

# **Protocols and Rules: What to Expect for the September 2020 Bar Exam**

**The Illinois Board of Admissions to the Bar is proceeding with an in-person September 9-10 Illinois Bar Examination/Uniform Bar Examination. If the State of Illinois reverts to Phase III and reduces the maximum number of people allowed in a gathering, the Board will have no choice but to cancel the September 9-10, 2020 examination. No remote test option is being planned. Carefully read these Protocols and Rules and be prepared.**

**Applicants should be aware that there is an inherent risk of exposure to Covid-19 in any public place where people are present. Covid-19 is an extremely contagious disease that can lead to severe illness and death. By attending the examination, you voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to Covid-19.**

**The following protocols and rules are subject to change at any time prior to September 9. In order to evaluate best practices under unprecedented conditions, many entities were consulted, including but not limited to the National Conference of Bar Examiners, other state's bar examiners, medical experts, the CDC, the Illinois Department of Health, and local health departments in order to create these protocols.**

This bar examination will function very differently from previous administrations. Rules in place for a past exam may be different for this administration, and new rules have been instituted. Please be patient and understanding as we navigate health and safety guidelines while maintaining the integrity of a high-stakes examination.

- Seat assignments for eligible September 2020 examinees will post to User home pages 2-3 weeks prior to the exam. You will be notified via email that you have a document from the Board at that time. Make sure that the email address you provided to the Board is current or you will not receive very important notices regarding the September exam.

Seating is in several Illinois locations and may be based on the address applicants provided to the Board. Already assigned seats will not be reassigned based on failure to advise an address change, personal preference, or any other reason. Check the accuracy of the email and mailing address you provided at your User Home Personal Information screen at [www.ilbaradmissions.org](http://www.ilbaradmissions.org). Information updated after seating is assigned will not be relocated to another seat in a different city. Your seat assignment will include links to more detailed instructions, and will include your exam venue name and address, your room name and floor, and your seat number.

- Hotels are abundantly available in all cities where the exam will be given. You should have the opportunity to make a hotel reservation near your site or, if you are assigned to a hotel, within that hotel.
- At test venues where there are groups of testers, groups will report at staggered times, and will be dismissed from sessions at staggered times. To limit interactions between groups, and avoid overcrowding, long lines, and delays, you must promptly arrive at your assigned time.
- Staff and test takers will be screened with touchless forehead thermometers at test site entrances on both days of the exam. Medical professionals in proper PPE including masks, gloves and goggles will take a reading and anyone with a reading of 100.4 or higher will be re-scanned twice with two thermometers. Applicants with three 100.4 or higher readings will not be allowed building entry, will be marked as Withdrawn from the exam for medical reasons, and the Board will transfer fees to the February 2021 examination.
- The check-in/photo ID verification process will take place at your test seat by proctors. Report to your test room at the time provided on your seat assignment for verification of valid photo ID and the completion of a health questionnaire. Your Photo ID badge will be on your tabletop and must be worn at all times throughout administration of the exam.
- No mask = no exam. A face covering is mandatory and will be enforced at all times inside test sites, including in the exam room during administration. Mouths and noses must be covered at all times with cloth masks, disposable non-surgical masks, or medical masks

such as an N95. We will not allow scarves, bandanas, or gaiters as a substitute for a mask that fully covers the nose and mouth. *There will be no exceptions unless you have an approved accommodation to not wear the required mask, in which case you will be required to wear a face shield.* Anyone refusing to comply will be dismissed from the exam. The Board will provide one disposable, non-surgical mask per applicant per day. We understand that wearing a face covering for an extended period of time can be uncomfortable, but they do offer protection against spread of COVID-19. Be aware that should you discover during testing that wearing a face covering is intolerable, there are no extra exam seats, no private test rooms, and no options other than to try a different type of face covering or forfeiting the exam altogether.

- Every applicant will be expected to complete a pre-examination health and safety questionnaire before the exam, and again at start of each day. You must be honest and forthcoming about your health and not attempt to cover up symptoms of illness (for example by having taken acetaminophen or ibuprofen to suppress a fever). You will be asked about recent or current symptoms such as those for Covid-19:
  - 100.4 or higher fever, or chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Skin rash
  - Unexplained skin bruising or spots

The Board will seek immediate medical attention by calling 9-1-1 upon witnessing or being alerted to anyone with a medical emergency, including anyone with emergency warning signs of Covid-19 which include:

- Difficulty breathing
  - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
  - New confusion
  - Inability to wake or stay awake
  - Bluish lips or face
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- If a tester leaves an exam after having reported or displayed Covid-19 symptoms, the test and the time will be stopped and all applicants temporarily dismissed to the nearest hallway or area so that the room can be sanitized as quickly as possible. Any time lost will be added upon continuation of exam. For guidance and to initiate contact tracing, local health departments will be contacted if a Covid-19 case is suspected.
  - Test seats will be pre-set 6 feet apart, and you are required to maintain 6 feet from others in all areas of your test site, including entry and exit, restrooms, and all other times. Exceptions may arise in abbreviated interaction with proctors, laptop technicians or Board staff. Do not hesitate to ask someone politely to move away from you if you know s/he is too close. Six feet is the approximate distance of two shopping carts, two Golden Retrievers nose-to-tail, a sofa, or a yoga mat.
  - Pursuant to the State of Illinois Restore Illinois Phase IV Plan, gatherings are limited to no more than 50 people. Therefore, there will be a maximum of 48 testers in a space with two proctors, and in most spaces, there will be fewer total people.
  - Board staff, including proctors and technicians, will also wear appropriate face coverings and comply with 6 feet social distance except when it is impossible to do so.
  - Do not touch another person or his or her belongings.
  - Proctors will be provided disposable gloves to be worn while handling material and at other times which will be disposed of after each handling.
  - Please bring >60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer in gel or wipe form for your hands, and alcohol or bleach-based sanitizing wipes and/or

spray for your laptop and surfaces. The Board will also provide sanitizing supplies. Sanitize your hands after room entry, and before leaving the room each time. Also sanitize after touching your face or face mask, or any surface that you are unsure has been disinfected.

- You must bring several of your own black or blue ink pens on both days of the exam, and make sure you bring several sharpened or mechanical #2 pencils on September 10 for the Multistate Bar Examination sessions. No highlighters will be allowed, and if you bring them you will be asked to dispose of them or take them to storage.
- You will be dismissed at lunch after the end of each morning session, and not be allowed to stay in the test room. Laptops will be left at test seats, and you will be asked to sanitize your laptop before you exit. Proctors will collect morning material, sanitize your test area, and place afternoon material at your seat. There will be little to no hand to hand contact between proctors and applicants. Proctors will be provided with extra material and supplies such as scratch paper, extra paper answer booklets, tissues, sanitizer and other items at a common area where you may retrieve it during the test. (Or raise your hand and proctor will bring it to you).
- You are only allowed to leave the room to use the restroom or to obtain laptop assistance from a laptop technician. A proctor will sign you out and back in to eliminate shared use of writing instruments. To expedite exit, be prepared to provide your seat number to your proctor every time you leave the room (your seat number will be printed on a seat card taped to your table top as well as printed on your Photo ID badge). Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Laptop technicians for ILG Technologies will be stationed at each test site to assist testers on exam essay day who may need assistance with their laptops or Exam360 software. They will not be inside test rooms but will be seated at tables in hallways where applicants can bring their laptops for tech help. Signs will direct testers to technician areas. While awaiting assistance, keep 6 feet physical distance in line. Closer proximity than 6 feet may be required when receiving laptop help, but technicians will be masked and sanitize between testers.

**UNDERSTAND THAT TECH SUPPORT MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SOLVE YOUR PROBLEM WITHIN SEVEN MINUTES DUE TO THE SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIRED FOR THE TESTING SITES. BE PREPARED TO HANDWRITE.** If the test is underway and the line to receive help is longer than you care to wait, you should request paper answer booklets and handwrite your answers. A report of the switch will be recorded, and the Board will retrieve and combine any laptop answers with your paper booklet answers. You will not get extra time. If technicians are able to fix your laptop problem over a lunch period, you may go back to typing and again, a report will be made and answers combined. Once you initially switch to handwriting, you may not re-enter Exam360 until the next session.

- Except when proctors are reading scripted instructions aloud or quietly conversing with one another on administration related matters, or when applicants require proctor assistance, NO TALKING will be allowed in the exam room.
- Different exam site venues may have different and more stringent rules relating to their sites. These include limited numbers of elevator riders, water fountains being disabled, or closing every other restroom stall. Watch for signs instructing you of site-specific rules that may not be included in the Board's general protocols.
- Storage: Each exam venue will have its own area for the storage of your items, if any, not allowed inside the test room. Watch for signs directing you to storage areas. Please strictly limit the number of items you bring to the venue, and do not place your items in contact with another person's items. Use plastic bags instead of cloth bags. Do not use a cloth bag such as a purse or backpack. Storage areas at all venues may not be continuously monitored. You may not access your stored material except before exam starts, at lunch break, and at end of day dismissal. Keep storage items at a bare minimum, for example: lunch, beverage, and cell phone.
- Leave your purses, wallets and backpacks at home, in your hotel, or in your locked car. They are not allowed inside exam rooms, and will not be guarded in the storage area.

This is a list of items that will be allowed **INSIDE** exam rooms:

- Laptops and authorized, related items to laptop testing;
- **Water bottle** with spill-proof lid in clear container with no label or writing on it

*In a clear plastic bag:*

- Photo ID
- Pens and Pencils
- Face coverings (you may bring more than one, and different types)
- Sanitizers
- Keys
- Transportation card
- Credit Card or Money
- Eyeglasses -no cases
- Earplugs
- Medical necessities - if previously approved
- Feminine hygiene products

\* **Water bottles** are not usually allowed inside test rooms. For the September administration, some test sites will have water fountains disabled. Therefore, you are allowed to bring a water bottle, in addition to any beverage you may be leaving at Storage with your lunch. The water bottle must be in clear bottle, must contain only water, and must have no writing on it. Any water bottle that is not clear, that does not contain water, or that has a label or writing on it will be disposed of or you will be asked to take it to Storage.

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Consult these sites for health and safety information:

<https://www.dph.illinois.gov/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/>

Symptom checkers:

WebMD:

<https://www.m.webmd.com/coronavirus/mobile-health-check-coronavirus/default.htm>

Apple/CDC:

<https://www.apple.com/covid19/>

Johns Hopkins:

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/coronavirus/covid-19-self-checker.html>