

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF MARYLAND  
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER ON ADOPTION OF THE  
NEXTGEN BAR EXAMINATION

WHEREAS, in November 2017, this Court adopted the Uniform Bar Examination (“UBE”), along with a Maryland supplement to the examination (known as the Maryland Law Component (“MLC”)), which was implemented in 2019; and

WHEREAS, the first administration of the UBE and MLC in Maryland was in July 2019, and Maryland has remained a UBE jurisdiction since that time; and

WHEREAS, all jurisdictions that participate in the UBE currently administer the Multistate Performance Test (“MPT”), the Multistate Essay Examination (“MEE”), and the Multistate Bar Exam (“MBE”); and

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

WHEREAS, NCBE has announced that the current UBE exam materials will be offered concurrently with the NextGen Bar Exam between July 2026 and February 2028, and that, beginning with the July 2028 administration of the bar exam, the current 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 Bar Exam materials will replace the current UBE materials as the sole basis for score portability between UBE jurisdictions;

WHEREAS, this Court, with the assistance of the Maryland State Board of Law Examiners (“SBLE”), has studied whether to adopt the NextGen Bar Exam and, if so, when to begin administering the NextGen Bar Exam in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, the NextGen Bar Exam will test a broad range of foundational lawyering skills, using a focused set of clearly identified fundamental legal concepts and principles needed in today’s practice of law; and

WHEREAS, Maryland has an interest in remaining a UBE jurisdiction where successful takers of a nationally administered Bar Examination may avail themselves of score portability; and

WHEREAS, SBLE has recommended that this Court adopt the NextGen Bar Exam, and that the first administration of the NextGen Bar Exam in Maryland be in July 2026; and

WHEREAS, SBLE has consulted with officials at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law and the University of Baltimore School of Law, who have informed SBLE that their respective law schools support the adoption of the NextGen Bar Exam; and

WHEREAS, this Court is satisfied that, beginning with its first administration in July 2026, the NextGen Bar Exam, in combination with the MLC, will provide a sound basis for assessing competence to enter the practice of law in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, it will be necessary to amend certain provisions of the Maryland Rules to account for the change from the current UBE materials to the NextGen Bar Exam

materials, and to ensure UBE broad score portability during and after the NextGen transition period; it is this **1st** day of November, 2023, hereby

**ORDERED** by the Supreme Court of Maryland that

1. Maryland shall adopt the NextGen Bar Exam; and
2. The first administration of the NextGen Bar Exam in Maryland shall be in July 2026; and
3. The Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure shall propose new Rules and/or amendments to the existing Maryland Rules of Procedure, as necessary to allow SBLE to administer the NextGen Bar Exam beginning with the July 2026 administration of the NextGen Bar Exam and to ensure broad UBE score portability during and after the NextGen transition period; and
4. SBLE shall incorporate the subjects of Family Law and Trusts and Estates (beyond Maryland-specific distinctions) into the MLC until such time as the NextGen Bar Exam includes those subjects in portions of the exam that test substantive legal knowledge.

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

/s/ Shirley M. Watts  
Shirley M. Watts, Justice

/s/ Michele D. Hotten  
Michele D. Hotten, 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

Filed: November 1, 2023

/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