Illinois Board of Admissions to the Bar
Bar Examination Instructions
JULY 28-29, 2026

Recipients of these instructions are registered for the July 2026 Illinois Bar Examination.

DAY ONE – Tuesday, July 28 consists of two Multistate Performance Tests (MPT) and the Multistate Essay Examination (MEE). The questions will be in paper booklets. The test site will open at **7:15 a.m**. **Please report to your assigned venue and seat.** Be aware that you must pass through metal detectors. Plan accordingly. You must be in your assigned seat, ready to begin, by **8:30 a.m.**

Paper test booklets containing the exam questions and instructions will be at your seat. DO NOT MOVE, HANDLE, OR LOOK AT THEM UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

DAY TWO – Wednesday, July 29 consists of the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE). The questions will be in paper booklets. The test site will open at **7:30 a.m.** **Please report to your assigned venue and seat.** You must pass through metal detectors and be in your assigned seat, ready to begin, by **8:30 a.m.**

Paper test booklets containing the exam questions and instructions will be at your seat. DO NOT MOVE, HANDLE, OR LOOK AT THEM UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

DETAILED SCHEDULE

Tuesday – July 28

7:15a Doors open for metal detection and check-in.

8:30a Examinees in their seats for instructions & attendance; laptop users have their equipment set up and ready to go

9:00a-Noon Multistate Performance Tests

12:15p Lunch Break **~ 50 minutes**

1:05p Examinees pass metal detection and in their seats for instructions and attendance; laptop users have their equipment checked and are ready to go

1:30-4:30p Multistate Essay Examination

4:45p Dismissal

Wednesday – July 29

7:30a Doors open for metal detection

8:30a Examinees in their seats for instructions and attendance

9:00a-Noon Multistate Bar Examination AM

12:15p Lunch Break ~ **45 minutes**

1:00p Examinees pass metal detection and in their seats for instructions and attendance

1:30p-4:30p Multistate Bar Examination PM

4:45 Dismissal

PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

The Illinois Board of Admissions to the Bar (IBAB or Board) provides these instructions so that you will be prepared for a successful bar examination. After reading them, please take

some time to plan your day at the exam to ensure that it goes smoothly.

REGISTRATION/CHECK IN

Registration occurs at your assigned test site. Your **Notice of Eligibility** indicates the test site to which you should report; you need not register or report to any other place. You will pass metal detection, proceed to the location to deposit all items that will not be allowed in the test room in the areas provided (this location will depend upon the venue to which you are assigned – please follow the signs upon arrival), and then proceed immediately to your seat for check in. Your section proctor will check you in at your assigned seat by checking your valid photo ID at the beginning of each test session.

UIC Credit Union 1 Arena: If you are assigned to test at this location and are being dropped off, you will need to be dropped off on Racine Avenue. No drop-offs are allowed on Harrison Street.

WHAT TO BRING

We ask that you limit what you bring to the test site to your Photo ID (required) and personal necessities.

Photo ID – Without exception, you must present a valid photo ID at the beginning of each test session. We will accept: valid passport; valid state driver's license or valid state identification card. When you arrive at your seat you will place your photo ID on your table for your proctor to view. Your applicant badge will be on the table, and that will serve as your admission ticket to the bar exam for both days.

Items permitted in the test room – No item of outerwear or gear, such as coats, jackets, gloves, hats, umbrella, etc., may be brought into the test room. Scarves are also not permitted. Nothing may be brought into the test room except these items:

1. **IBAB-issued Photo ID badge** – *must be worn on your chest at all times while at the test site and always visible*
2. **Photo ID** (passport, driver's license, etc.)
3. **Laptop equipment** – see *For Laptop Users Only*, p. 7-8.
4. **Credit card and money**
5. **Transportation card**
6. **Keys**
7. **Feminine hygiene products**
8. **Eyeglasses** (but not sunglasses) ***without*** the eyeglass case
9. **Previously-approved medical items** – see *Medical Necessities*, p. 4.
10. **CLEAR PLASTIC bottle of water only**. No colored liquids of any type, no opaque bottles, no glass or any material other than plastic, NO WRITING OF ANY KIND OR SORT ON THE BOTTLE. If the label cannot be removed, you may not have it in the room. IT MUST REMAIN ON THE FLOOR, WITH THE LID ON, UNLESS YOU ARE TAKING A DRINK. IT CANNOT BE ON YOUR TABLE AT ANYTIME.
11. **FOR DAY ONE**: Ink **pens in blue or black ink only and highlighters**. No pencils. If you are unable to remember your seat and section number, you may bring your Notice of Eligibility into the exam. Once you are at your seat, this notice will be collected by a proctor.
    FOR DAY TWO: Number **Two Pencils Only.** No highlighters, no pens, no mechanical pencils, no large erasers, no pencil sharpeners.
12. **One bottle of hand sanitizer.**
13. **A face covering** (cloth, polypropylene, paper, or other covering that covers the nose and the mouth and that rests snugly above the nose, below the mouth, and on the sides of the face).

All items, with the exception of laptop equipment, must be displayed in a *clear* plastic bag. Upon arrival at your seat, please place your clear plastic bag on the table so a proctor can inspect it for any unpermitted item. After a

proctor inspects your clear plastic bag, you may place it under your seat.

If you enter the test room with any item(s) not listed above, you will be asked to dispose of the unpermitted item(s) in a trash receptacle or remove the item(s) to the **Designated Storage Area** (*see below*).

While in the test room, you may be asked to empty the contents of your pockets in random checks for unpermitted items.

*TIP: Remember to store your **wallet, watch, fitness tracker, eyeglass case, coat, and hat in the designated storage area**. You will not be allowed any type of time-keeping devices in the test room. These items will be confiscated at the checkpoint. You will NOT need a watch as the time will be clearly visible to all examinees throughout the exam.*

TIP: Instead of a laptop bag, use a 2-1/2 gallon clear plastic bag (e.g., one made by Hefty or Ziploc). This size bag is large enough to fit a laptop, power cord and external mouse, if desired, and will keep your computer clean and dry.

If you are found in possession of an unpermitted item while in the test room, you may be penalized or sanctioned at the discretion of the Board. Your failure to follow the examination instructions may result in your referral to the Committee on Character and Fitness. Loss of testing time that results from your violation of the instructions will be borne by you.

DESIGNATED STORAGE AREA

You may leave items unpermitted in the test room in an unsecured Designated Storage Area at your own risk. This includes valuables such as cellphones, watches, fitness trackers (*e.g.*, Fitbits), electronics, outerwear, and bags. Also leave other unpermitted items in storage such as any written material and papers of any kind, all unpermitted writing implements, and any bags other than the allowed clear plastic bag. The Board assumes no responsibility for any personal property.

While the examination is in progress, you may not access stored items.

PROHIBITION ON ELECTRONIC AND MECHANICAL ITEMS

With the exception of authorized computer laptop equipment, all electronic and mechanical devices are strictly prohibited. Examples of such devices, without limitation, are: cellphones, tablets, iPods, pagers, watches or timers of any kind, fitness trackers, smart glasses or other wearable technology, handheld computers, email and text messaging devices, PDAs, scanners, language translators, radios, electronic storage devices, including CDs, DVDs, memory sticks and thumb and other flash drives, calculators, cameras or other picture-taking devices, audio or video recorders, any type of media player, e-cigarettes or vaping devices, and audio receptors, including headphones, ear buds, and headsets.

During any test session, if you are found to have in your possession while in the test room, in the restroom, or elsewhere at the test site, an electronic or mechanical device, you will be immediately dismissed from the examination and deemed to have failed.

We must underscore that ***you may not bring your cellphone into the test room. The Board has made no exceptions in expelling and failing violators of this rule. Be advised that you may be scanned for metallic objects if you exit the test room to go to the restroom.***

DRESS

Dress is casual. As it may be warmer or cooler in the test room than you would like, please layer your clothing, such as by bringing a sweater or sweatshirt. Note, however, that scarves, hats, and coats are prohibited. Except for items of

religious apparel, you are prohibited from covering your ears or head with a hood, hat, or other garment or object while in the test room. Ears and heads must be fully exposed at all times. Sweaters and sweatshirts are subject to search. Please do not wear footwear that makes loud or distracting noise when you walk.

FACE MASK

You will be permitted to wear a face mask if you choose, except if briefly asked to lower it for identification purposes. It must be cloth, polypropylene, paper, or other covering that covers the nose and the mouth and that rests snugly above the nose, below the mouth, and on the sides of the face. You may double mask if you wish.

EARPLUGS

Personal earplugs, earmuffs, or headphones are strictly prohibited in the testing room. We will provide disposable foam earplugs upon request. If you are found to be in possession of personal earplugs inside of the testing room, we will ask you to dispose of them.

MEDICAL NECESSITIES

Any medically necessary item to which you require access (medicines or other medically-necessary item during the exam), *must have been approved prior to the exam*. Approved medicine and medical items OTHER THAN FOOD must be placed in a clear plastic bag labeled with your name and placed under your seat. **If you need to access it during the exam, YOU MUST FIRST notify your proctor and the proctor will allow you access to your bag**.

If you need access to food during exam periods and have an administrative accommodation for it, you must leave any food item at the Help Desk with your name clearly marked on it. Any time you require access, you may leave your seat and approach the Help Desk for your food item, except for the last fifteen minutes of any test session.

FOOD AND DRINK

Food may not be consumed during the test sessions unless you have an administrative accommodation allowing it. This includes candies, mints, cough drops, and chewing gum. You may consume water. *If you have an accommodation for access to food during the exam, you must store any food item at the Help Desk.*

During the lunch break, you may leave the test site to buy food. You will be required to pass through a metal detector before taking your seat for the afternoon session. Plan accordingly. Due to time constraints and, perhaps, weather conditions, you may prefer to bring food and drink with you to the test site.

You will be required to leave the test room during the lunch breaks. You may not eat at your test seat, but generally you may eat elsewhere at the test site outside of the test room.

SMOKING

Smoking and vaping of any substance of any kind are not permitted at the test site, and you may not leave the test site to smoke or vape during the administration of the exam. You may smoke or vape ONLY during the lunch break and before the exam, and ONLY in permitted areas. The University of Illinois at Chicago is a tobacco- and marijuana-free campus.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED FROM ANY TEST SITE:

- any pistol, revolver, stun gun, taser or other firearm, concealed or otherwise;
- any knife, bludgeon, throwing star, metal knuckles or other like item regardless of its composition;
- any object containing mace, pepper spray, or any noxious liquid, gas, or substance;

- any item of similar description which may be used as a weapon, whether concealed or carried openly.

EXAM DAY

ENTERING/LEAVING THE TEST SITE

Upon arriving at the test site on Day One and Day Two, pass metal detection, place unpermitted items in the designated storage area, and then immediately find your seat. *Your section proctor will check you in at your assigned seat by checking your* valid photo ID at the beginning of each test session. Your section proctor will also inspect your clear plastic bag for any unpermitted items. After a proctor inspects your clear plastic bag, you may place it under your seat.

Once you are checked in at your assigned seat, you must wear your photo ID badge at all times and in a visible manner on your chest while you are at the test site.

Leave your badge at your seat after Day One and Day Two; do not take it with you.

Late Arrival - If you arrive late but not more than **30 minutes** after the start of the exam, you may be admitted; however, NO extra time for taking the exam will be allowed. If you arrive more than 30 minutes after the time to start has been called, you will be disqualified and deemed absent from the exam.

Early Departure - The Board does not allow early departure. If you finish a test session early, you must remain in your seat until the session is over and the entire group is dismissed. *For planning purposes, you should not expect to leave the afternoon session until approximately 4:45.*

IMPORTANT: During the hours of the exam, you will not be permitted to leave the test site building. If you leave the building, you will be deemed to have abandoned your exam and will be disqualified.

ENTERING/LEAVING THE TEST ROOM

Once a test session has started, you will not be permitted to leave the test room for any reason during the **last 15 minutes** of the session. You are otherwise permitted to leave briefly only to use the restroom facilities or to access items at the Help Desk. Time advisory warnings will be given at 15 and 5 minutes prior to the end of each test session. If you are in the restroom immediately prior to the 15-minute warning, you must make every effort to be back at your seat for the final 15 minutes.

KEEPING TRACK OF TIME

The time will be displayed in a way that will be visible to all examinees. Time advisory warnings will be given 15 and 5 minutes prior to the end of each test session. Once 'time' has been called, do not continue to type, write, or mark answers to MBE questions. You will not be allowed extra time to complete, mark, or transfer an answer after time is called.

PROHIBITED COMMUNICATIONS

While the exam is in progress, including during restroom breaks or any unplanned interruption of any test session, you may only communicate with proctors and other agents of the Board. You are prohibited from communicating with other examinees or persons in any way.

Only persons authorized by the Board and the test facility may be on the test site premises immediately before, during, and immediately after the exam. Because all unauthorized persons will be asked to leave, we ask that you discourage friends and/or family members from coming with you, waiting for you, or meeting you on the test site premises.

SANCTIONS

You will be subject to any sanction in the discretion of the Board if you give or receive aid in answering exam questions, begin reading or

working on an exam segment before time to begin is called, continue working on an exam segment after time to stop is called, remove test materials from the test room, or otherwise violate any oral or written exam instruction, including the instructions herein.

SUSPECTED CHEATING

While the exam is in progress, you are required to look straight ahead, at your laptop screen, or down at your exam materials. The proctors have been instructed to warn any examinee whose gaze appears to be focused elsewhere. If you are warned a second time, you may be asked to speak with a Board member, have your exam answers reviewed for suspected cheating, or the Board may review security camera footage of your area of the test room.

If it has been determined before, during or after the bar exam that an examinee has cheated, or has engaged in any activity for the purpose of cheating, that examinee will be deemed to have failed the exam and may be subject to additional sanctions.

COMPLAINTS

Please bring any complaint(s) regarding a testing condition immediately to the attention of one of your proctors. Your proctors and the test administration staff will make every reasonable effort to remedy or ameliorate an unsatisfactory testing condition. Please be aware, however, that some problems are beyond the control of the test administration staff, for example coughing examinees, other users of the facility, lighting or heating and cooling systems, or street noise. As a precaution, you should request earplugs from a proctor.

WITHDRAWAL

If you find it necessary to withdraw from the exam while a test session is in progress, you must first notify the Board by reporting your decision to a proctor who will instruct you as to what to do. A test session is "in progress" at any time after the first set of instructions are given, until you are dismissed at the end of the testing day. *If you withdraw on DAY ONE, you may not sit for the MBE on DAY TWO.*

MPT & MEE INSTRUCTIONS

The MPTs and MEE are the written components of the Illinois bar exam. Quality of writing counts. Answers written in outline form or in other than paragraphed essay form on the MEE will not receive full credit. Answers to the MPTs must be in the form called for by the MPT assignment to receive full credit. Excessive use of abbreviations, such as symbols, acronyms and text-talk, may result in score reduction.

Answers should demonstrate an understanding of the facts and a recognition of the issue(s) involved; they should include a statement of the principles of applicable law and the reasoning employed to reach the conclusions. Questions are intended to be inquiries on fundamental points of law. Do not search for hidden meanings or remote exceptions, since none are intended. Let your answers represent your best judgment in each instance on the plain meaning of the question. Confine your answer to a discussion of the particular issues raised by the question, but give a complete answer to those issues. Write concisely and organize your answer. If you present arguments for different possible views, be certain that you decide the issue.

HANDWRITERS: Each of the six MEE answer booklets contain 4 pages bearing lines on one side, and each of the two MPT answer booklets contain 12 pages bearing lines on one side. There are no word or character limits for any of your answers, so you may request additional corresponding answer booklets if needed. No extra time is given when additional answer booklets are utilized. Each answer must be confined to the correctly marked booklet (e.g., MEE question 1 answered in one or more MEE answer booklet 1). Answers or partial answers written anywhere except in the correctly marked booklets will not be counted. As you may not erase your pen markings, draw a line through

any words that you wish the Board to ignore. Do not place your name or any other mark of identification on your answer booklets or envelope. All answer booklets, whether they contain writing or not, must be turned in at the end of each session.

LAPTOP USERS: There are no word or character limits for any of your MPT or MEE answers, so you may type as full and complete of an answer as you wish within the allotted time. Make sure you are typing your answer into the correct answer screen. Each MPT and MEE answer will need to be typed into the corresponding answer screen within Exam360.

QUESTIONS

If you cannot find the information you need on our website, please email, rather than phone, your file analyst. If you do not know the name of your file analyst, click on FAQ on our web home page and scroll down to "*Who will be responsible for processing my file?"*

FOR LAPTOP USERS ONLY

ILG EXAM360® PASSWORD

Do not bring the ILG Exam360® password to the exam on Day One. Your password is autosaved in the software.

AUTHORIZED EQUIPMENT

You must bring one registered laptop, loaded with ILG Exam360®, along with its power cord. An external mouse and full-sized keyboard are also permitted but may be used only if seating and table space allows. Mac users without USB ports may bring a USB adapter. Should devices extend beyond the table space allocated to each examinee, they will be disallowed.

ATTENTION MAC USERS: If you have a Mac with the below power adaptor, we strongly urge you to bring a small extension cord under 12 inches in length with you (pictured below). The Mac power adaptor takes up too much space on a power strip that you must share with other examinees who have the same need to plug in their laptop.

CONDITIONS OF LAPTOP USE

- Your laptop battery must be **fully charged**. In case of power failure at your test site, a fully charged battery will allow you to continue typing while the power is being restored.
- Commencement of the exam will not be delayed due to a hardware or software problem with your laptop, and you will not be provided additional time to take your exam to replace any time spent fixing the problem.
- Your laptop must remain plugged in, powered up, and in the test room throughout the entire exam day. **You may not access ANYTHING – social media, websites, any study notes or outlines on your laptop during the lunch break**. Study materials should be removed from the laptop prior to your bringing it to the exam. *Again, if you wish to use your phone during a lunch break, you must do so in an area outside of the testing floor*.
- No administrative relief will be granted in the event an exam file or a partial or entire exam answer is deleted or otherwise altered.
- If you tamper with or attempt to disable ILG Exam360® security features, or if you enable any prohibited features, you will be immediately dismissed from the exam and deemed to have failed.
- ILG Exam360® must remain installed on your computer until after exam results are posted in early October.

Morning Laptop Problems. If ILG Exam360® is not fully functional on your laptop when the morning instructions begin, you will be required to handwrite the entire morning, and, perhaps, the rest of the day. During the lunch break, if you are able to restore your laptop's functionality for the afternoon session, you may type the afternoon session.

In the event a malfunction occurs *after* you begin typing the morning session and you are unable to get your laptop functioning again **after 7 minutes of down time,** you will be required to handwrite the remainder of the morning, and, perhaps, the rest of the day. During the lunch break, if you are able to restore your laptop's functionality for the afternoon session, you may resume typing in the afternoon.

Afternoon Laptop Problems. If ILG Exam360® is not fully functional on your laptop when the afternoon instructions begin, you will be required to handwrite the entire afternoon.

In the event a malfunction occurs *after* you begin typing the afternoon session, and you are unable to get your laptop functioning again **after 7 minutes of down time,** you will be required to handwrite the remainder of the afternoon.

Laptop Reporting Form. All laptop malfunctions and irregularities must be reported on a Laptop Reporting Form that will be provided on the day of the exam.

If you are not confidently familiar with your laptop and/or with ILG Exam360® features, you should handwrite your exam. ***By electing to participate in the laptop program, you agree to the foregoing Conditions of Laptop Use, that your laptop meets ILG Exam360® minimum system requirements as outlined, and to devote the advance time necessary to become familiar with the features of your laptop and of ILG Exam360®. You will be asked to sign an agreement on the day of the exam confirming your assent to these conditions.***

Uploading Answer Files: You will need Internet connectivity to upload your answer files to ILG Technologies. Internet connectivity will not be available at the test site. Instructions for uploading will be provided to you on exam day.

* * * *

You MUST upload YOUR ANSWERS BY 2:00 A.M. CST, Wednesday, July 29, 2026. If you fail to upload your answer files before the deadline, you will receive a score of zero on each MPT and MEE answer. Carefully consider and determine how you will comply with this requirement.

COVID Directive

Applicants for the July 2026 Illinois Bar Examination are required to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.
If an applicant:

- has tested positive for COVID-19 within five days prior to July 28, 2026,
- is waiting for COVID-19 test results on any day of the bar exam,
- has COVID-19 symptoms on any exam date, or
- as of any exam date, either has tested positive for COVID-19 and been advised to isolate, or has been exposed to COVID-19 and advised to quarantine by a health professional,

The applicant is prohibited from coming to the exam site or sitting for the examination. With medical proof of illness/test/advice to isolate or quarantine by a health professional, an applicant may submit a written request along with documentation to their file analyst that the exam

fee be forwarded to the February 2027 exam only.