

M.R. 3140

IN THE
SUPREME COURT
OF
THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Order entered May 29, 2025.

(Deleted material is struck through, and new material is underscored.)

Effective immediately, Illinois Supreme Court Rules 703, 704, 704A, and 706 are amended, as follows.

Amended Rule 703

Rule 703. **Legal Educational Requirements**

Every applicant seeking admission to the bar on examination shall meet the following educational requirements:

~~— (a) **Preliminary and College Work.** Each applicant shall have graduated from a four-year high school or other preparatory school whose graduates are admitted on diploma to the freshman class of any college or university having admission requirements equivalent to those of the University of Illinois, or shall have become otherwise eligible for admission to such freshman class; and shall have satisfactorily completed at least 90 semester hours of acceptable college work, while in actual attendance at one or more colleges or universities approved by the Board of Admissions to the Bar. In lieu of such preliminary or college work, the board may, after due investigation, accept the satisfactory completion of the program or curriculum of a particular college or university. Proof of preliminary education may be made either by diploma showing graduation or by certificate that the applicant has become eligible for admission to such college or university, signed by the registrar thereof. Proof of the satisfactory completion of college work may be made by certificate, signed by the registrar of the college or university, that the applicant has satisfactorily completed the required college work. In lieu of the diploma and certificates described herein, the board may accept, as proof of the preliminary and college work required herein, a certificate from an approved law school that the law school has on file proof of such preliminary and college work.~~

~~— (b) **Legal Education.** After the completion of both the preliminary and college work above set forth in paragraph (a) of this rule, each applicant shall have pursued a course of law studies and fulfilled the requirements for and received a first professional degree in law (J.D. or L.L.B.) from a law school approved by the American Bar Association. Each applicant shall make proof that he has completed such law study and received a degree, in such manner as the Board of Admissions to the Bar shall require. A Master of Laws (L.L.M.), Doctorate in Law (S.J.D.), or a degree equivalent to either of these is not a first professional degree in law.~~

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MAY 29 2025

SUPREME COURT
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Amended September 28, 1977, effective October 15, 1977; amended September 14, 1984, effective September 14, 1984; amended June 12, 1992, effective July 1, 1992; amended May 29, 2025, eff. immediately.

Amended Rule 704

Rule 704. Qualification on Examination

(a) Every applicant for the Illinois bar examination shall file with the Board of Admissions to the Bar both a character and fitness registration application and a separate application to take the bar examination. The applications shall be in such form as the Board shall prescribe and shall be subject to the fees and filing deadlines set forth in Rule 706.

(b) In the event the character and fitness registration application and the separate application to take the bar examination shall be satisfactory to the Board, the applicant shall be admitted to the examination; provided, however, that the following applicants must first receive certification of good moral character and general fitness to practice law by the Committee on Character and Fitness pursuant to Rule 708 before they will be permitted to write the bar examination: (1) applicants who have been convicted of felonies; (2) applicants against whom are pending indictments, criminal informations, or criminal complaints charging felonies; (3) applicants who have been rejected, or as to whom hearings are pending, in another jurisdiction on a ground related to character and fitness; or (4) applicants admitted to practice in another jurisdiction who have been reprimanded, censured, disciplined, suspended or disbarred in such other jurisdiction or against whom are pending disciplinary charges or proceedings in that jurisdiction.

(c) The Board of Admissions to the Bar shall conduct separate examinations on academic qualification and professional responsibility. At least two academic qualification examinations shall be conducted annually, one in February and the other in July, or at such other times as the Board, in its discretion, may determine. At least three professional responsibility examinations shall be conducted annually, one in March, another in August, and another in November, or at such other times as the Board, in its discretion, may determine. The Board may designate the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination of the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) as the Illinois professional responsibility examination. The Board may recommend for the Court's consideration and determination a proposed passing grade on both the academic qualification examination and the professional responsibility examination. ~~determine the score that constitutes a passing grade.~~

(d) The academic qualification examination, also known as the Illinois bar examination, shall be conducted under the supervision of the Board. The Illinois bar examination shall be created, prepared, and administered in a manner approved by the Court, on recommendation of the Board. The nature, location, and dates of the Illinois bar examination shall be determined by the Board, and information regarding the nature, location, and dates of the Illinois bar examination shall be posted on the Board's website and otherwise made available to interested members of the public through reasonable means. If the Board recommends that the Illinois examination be a national examination developed by the NCBE and the Court so approves, then the examination

~~shall be administered consistent with the terms of use or policies developed by the NCBE. The Illinois bar examination shall be the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) prepared by the National Conference of Bar Examiners.~~

(e) In the event the Board of Admissions to the Bar shall find that an applicant has achieved a passing score, as determined by the Board, on the academic and professional responsibility examinations, meets the requirements of these rules, and has received from the Committee on Character and Fitness its certification of good moral character and general fitness to practice law, the Board shall certify to the Court that these requirements have been met; the Board may also transmit to the Court any additional information or recommendation it deems appropriate.

~~(f) For all persons taking the bar examination after the effective date of this rule, a~~ passing score on the Illinois bar examination is valid for four years from the last date of the examination. An applicant for admission on examination who is not admitted to practice within four years must repeat and pass the examination after filing the requisite character and fitness registration and bar examination applications and paying the fees therefor in accordance with Rule 706.

Amended effective October 2, 1972; amended April 8, 1980, effective May 15, 1980; amended June 19, 1987, effective immediately; amended June 12, 1992, effective July 1, 1992; amended May 7, 1993, effective immediately; amended July 1, 1998, effective immediately; amended July 6, 2000, effective immediately; amended December 6, 2001; effective immediately; amended October 2, 2006, effective July 1, 2007; amended June 8, 2018, eff. Mar. 1, 2019; amended May 29, 2025, eff. immediately.

Amended Rule 704A

Rule 704A. Admission by Transferred Uniform Bar Examination Score

An applicant who has taken the Uniform Bar Examination in a jurisdiction other than Illinois and earned or exceeded the scaled total score deemed passing by the Board may be admitted to the practice of law in this state on the following conditions:

(a) The scaled total score was achieved by taking all portions of the Uniform Bar Examination in the same jurisdiction and in the same exam administration and was attained within the four years immediately preceding the date the application for admission in this state is properly submitted. The date on which a score on the Uniform Bar Examination was attained is the Wednesday of the week during which the Uniform Bar Examination in question was administered.

(b) The applicant:

(1) meets the educational requirements of Rule 703 or

(2) meets all requirements under Rule 715 as of the date of the properly submitted application for admission under this Rule and, as of that date, would have been qualified pursuant to Rule 715 to sit for admission to the bar upon academic qualification examination.

(c) In the event the Board of Admissions to the Bar shall find that an applicant has achieved a passing Uniform Bar Examination score as determined by the Board through transfer from another jurisdiction, a required minimum score on professional responsibility examinations as

required, meets the requirements of these rules, and has received from the Committee on Character and Fitness its certification of good moral character and general fitness to practice law, the Board shall certify to the Court that these requirements have been met; the Board may also transmit to the Court any additional information or recommendation it deems appropriate.

(d) The applicant is in good disciplinary standing before the highest court of every jurisdiction in which ever admitted.

~~(e) A person applying for admission under this Rule shall not be eligible for admission prior to November 7, 2019.~~

~~(f)~~ For all persons transferring a Uniform Bar Examination score, the transferred score is valid for four years from the date of the properly submitted application for admission with a transferred Uniform Bar Examination score. An applicant for admission under this Rule who is not admitted to practice in Illinois within four years of that date must either: i) repeat and pass the Illinois bar examination after filing the requisite character and fitness and bar examination applications, and paying the fees therefor, in accordance with Rule 706, or ii) submit a transferred Uniform Bar Examination score attained after the expiration of the previously submitted score and satisfy all other requirements of this Rule.

Adopted June 8, 2018, eff. Jan. 1, 2019; amended May 29, 2025, eff. immediately.

Amended Rule 706

Rule 706. Filing Deadlines and Fees of Registrants and Applicants

(a) **Character and Fitness Registration.** Character and fitness registration applications filed with applications to take the bar examination shall be accompanied by a registration fee of \$450.

(b) **Applications to Take the Bar Examination.** The fees and deadlines for filing applications to take the February bar examination are as follows:

- (1) \$500 for applications submitted on or before the regular filing deadline of September 15 preceding the examination;
- (2) \$700 for applications submitted after September 15 but on or before the late filing deadline of November 1; and
- (3) \$1000 for applications submitted after November 1 but on or before the final late filing deadline of November 30.

The fees and deadlines for filing applications to take the July bar examination are as follows:

- (1) \$500 for applications submitted on or before the regular filing deadline of February 15 preceding the examination;
- (2) \$700 for applications submitted after February 15 but on or before the late filing deadline of April 1; and
- (3) \$1000 for applications submitted after April 1 but on or before the final late filing deadline of April 30.

(c) **Applications for Reexamination.** The fees and deadlines for filing applications for

reexamination at a February bar examination are as follows:

(1) \$500 for applications submitted on or before the regular reexamination filing deadline of November 1;

(2) \$850 for applications submitted after November 1 but on or before the final late filing deadline of November 30.

The fee and deadline for filing applications for reexamination at a July bar examination are \$500 for applications submitted on or before April 30.

(d) Late Applications. The Board of Admissions to the Bar shall not consider requests for late filing of applications after the final bar examination filing deadlines set forth in the preceding subparagraphs (b) and (c).

(e) Applications for Admission on Motion under Rule 705. Each applicant for admission to the bar on motion under Rule 705 shall pay a fee of \$1500.

(f) Applications for Admission by Transferred Uniform Bar Examination Score Under Rule 704A. Each applicant for admission to the bar by transferred UBE score under Rule 704A shall pay a fee of \$1500.

(g) Application for Limited Admission as House Counsel. Each applicant for limited admission to the bar as house counsel under Rule 716 shall pay a fee of \$1500.

(h) Application for Limited Admission as a Lawyer for Legal Service Programs. Each applicant for limited admission to the bar as a lawyer for legal service programs under Rule 717 shall pay a fee of \$100.

(i) Recertification Fee. Each applicant for Character and Fitness recertification shall pay a fee of \$450.

(j) Miscellaneous Fees. Each applicant shall pay a fee of \$25 per request for the following documents and/or services:

(1) For applicants who are unsuccessful in passing a particular administration of the bar examination, provision of a copy of the applicant's essay answers for that administration of the bar examination and a set of sample passing answers;

(2) Provision to the applicant of a copy of the applicant's application for admission to the bar under any of these Rules or any documents associated with that application;

(3) Transferring an applicant's score on the Multistate Bar Examination or Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination to another jurisdiction; or

(4) Provision of a letter to another jurisdiction or other third party, stating that an applicant has passed a particular administration of the bar examination in Illinois.

(k) Payment of Fees. All fees are nonrefundable and shall be paid in advance by credit or debit card, certified check, cashier's check, or money order payable to the Board of Admissions to the Bar. Payments by credit card shall be subject to a convenience fee commensurate with the fees charged to the Board for the processing of such credit card payments. Fees of an applicant who does not appear for an examination shall not be transferred to a succeeding examination.

(l) Fees to be Held by Treasurer. All fees paid to the Board of Admissions to the Bar shall be held by the Board treasurer, subject to the order of the Court.

Amended January 30, 1975, effective March 1, 1975; amended October 1, 1982, effective October 1, 1982; amended June 12, 1992, effective July 1, 1992; amended July 1, 1998, effective immediately; amended July 6, 2000, effective August 1, 2000; amended December 6, 2001, effective immediately; amended February 11, 2004, effective July 1, 2004; amended October 1, 2010, effective January 1, 2011; amended January 10, 2012, effective immediately; amended Nov. 26, 2013, effective Jan. 1, 2014; amended February 10, 2014, effective immediately; amended May 26, 2016, effective July 1, 2016; amended June 22, 2017, eff. July 1, 2017; amended June 8, 2018, eff. Jan. 1, 2019; amended Dec. 22, 2022, eff. Jan. 1, 2023; amended Jan. 26, 2023, eff. immediately; amended May 29, 2025, eff. immediately.