Updated FAQs Related to the October 2020 Remote Bar Exam in Maryland

Exam administration questions:

What content will be tested by this remote exam?

- The content tested on the October 2020 remote exam will be the same as the content of the Uniform Bar Exam. You should study the same topic areas that you would if you were preparing to take the UBE.

What is the format of the October 2020 remote exam?

- The remote exam will consist of four 90-minute test sessions administered over two days, October 5 and 6, 2020.

- On October 5, one 90-minute session will consist of one Multistate Performance Test (MPT) item and the other 90-minute session will consist of three Multistate Essay Examination (MEE) questions.

- On October 6, each of the two 90-minute sessions will consist of 50 Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) questions.

What is the schedule for the October 2020 remote exam?

- The standard administration of the October 2020 remote exam will occur on the following schedule (all times are Eastern Time):

Monday, October 5, 2020	12:00 PM to 1:30 PM (ET) MPT	2:00 PM to 3:30 PM (ET) MEE
Tuesday, October 6, 2020	12:00 PM to 1:30 PM (ET) MBE 1-50	2:00 PM to 3:30 PM (ET) MBE 51-100

- The schedules for applicant testing with accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act will vary from the standard schedule addressed above. Each examinee who was granted nonstandard testing accommodations for a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (the "ADA") on the in-person July 2020 UBE has been contacted directly by SBLE regarding their accommodations for the October remote exam.

What software vendor will Maryland use to deliver the October remote exam?

- Maryland examinees will register to use the Examplify testing software provided by ExamSoft Worldwide.

- ExamSoft will contact applicants directly by email on September 1, 2020 with instructions for registering your computer, downloading the software, downloading and taking the mandatory mock exams and downloading the required exam files.

  o **ExamSoft registration opened on September 1, 2020 and will close on September 18, 2020 at 11:59pm.**

  o After September 18, 2020 and prior to the dates of the Remote Exam, ExamSoft will contact applicants with instructions for downloading the required exam files for exam day.

  o It is extremely critical that all deadlines are strictly complied with as they will not be extended.

- General information on Examplify for bar exams may be found at https://bar.examsoft.com/.

Mock Exams

- All applicants will be required to take at least two mock exams, and applicants will have the opportunity to take a third mock exam before the date of the exam. The mock exams will be available for download after you register with ExamSoft beginning on September 1.

UPDATED ON 9/18/2020

Updated FAQs Related to the October 2020 Remote Bar Exam in Maryland

- During the first mock exam applicants will establish their baseline photo ID that will be used for exam day. Applicants will also have the opportunity to practice all of the features of the software including the virtual scrap paper and highlighting features.

- The second mock exam will contain practice questions and applicants may practice using all of the software features with exam questions.

- Applicants may use as much or as little of the available mock exam time as they wish, but MUST upload both mock exam answer files to complete the registration process.

Technical Support

- ExamSoft will have dedicated phone response for bar applicants separated into general inquiry and technical assistance. Applicants are permitted to access their phones for technical support, but phones must be removed from the testing area after the support call ends.

- ExamSoft will also have live online chat assistance, which will be accessible from the testing computer until the applicants enter the secure software.

- Applicants are permitted to access their phones for technical support, but phones must be removed from the testing area after the support call ends.

Will applicants have to pay a separate fee for the Examplify software?

- NO. SBLE will pay the registration fee for each applicant.

What technology is required?

- Applicants may use a laptop or desktop computer that meets ExamSoft's minimum system requirements.

- Applicants will need a reliable internet connection before each exam session to obtain the password for each exam session, to check in and begin each session and to upload their answer file and proctoring video at the close of each session. An active internet connection during each session is not required. Once applicants check in and begin the exam session you will take the exam offline.

- All examinees are required to have a webcam and microphone for check-in and for remote proctoring of the exam. If your computer does not have an internal webcam and microphone, you may use an external webcam with microphone. You will need to test the use of the webcam and microphone during the mandatory mock exam.

- Minimum system requirements are available at are available at https://bar.examsoft.com/system-requirements/.

Where is the exam administered?

- Examinees may take the remote exam at their home, work/office, law school, library, or another location of their choice. The environment should be quiet and distraction free, with no personal identifying information.

- Some law schools are offering space for applicants who may not have a secure and reliable internet connection or suitable place to take the exam. If your law school offers space for you to take the exam and is authorized to do so, it is permissible for you to take the exam at the law school provided that you are seated sufficiently far enough away from any other applicants in the classroom or other testing space to assure the security of the test and to minimize problems with the remote proctoring. You will need to

UPDATED ON 9/18/2020

Updated FAQs Related to the October 2020 Remote Bar Exam in Maryland

abide by all other instructions including remaining in your seat in view of your webcam throughout each session. It is the responsibility of the law school and applicant to make sure that all social-distancing protocols are followed and that no prohibited materials or devices are allowed in the examination space. Remote proctoring through ExamSoft will still be in place.

What testing conditions will be required?

- Examinees must be alone in the room where they are taking the exam unless testing in a law school and applicants are sufficiently spaced apart in the classroom, lecture hall or other testing space (see above). This should be a quiet and distraction-free environment.

- Examinees should not have a phone in the room, except to resolve a technology issue. Applicants may not possess a phone or not communicate with anyone while the exam time is running. If a technology issue arises that requires a call to ExamSoft Support, the applicant may retrieve a phone and contact ExamSoft. When the technology issue is resolved, the applicant must remove the phone from the testing area.

- Examinees are required to submit a copy of a government issued photo-ID. Information regarding upload of the photo ID were emailed on Monday, August 24, 2020.

- At the beginning of the first mock exam for Examplify, applicants will be required to display to the web camera the same photo ID that was uploaded to SBLE. THERE WILL BE NO PHOTO ID REQUIREMENT ON EXAM DAY.

- The photo ID uploaded to SBLE and used for the mock exam must match the name listed on the applicant's eBar account and should be valid/not expired.

- Diplomas, photographs, or other items that might personally identify the applicant should not be visible to the applicant's webcam during the examination.

- Examinees should remain seated with their face visible to the camera for the duration of each 90-minute test session.

- Examinees will have a break in between the 90-minute sessions, during which they will be allowed to step away from their computer to stretch, use the bathroom, take medications, etc.

- Applicants may not wear a hat or cap during the remote exam except if it is for religious reasons in which case it may not have a brim or otherwise obscure the applicant's eyes.

- Applicants may not wear headphones, headsets, or earbuds during the exam, but **ordinary foam ear plugs are permitted provided the applicant displays them to the camera at the beginning of each exam session.**

What features will examinees be able to use within the exam software?

- On the MEE and MPT applicants WILL be able to:

  - View the question and their response on the screen at the same time. For the MPT, applicants will be able to open the MPT library attachments and view both the attachments and the exam response on the screen.

  - Highlight within the text of questions (but there is NO highlighting within any attachment).

UPDATED ON 9/18/2020

- Use the "Notes" feature (i.e. virtual scrap paper) for each question (MPT and MEE questions) to outline their responses.

- Cut and paste text between virtual scrap paper and answer.

- Use the spell-check, highlighter and "find and replace" features in your answers.

- On the MBE questions, applicants WILL be able to:

  - Highlight within the text of each question.

  - Strike out unwanted answers or answers you believe to be incorrect as you read the multiple-choice questions. Applicants must still select an answer (and not just strike through purported incorrect answers) in order to receive credit for a correct answer.

  - Navigate forward and backward between questions, as well as skip and/or return to unanswered questions during each session.

  - Flag multiple-choice questions that you would like to return to during that session.

  - Use the Notes (i.e., virtual scrap paper) for each question.

- Applicants WILL NOT be able to:

  - Use more than one monitor.

  - Cut and paste or drag and drop text from the text of the MEE question or the text of the MPT question and library to their answer.

  - Underline, circle, or cross out text within the MEE and MBE questions or the MPT materials.

  - Use physical scratch paper, notes, or any other physical reference materials on the MEE and MBE sections of the exam. **SCRATCH PAPER IS PERMITTED ON THE MPT SESSION ONLY.**

How does remote proctoring work?

- Examinees must remain at their computer, with their face fully visible to their webcam, for the entirety of each 90-minute test session.

- The proctoring software will record the applicant (audio and video) throughout the exam session. The recording will be uploaded to ExamSoft along with the examinee's answer files.

- ExamSoft's artificial intelligence (AI) program will analyze the recording and will flag any unusual behaviors, movements, or sounds.

- All flagged footage is then reviewed by at least one human proctor to determine whether further analysis as to potential cheating is necessary. For example:

  o A dog barking in the background might be initially flagged by AI but cleared upon review.

  o The mere fact that a sound or behavior generates a flag does not necessarily mean that SBLE will formally investigate or take action against an applicant for exam misconduct.

- These proctors reviewing exam footage **will not** have access to any personally identifying information for examinees; all exam materials, including exam footage, are connected only to an examinee ID number.

UPDATED ON 9/18/2020

Updated FAQs Related to the October 2020 Remote Bar Exam in Maryland

- SBLE will destroy and/or direct ExamSoft to destroy all video recordings from the examination within a reasonable time after the completion of all grading or, where misconduct investigations are initiated, after resolution of any misconduct investigation, including any related Character and Fitness proceedings.

- SBLE will distribute an exam conduct policy to applicants prior to the October remote exam which applicants must read and will be required to acknowledge during the check-in procedure on exam day.

- It is expected that all applicants will demonstrate integrity, honor, and ethical behavior during this exam. The Board will review audio/video exam files for irregularities. An applicant who is found to have violated or attempted to violate any rule or restriction established by the Board related to taking the bar examination may be referred for character & fitness review pursuant to Maryland Rule 19-203.

How does ExamID work?

- ExamID authenticates the identity of applicants to insure that the person taking the exam is the person who registered for the exam.

- During the first mock exam ExamID will take a baseline photo of the applicant. Applicants are urged to have a well-lit room to provide adequate lighting for the photo. It is highly recommended that applicants take this baseline photo in the same well-lit room they intend to take the exam. The software will confirm that the photo taken is acceptable. At the start of each session of the actual exam ExamID will take another photo of the applicant and will compare it to the photo taken during the mock exam to authenticate the applicant's identity. Should an applicant experience an issue with the ExamID authentication at the beginning of an exam session, the applicant will still be permitted to take the exam and SBLE will authenticate the applicant's identity through the video and the previously submitted photo IDs.

Post examination questions

When may applicants uninstall the Examplify software?

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to retain the Examplify software on their computers until at least the release of exam results in case there is a need to manually recover answers from the software after upload. This is a recommendation only and is in place for the protection of examinees.

How will the remote examination be graded and scored?

- The MEE and MPT questions will be graded in the same manner as the Uniform Bar Examination. The written score will be scaled to the MBE.
- 100-question MBE multiple-choice test provided by the NCBE will be given. SBLE has contracted with a subject matter expert psychometrician with whom it has developed a plan that strives to sustain high exam reliability while maintaining a standard that is reflective of past exams. The methodology centers on converting scores on the 100-item multiple-choice exam to a 200-point score using a raw-to-scale conversion plan based on NCBE's historic MBE raw-to-equated scale score transformations.
- The components of the examination will be weighted as on the Uniform Bar Examination – 50% for the MBE, 30% for the MEE and 20% for the MPT.

UPDATED ON 9/18/2020

Updated FAQs Related to the October 2020 Remote Bar Exam in Maryland

- Final scores will be reported on a 400-point scale and a scaled score of 266 or greater is required to pass the examination.
- Applicants must take and timely upload all sessions of the remote examination in order to be graded.
    - File uploads should be completed as soon after the last exam session as possible, and not later than the following deadlines:
        - The exam files must be uploaded by 11:59pm on Tuesday, October 6, 2020.
        - The video proctoring files must be uploaded by 11:59pm on Friday, October 9, 2020.
    - Any applicant who does not upload answer files and video proctoring files for all sessions of the exam is subject to being withdrawn from the examination and not receiving examination results.
    - If an applicant is ultimately unable to complete the exam or upload exam files or video proctoring files due to technological failures will NOT be considered to have failed the exam, but rather will be treated as absent.
    - Being absent or withdrawn from the October remote exam will have no effect on the ability of the applicant to register for and take the February bar exam.

When will results be available?

- SBLE expects to release the results of the October remote exam on or about November 25, 2020.

When will the formal admission ceremonies take place?

- Formal admission ceremonies for applicants who are successful on the October remote exam and complete all other admissions requirements are expected to be scheduled for late December 2020.
- Whether admissions ceremonies will be in-person or virtual will depend on the status of the COVID-19 emergency.

Will a remote exam be the norm going forward (February 2021 and beyond)?

- The October 2020 remote administration of the bar exam is in response to the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.
- SBLE plans to resume the administration of the in-person Uniform Bar Exam in February 2021, if it is safe to do so.

How does reciprocity work?

- Agreements for portability of scores earned on the October remote exam are sought with only those jurisdictions that will administer the same remote exam, on the same dates, with the identical exam content, and are transferable only for purposes of this specific exam.
- Announcements regarding jurisdictions that have entered into portability agreements with Maryland can be found on the front page of [SBLE's website](#).
- Within about five days of the release of results for Maryland's administration of the October remote exam, SBLE will provide the exam results for all Maryland examinees to each jurisdiction with which agreements for portability were reached.
    - Maryland examinees may opt out of having their results shared with other jurisdictions by completing an Opt-Out form and submitting it by November 30, 2020.

UPDATED ON 9/18/2020

Updated FAQs Related to the October 2020 Remote Bar Exam in Maryland

- *Please note that by completing and submitting the opt-out form, examinees are opting out of the transfer of exam results to **all** reciprocal jurisdictions.*

- *Your score will either be sent to all reciprocal jurisdictions or will not be sent to any jurisdictions.*

- *Applicants who opt out of sharing their October 2020 remote exam score **will not** be able to transfer this score at a later date.*

- Maryland will receive scores earned on the October remote exam in a reciprocal jurisdiction according to procedures developed in that jurisdiction.

- Applicants may file a bar application in Maryland based on a qualifying score earned in a reciprocal jurisdiction until the end of July 2023.

- Examinees must achieve a total scaled score of 266 or higher in order to seek admission to the Maryland bar.

- SBLE will publish detailed instructions on seeking admission in Maryland based on a qualifying score earned in a reciprocal jurisdiction after the October 2020 remote exam.