

Florida Temporarily Rejects New Bar Exam, Postpones Implementation



In a significant blow to the National Conference of Bar Examiners' (NCBE) revamped test, the state of Florida has announced that it will not adopt the new version of the bar exam scheduled to debut in July 2026. The Florida Board that it will continue to use its existing bar exam format for 2026 and will determine later whether to incorporate the NextGen Bar Exam after July 2026.

Board chair Rachelle Munson explained that the decision was made to clarify for incoming law students who will graduate in 2026. By sticking with the current format, law schools can also benefit from this information as they make the class of 2026.

National Conference President Judith Gundersen agreed with the importance of providing clarity to examinees as the launch of the NextGen exam draws nearer. The NCBE is currently designing the NextGen Bar Exam, which aims to emphasize legal skills rather than mere memorizing laws. The new exam will include multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions.

See also: [National Conference of Bar Examiners Reveals Planned Structure of New Practice Skills Questions](#)

Florida's decision marks a significant development as it is the fourth-largest bar exam jurisdiction in the United States, following New York, California, and Texas. It is also the first state to publicly announce its stance on the form the July 2022 exam, nearly 2,800 law graduates sat for the Florida bar exam.

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The NCBE plans to offer jurisdictions a choice between the current Uniform Bar Exam, which includes the 200 multiple-choice questions Multistate Bar Exam, the Multistate Essay Exam, and the Multistate Performance Test, and the starting in July 2026. However, within two years, states will need to decide whether to adopt the NextGen Bar Exam or opt for another form of test.

Florida is not the only state expressing skepticism about the new bar exam. The State Bar of California's Board of Trustees has endorsed a [proposal](#) to develop its own test rather than adopting the NextGen bar exam, although the has yet to act on this recommendation. Officials responsible for bar exams in New York and Texas have not provided immediate responses to requests for comments regarding their respective bar exam plans.

Currently, Florida's bar exam consists of the Multistate Bar Exam, complemented by a series of essays and multiple-choice questions crafted by Florida bar examiners. While the NextGen Bar Exam aims to transform the assessment question types, the decision by the Florida Board of Bar Examiners suggests that the state prefers to maintain its traditional approach for the time being.

The NCBE initiated the development of the NextGen Bar Exam in 2021 with the objective of creating an exam that reflects a more comprehensive evaluation of legal skills. By combining different question formats and focusing on NCBE seeks to modernize the bar exam process. The specific topics within seven skill areas and eight areas of law that the new exam will cover were unveiled by the NCBE in May, and sample questions are currently being pilot tested.

While Florida's rejection of the NextGen Bar Exam is a setback for the NCBE's efforts to revamp the assessment process, it remains to be seen how other states will respond to the option of adopting the new exam. As the July 2022 jurisdictions are likely to announce their decisions, shaping the future of bar exams across the United States.

Don't be a silent ninja! Let us know your thoughts in the comment section below.