

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF MARYLAND  
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER ON  
LIMITATION ON APPLICATIONS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE  
NEXTGEN BAR EXAM IN MARYLAND IN JULY 2026

WHEREAS, the National Conference of Bar Examiners (“NCBE”) previously announced that it will begin offering a new version of the bar examination, known as the NextGen Uniform Bar Examination (the “NextGen UBE”), with the first administration of the NextGen UBE to occur in July 2026; and

WHEREAS, NCBE has announced that the current Uniform Bar Examination (the “Legacy UBE”) exam materials will be offered concurrently with the NextGen UBE between July 2026 and February 2028, and that, beginning with the July 2028 administration of the bar exam, the Legacy UBE materials will no longer be available for any jurisdiction to use as a test for law licensure; and

WHEREAS, as of July 2028, the NextGen UBE materials will replace the Legacy UBE materials as the sole basis for UBE score portability between UBE jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, on November 1, 2023, this Court issued an Administrative Order announcing that Maryland shall adopt the NextGen UBE, with the first administration of the NextGen UBE in Maryland to occur in July 2026; and

WHEREAS, Maryland is one of nine states and territories that has announced it will be administering the NextGen UBE in July 2026,<sup>1</sup> and the 35 other states and territories that will then be UBE jurisdictions will administer the Legacy UBE in July 2026; and

WHEREAS, because July 2026 will be the first time the NextGen UBE is offered, it is unknown how the number of applicants to take the exam will compare to the number of applicants who have taken prior July Legacy UBE exams; and

WHEREAS, physical limitations exist on the amount of space available to the Maryland State Board of Law Examiners (“SBLE”) to administer the NextGen UBE in Maryland in July 2026, and financial and other constraints at this time prevent SBLE from being able to guarantee that, if the number of applicants to take the NextGen UBE in July 2026 is significantly higher than it has been in recent July administrations of the Legacy UBE in Maryland, it will be able to secure enough additional space and staff to accommodate all potential applicants who might wish to sit for the NextGen UBE in Maryland in July 2026; and

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<sup>1</sup> The other July 2026 NextGen jurisdictions are Connecticut, Guam, Idaho, Missouri, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, the Virgin Islands, and Washington.

WHEREAS, consistent with the limitations and constraints discussed in the preceding paragraph, and based on the number of applications SBLE has received for prior administrations of the July Legacy UBE, SBLE has recommended that this Court limit the number of applications to sit for the NextGen UBE in Maryland in July 2026, to 1,000 applications, with top priority being given to those applicants who will be taking a bar exam for the first time in any U.S. jurisdiction in July 2026 and secondary priority being given to those applicants who were unsuccessful on the July 2025 Legacy UBE in Maryland or the February 2026 Legacy UBE in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, SBLE officials have consulted with their counterparts in other July 2026 NextGen UBE states, several of whom have indicated that their states likely will limit the number of applications to sit for the NextGen UBE in those states; and

WHEREAS, this Court would prefer not to have to impose any limitation on the number of applications, or alternatively, would prefer to limit the number of applications to a number greater than 1,000; and

WHEREAS, this Court finds, however, that, in the absence of a limit of 1,000 applications to sit for the July 2026 NextGen UBE in Maryland, it is possible that the number of applications received by SBLE will be greater than the number of people SBLE can test under current financial and space constraints, which could lead to disruption and other problems that could adversely affect applicants;

Now therefore, it is this 2nd day of June, 2025, hereby

**ORDERED** by the Supreme Court of Maryland, a majority concurring, that

1. SBLE shall process no more than 1,000 applications to sit for the NextGen UBE in Maryland in July 2026; and
2. Beginning on April 1, 2026, SBLE shall process, on a first-come-first-served basis, completed applications submitted online during the first 10 days of the July 2026 filing period (Wednesday, April 1, 2026-Friday, April 10, 2026), from applicants who will be taking a bar examination for the first time in any U.S. jurisdiction (“First-time Applicants”); and
3. Beginning on April 11, 2026, SBLE will process, on a first-come-first-served basis, completed applications submitted online during the first 20 days of the July 2026 filing period (Wednesday, April 1, 2026 to Monday, April 20, 2026), from:
  - a. First-time Applicants; and

- b. Applicants who were unsuccessful on the July 2025 Legacy UBE in Maryland and/or the February 2026 Legacy UBE in Maryland (“Repeat Applicants in Maryland”); and
4. Beginning on April 21, 2026, SBLE will process, on a first-come-first-served basis, completed applications submitted online during the entire July 2026 filing period (Wednesday April 1, 2026 to Friday, May 1, 2026) from all applicants without applying any preferences; and
  5. During each section of the July 2026 filing period, all priority categories of applicants are permitted to submit bar applications through SBLE’s online system. During the first section (April 1-April 10, 2026), applications submitted by First-Time Applicants, only, will be processed in the order in which they are received. During the second section (April 11-April 20, 2026), applications submitted by First-time Applicants and Repeat Applicants in Maryland, only, will be processed in the order in which they are or were received dating back to April 1. During the third section of the filing period (April 21-May 1, 2026), SBLE will process applications from all applicants in the order they are or were received dating back to April 1, 2026; and
  6. SBLE shall publicize the issuance and provisions of this Order on its website and as it otherwise deems appropriate (including, but not limited to, notification to law schools in and near Maryland) in order to maximize the likelihood that those who would qualify as First-time Applicants or Repeat Applicants in Maryland become aware of the provisions of this Order; and
  7. SBLE shall seek out opportunities that would allow SBLE to test more than 1,000 applicants for the July 2026 administration of the NextGen UBE; and
  8. If SBLE comes to believe that circumstances have changed such that SBLE can reasonably test more than 1,000 applicants during the July 2026 administration of the NextGen UBE, SBLE shall promptly so notify this Court and shall provide this Court with its recommendation concerning amendments to this Order.

/s/ Matthew J. Fader  
Matthew J. Fader, Chief Justice

Shirley M. Watts, Justice\*

/s/ Brynja M. Booth  
Brynja M. Booth, Justice

/s/ Jonathan Biran  
Jonathan Biran, Justice

/s/ Steven B. Gould  
Steven B. Gould, Justice

/s/ Angela M. Eaves  
Angela M. Eaves, Justice

/s/ Peter K. Killough  
Peter K. Killough, Justice

\* Justice Watts does not approve this Order.

Filed: June 2, 2025

/s/ Gregory Hilton  
Gregory Hilton  
Clerk  
Supreme Court of Maryland

Pursuant to the Maryland Uniform Electronic Legal  
Materials Act (§§ 10-1601 et seq. of the State  
Government Article) this document is authentic.



Gregory Hilton, Clerk