

Tips and Frequently Asked Questions – Transferred UBE Score Applicants

Application Information

You will want to begin the application process as early as possible. If you file on or immediately prior to the deadline, there is no grace period to correct deficiencies.

You should review all instructions, on the WVBLE and NCBE sites, carefully and gather copies of necessary and helpful documents, such as undergrad and law school admission applications, documents from creditors, documentation of legal proceedings, residence history, driving records, etc.

Your application data will be saved in your NCBE online account as you work on it, and you may log in at any time to answer remaining questions and upload documents, if applicable, as you have them available.

Do not use responses such as “will provide later” as your application may be considered incomplete and/or your investigation process will be delayed, which in turn can delay your admission.

You will want to confirm all entries carefully before application submission. If you make errors (typographical or otherwise) and are required to submit additional details to NCBE this can delay your character and fitness investigation, which in turn can delay your admission.

Add “@ncbex.org” and “@courtswv.gov” extensions to your email address book and check your “junk” or “spam” folder to make sure you don’t miss any correspondence. Monitor your NCBE account as well as the email address(es) you provide in your application to avoid delays and confirm you are responding promptly, and within deadlines, to NCBE and WVBLE requests.

You must complete the forms and affidavits as provided. These may not be modified. The Board cannot make advisory opinions. An application must be filed according to the Rules and instructions. There are no waivers to the Rules or instructions.

Q. When is the application due?

A. Applications for admission by UBE transfer are accepted throughout the year; complete applications must be received according to the Rules for Admission to the Practice of Law.

Q. How long does it take to be admitted?

A. This depends on how precisely you complete the application and the information in your background. The NCBE recommends allowing six months for processing of the character and fitness background investigative report. Your character interview will be scheduled after all required credentials and the NCBE’s report have been received in our office. In the event your personal or professional history includes criminal charges, financial issues, 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. Applicants must appear in person before the Justices of the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia to be admitted. Admissions ceremonies are typically held every few months during the two terms of the Court each year.

Q. May I submit a request for a Supplemental report through the NCBE?

A. If your Character Report in another jurisdiction was prepared by the NCBE within three years of your application to our jurisdiction, and the original jurisdiction releases the original report, our jurisdiction will accept a supplemental report from the NCBE. Completion of a new application (by answering all questions under the West Virginia application) is required.

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, except for transcripts and score transfers that may be issued by email.

Q. How much is the application fee?

A. The fee schedule is available under the *Fee Schedule* tab on our website. In addition, all applicants must pay the NCBE separately for the character and fitness background investigative report.

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* and *Rules of Professional Conduct*. You will be expected to understand and abide by these throughout the application process.

Q. I recently sat for the bar examination in another jurisdiction ... applied to another jurisdiction ... but have not yet been admitted ... how do I respond to this application request?

A. The information you provide in your application should be current at the time you complete it. As timely as possible, you will want to complete an amendment form with the NCBE and an update form with the WVBLE noting any changes to your application and providing required credentials (copies of applications, original Certificates of Good Standing, etc.) when applicable.

Q. I am admitted in another jurisdiction but was suspended for non-payment of dues ... CLE noncompliance ... another administrative or disciplinary action... can I be admitted?

A. To be admitted to practice law in West Virginia, applicants must be in good standing in every state in which they have been admitted to practice and must submit evidence of that standing.

Q. I took a couple of classes at two other universities or sat for college-level classes in high school ... do I need to list that in the application? Do I need that transcript?

A. Follow the instructions in the application to, "List complete information regarding all college/university attendance..." Transcripts required by the WVBLE office must show graduation (degree and date conferred) from an approved college or university in support of this Rule requirement. If you took classes but did not obtain a degree from a university or college, a transcript for this need not be submitted to the WVBLE office. Include "Details" to clarify your application responses.

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 as precisely as possible. Check with your insurance provider or the DMV for your driving history. If you cannot recall past residences, review tax returns, emails, and old addresses saved under online shopping sites. Failure to provide complete information about prior employment, residences, and other matters will delay the processing of your application, which in turn can delay your admission. Be as thorough and accurate as possible in answering all application questions. Include "Details" to clarify your application responses.

Q. I lived at my parents' home during summer break and returned to the same apartment while attending college/law school. Do I have to list these each time?

A. Follow the instructions on the application which notes the length of time required for *Residence History*. Individual entries must be listed for each change of address for the period listed, and residences/locations will need to match your employment/education periods listed. Include "Details" to clarify your application responses.

Q. I served as a TA in undergrad but received class credit and was not paid ... I volunteered at a special event to build a house over a weekend ... does this count as employment?

A. Carefully review the application and what employment encompasses; for more information on such requests, you will want to reach out to the NCBE as they conduct the background investigation and can clarify the exact information required.

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 references you list in your application to confirm current contact information (preferably email) and to notify them they should expect this correspondence from the NCBE. The ideal contact is a supervisor who can confirm your employment, but if that person is not available try the human resources or records department, a co-worker or client who is aware of your employment. Include the contact information for your reference if different from the required employer information. Add "Details" to clarify your responses. If you do not provide complete or correct responses this can delay your character and fitness investigation, and in turn can delay your admission.

Q. When and how will my references be contacted... what will they be asked?

A. The NCBE will carefully review your application following intake (including payment) and confirm dates and addresses under education/employment match with residences for the time periods listed (add "Details," such as "lived in Shangri-La while working remotely in Babylon" to clarify your responses). They will reach out to references, typically by email, following this. References will be requested to confirm the details you have provided and their association with you. Please note that if you have listed anyone as a reference who is related to you by blood or marriage, or an individual under *Character References* who is listed under *Employment*, you will be required to find another reference; a request such as this can delay your character and fitness investigation, and in turn can delay your admission. Include "Details" to clarify your application responses, particularly if you are listing a reference who coincidentally may have the same last name as yours.

Q. Do I need to have known references for 5 years? Must I have one person from each geographic location?

A. Review the application instructions carefully. Note that it is requested you have six references, "preferably" known for a minimum of five years, and "encouraged" to include a reference from every locality you have lived. Be sure to **not** include anyone related by blood or marriage, anyone living with you, or anyone listed under your Employment History.

Q. Must I list all civil actions I have been a party to, including large class actions?

A. Follow the instructions as noted under the application question and reply as requested regarding "any civil action" to which you have been a named party. Be sure to provide a copy of the required documents, for each response, as requested on the application to the NCBE and the WVBLE.

Q. I have \$100k in student loans ... will this impact me in my interview?

A. Knowledge of your financial situation will not hurt you. We recommend that you carefully review your credit report you are submitting in support of your application.

Q. I got behind on my credit card payments ... do I have to report this ... will it hurt my character and fitness determination?

A. You must report your finances according to the application questions. Knowledge of your financial situation and a plan moving forward to address any issues will not hurt you; lack of candor may require further review and delay or prohibit admission.

Q. What documents must I include in my 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. This required material must be provided to the WVBLE and NCBE with your application submission, by the deadline, or your application cannot be processed.

Q. How long is my MPRE score valid?

A. You must achieve a passing score on an MPRE administration (test date) within 25 months of the date of your successful UBE administration (test date).

Jurisdiction-Specific Character and Fitness Interview

Q. When will I be interviewed?

A. The interview will typically occur following completion and receipt in the WVBLE office of the NCBE report and submission of all required credentials, including updates.

Q. Where will I be interviewed?

A. You will be interviewed in or near the county you enter on your application. This county should be the one where you will primarily practice or where you are residing, as interviews are typically conducted during the work week (Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.). If you will be living out of state at the time of the interview, choose the county that is most geographically convenient for your travels. If you need to update your interview county, you should notify our office immediately/before the release of scores as interviews will be scheduled at that time.

Admission

Q. Do I have to attend the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia Admission Ceremony?

A. 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 during scheduled admission ceremonies, which are typically held every several months during the two terms of the Court each year. If a date has been scheduled, details on this will be made available to applicants as soon as they are deemed eligible for admission.

Q. Are guests allowed to attend the admission ceremony?

A. Guests are welcome. You may obtain details on the Court's (argument) webcast and call-in line on the website at <https://www.courtswv.gov/appellate-courts/argument-webcast> to share with family unable to attend in person.

Post Admission

Q. When will I receive my West Virginia Bar ID/number?

A. Membership in the West Virginia State Bar is mandatory in this jurisdiction and their office will contact you within several days following admission with important information, including dues, Bar ID, IOLTA, and CLE requirements.

Q. How do I get admitted to practice before the United States District Court?

A. When the opportunity is available, the United States District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia, with a Courthouse in Charleston, West Virginia, may hold admissions following the admissions ceremony before the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia. If coordination of these events is not possible, all those admitted to the West Virginia State Bar may seek admission to this and/or the United States District Court for the Northern District of West Virginia by following the admissions instructions on those Courts' websites.

Q. How do I obtain a copy of my WV application, MBE Score, MPRE Score, Certificate of Good Standing, etc., for application to another jurisdiction?

A. Review the *Prior Application and Score Reports* on the WVBLE website for information on these requests.