Frequently Asked Questions – Reciprocity Applicants

Basic Info

Q. When may I submit my application?
A. Applications for admission on motion/reciprocity are accepted throughout the year. You may file your application with our office at any time.

Q. How long does it take to be admitted?
A. The NCBE recommends you allow at least six months for application processing. Your character interview will be scheduled after all required credentials (including a passing score on the MPRE) and the NCBE’s character and fitness background investigative report have been received in our office. In the event your personal or professional history includes criminal charges, poor financial management, conduct reflecting a lack of fitness to practice, educational or professional discipline, or other evidence of a lack of good moral character, you may be required to meet with the Board at one of its biannual meetings in November or May.

Q. What if I don’t see the jurisdiction in which I am licensed on the Reciprocity List?
A. The Reciprocity List on our website is kept current, but you are welcome to call our office if you have questions about a jurisdiction not included on the list. If we do not share reciprocity with the jurisdiction in which you are licensed, you have two options: 1) you may apply for admission by examination; 2) you may consider becoming licensed in a jurisdiction with which we share reciprocity and after being admitted there you may apply to West Virginia on that basis as long as you meet all other requirements listed in the Rules for Admission to the Practice of Law. Your years of active practice need not have been achieved in the jurisdiction with which we practice reciprocity.

Q. How much is the application fee?
A. The fee schedule is available under the Fee Schedule and Other Requests tab on our website. In addition, all applicants must pay the NCBE separately for preparation of a Character Report.

Q. Should I send the application and all of the supporting documents at the same time or may they arrive separately?
A. You must submit all credentials at the same time; if you are waiting to sit for an MPRE administration, you should include the date of the test administration for which you are registered in an application cover letter.

Q. I have practiced in a jurisdiction with which you do not share reciprocity for over five years but have only been licensed in a jurisdiction with which you share reciprocity for two years. Am I eligible to apply by reciprocity?
A. Yes. Your years of active practice need not have been achieved in the jurisdiction with which we practice reciprocity. Please see Rule 4.0 (b) of the Rules for Admission to the Practice of Law.

Q. What general concerns should I be aware of?
A. Make sure you are familiar with the Rules for Admission to the Practice of Law. You will be expected to understand and abide by these requirements throughout the application process.
Application Information

Q. I don’t know the exact dates/details ... I was employed, lived at a residence, received a traffic citation, etc.... What do I do?
A. Fill out the application to the best of your recollection, estimating dates, place names, etc., if you are unable to track down the exact information required. Create as accurate a timeline as possible. If you cannot recall details of traffic citations, contact your insurance provider or the DMV for your driving history. If you cannot recall past residences, check your old tax returns, e-mails, and old addresses saved by online shopping sites. Failure to provide complete information about prior employment, residences, and other matters will delay processing of your application, so be as thorough as possible in answering the questions.

Q. I recently applied in another jurisdiction and am not yet admitted ... how do I respond to this application request?
A. The information you provide in your application must be current at the time you fill it out. You must file an amendment form with the NCBE and an update form with the WVBLE noting any changes to your application.

Q. What if the place I was employed is no longer in business or I’m unable to identify a contact at a former employer?
A. Find someone (who is unrelated by blood or marriage) willing to accept the correspondence from the NCBE who will verify your employment. You should contact all the organizations you list under employment to notify them they should expect this correspondence from the NCBE. The ideal contact is a supervisor who knew you while you worked at an organization, but if that person is not available, try the human resources or records department. Include the contact information for your reference if different from the required employer information.

Q. Must I list all civil actions I have been a party to, including large class actions?
A. Yes. List everything you’ve been a party to, including class actions, divorces, and custody disputes, and attach a copy of the required documents as listed on the application.

Q. What documents must I include in my Character & Fitness Application copy to West Virginia?
A. In addition to the items listed under the instructions on the West Virginia website, you must provide all required attachments as listed on the application (legal proceedings, financial responsibility, military, etc.), if applicable; if you no longer have these materials, contact the issuing agency and if they no longer have copies of these available to you provide their response in writing (these required attachments must be provided to the WVBLE and NCBE with your application submission).

Support Materials

Q. The type of law I practice does not involve contact with judges so how can I provide the Certificate of Presiding Judge from one of the trial courts of record in my primary home city or county?
A. When submitting your application to our office, include a cover letter explaining this and describing your practice. Our office will determine if the Certificate may be waived.

Q. I didn’t save my original bar application(s) to the jurisdiction(s) in which I am licensed. How do I provide this material?
A. Contact the jurisdiction(s) in which you are licensed to secure this material. If they have not retained these records, provide their written response in your application packet.
Interview Process

Q. When will I be interviewed?
A. The interview cannot occur until we have received your background investigative report conducted by the NCBE and all other required credentials.

Q. Where will I be interviewed?
A. You will be interviewed in or near the county you entered on your application. This county should be the one where you will primarily practice or where you will reside. If you will be living out of state and have no immediate plans to practice here, choose the county that is most geographically convenient. If you need to update your interview county, you should notify our office immediately.

MPRE

Q. What is the MPRE requirement and where do I take it?
A. The Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam (MPRE) is a 120-minute, 60-question, multiple-choice examination designed to measure the knowledge and understanding of established standards related to a lawyer's professional conduct. The MPRE is administered by the National Conference of Bar Examiners and the Law School Admission Council, and is typically held in March, August, and November. See ncbex.org for more information, including exam dates, location, and registration.

Q. I took the MPRE 5 years ago for admission in another jurisdiction. Will I be able to transfer that score to WV?
A. No. Per Rule 4.4 of the Rules for Admission to the Practice of Law, a passing MPRE score must be achieved on an examination administered within 25 months of receipt of your application. The MPRE may be taken after your application has been received in our office, but a passing score must be achieved prior to admission. There are no waivers of this rule.

Admission

Q. Do I have to attend the Supreme Court of Appeals Admission Ceremony?
A. Yes. You must be physically present in the courtroom before the Supreme Court of Appeals for the entry of your license and admission order. Attorneys are sworn in only during scheduled admission ceremonies, which are typically held every couple of months from January through June and from September through November.

Q. Are guests allowed to attend the admission ceremony?
A. Yes. Seating in the Court is limited but guests are welcome. Your friends and family may view admissions proceedings remotely on the Court’s website at http://www.courtswv.gov/supreme-court/calendar-docket.html or listen by phone at (304) 558-1313.

Post Admission

Q. How do I obtain a copy of my application, MBE Score, Exam Score, MPRE Score, Certificate of Good Standing, etc. for application to another jurisdiction?
A. Review the Fee Schedule and Other Requests page on the WVBLE website for information on these requests.