this 17th day of December, 2025.

For the Court

Stephens, C.J.

CHIEF JUSTICE

RULE 4 OF THE ADMISSION AND PRACTICE RULES (APR)-(MARK UP VERSION)

RULE 4. EXAMINATIONS FOR ADMISSION; NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

(a)-(c) [Unchanged.]

(d) Lawyer Bar Examination. Unless otherwise provided by these rules, applicants for admission to practice as a lawyer must take and pass the National Conference of Bar Examiners' (NCBE) Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) and Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE).

(1) Washington's minimum passing score for the ~~original~~ legacy UBE is ~~266~~ 260; the minimum passing score for the NextGen UBE is 610 ~~to be established by court order.~~

(2)-(3) [Unchanged.]

RULE 4 OF THE ADMISSION AND PRACTICE RULES (APR)-(CLEAN VERSION)

RULE 4. EXAMINATIONS FOR ADMISSION; NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

(a)-(c) [Unchanged.]

(d) Lawyer Bar Examination. Unless otherwise provided by these rules, applicants for admission to practice as a lawyer must take and pass the National Conference of Bar Examiners' (NCBE) Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) and Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE).

(1) Washington's minimum passing score for the legacy UBE is 260; the minimum passing score for the NextGen UBE is 610.

(2)-(3) [Unchanged.]