

Iowa Bar Exam Laptop Option Overview



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT EXAMSOFT AND THE SOFTWARE

Who is ExamSoft?

ExamSoft Worldwide, Inc. is a software developer specializing in computerized assessment and assessment administration programs. The Iowa Supreme Court contracts with this vendor to provide technology in administering the laptop option.

What is SofTest™?

SofTest is a high stakes assessment program developed and licensed by ExamSoft that enables applicants to securely take examinations downloaded to their own laptop computers by blocking access to files, programs and the Internet during the bar exam.

How reliable is SofTest?

Over 2,000,000 exams have been successfully administered using SofTest. SofTest is used by 34 State Supreme Courts for delivery of the Bar and Legal Specialization exams and at over 120 colleges and universities. SofTest has several safety features to ensure that answers entered are not lost.

What is FlexSite?

FlexSite is ExamSoft's Internet-based exam delivery option. Using SofTest, you will download your exam files prior to the day of the examination, and upload your answers after the examination via the Internet. You WILL NOT require Internet connectivity during the examination. You WILL require Internet connectivity to download your exam files and upload your answers.

LAPTOP AND TECHNICAL QUESTIONS

What are the minimum system requirements for using SofTest and FlexSite?

SofTest may be used on PC laptops or Mac laptops utilizing Mac OSX v.10.4.4 (Tiger) or Mac OSX 10.5 (Leopard) with Windows installed through Bootcamp, as per the requirements listed below. SofTest is not compatible with the Macintosh operating system, nor may it be used with any PC emulation software. The minimum recommended system requirements are:

- PC/Intel-based architecture/framework (Including Mac laptops using Bootcamp)

- CPU = 1 GHz Pentium III or Industry Equivalent
- RAM = 1 GB
- Drives = 50 MB of free space
- Must have a working internal battery
- Operating System = English versions of 32-bit Versions of Windows XP or Vista or 64-bit Versions of Windows Vista
 - **NOTE:** Ensure that the date and time are accurate on your laptop!
- Software = Internet Explorer 6.0 or greater
- Internet Connection: An Internet connection is required SofTest Installation, Exam Download and Upload (AOL Users must have AOL 6.0 or higher)
- Minimum Screen Resolution: 1024 x 768

Does it matter what type of laptop I use?

The specific model or make of your laptop does not have a direct impact, provided you meet the minimum system requirements (listed directly above). It is imperative that you make sure you are using a dependable laptop, and that you test the software on the laptop several times prior to examination day.

Can I use more than one laptop for the examination (a backup laptop scenario)?

No. You can use *ONLY* one laptop for this exam. This laptop will be the one you must bring with you to the examination site on the day of the examination. If you have followed all of the registration steps in the "Registration Checklist for Laptop Users" properly, your laptop should function adequately for the examination. Therefore, no backup laptop would be necessary.

Where can I get further advanced technical information on the hardware requirements and software?

ExamSoft offers further advanced technical support answers on their web site at the following location:

<https://www.examsoft.com/dotnet/faqs/faq.aspx>

This page answers many more advanced computer and software setup questions, such as:

1. How to install SofTest for use with more than one jurisdiction
2. Common errors which happen during the examination and trouble-shooting
3. Downloading software while a firewall is running on your laptop
4. Having administrator rights for your user account on your laptop

SIGNING UP AND REGISTERING

What is the SofTest registration process?

The Registration Process records you as an applicant who has been properly enrolled to take their essay examination on computer *and* provides you a copy of SofTest to install on your computer. It confirms you have downloaded and installed SofTest, registered your copy of SofTest and downloaded your exam(s) so you may use your computer on examination day. This process can *ONLY* be completed on one computer, so make sure you have a reliable laptop ready before downloading any software.

How do I sign up and register?

You must notify the Board of Law Examiners that you choose the laptop option. You must file a Laptop Option Enrollment and Release form with your bar exam application. Registration instructions will be emailed to you.

When will I receive email notice that I can download and register the software?

You will receive notice on the date registration opens.

What happens if I do not receive the email regarding the software download and registration?

The Office of Professional Regulation will send out a reminder email to applicants who enrolled for the laptop option and who have not downloaded the software. This reminder will be sent before registration closes. If you do not receive any of these emails, check the following:

1. Ask your email service provider if they are blocking SPAM.

If you are using email client software, such as Outlook or Outlook Express, make sure you do not have a SPAM blocker enabled. If you do, you can add the following email address to the list of allowable email addresses: Bar.Admissions@iowacourts.gov

2. Ensure that you have provided the Office of Professional Regulation with a valid email address.
3. If you have not received your email notice by the time you receive the letter advising that you have been approved to sit for the exam (one month prior to the exam), call the Board office for your user ID and password information [(515) 281-8430, Alison Flannery].

How can I check to make sure I have registered successfully?

Once you register SofTest, you will be advised on-screen and via email that you have done so successfully. You may also access your registration status online at <http://www.examsoft.com/IABLE>.

Do I have to register before the day of the examination?

Yes. If you have not registered by the designated deadline, you will be required to handwrite your answers. **Your laptop option fee will not be refunded.**

Will my law school version of SofTest work for this examination?

No. You must download the Bar Edition of SofTest to use your laptop for the Iowa bar exam.

May I practice with the software?

Yes. There are two options. We **STRONGLY** urge you to take advantage of both.

Internet Delivered Mock Exam – Additional copies of the Mock Exam are available to familiarize you with SofTest. Internet connectivity is *only* required to download an additional copy of the exam file and upload the answer file. No Internet connectivity is required while taking the exam.

Practice Exam Built into SofTest - After registering SofTest, launch the program by double-clicking the SofTest icon on your Windows desktop and then click 'LaunchSofTest.' When SofTest opens click the "Practice Exam" button.

REGISTRATION CHECKLIST FOR LAPTOP USERS

The following checklist is provided as a convenience for applicants to ensure they have met the adequate requirements for the laptop option. The items on this checklist must be completed prior to the date of the bar examination if you wish to use your laptop for the Iowa bar exam.

- ➡ **Obtain a Fully Qualified Laptop** – Ensure that you have access to a fully qualified laptop as defined in the *Laptop and Technical Questions* section of the *Frequently Asked Questions*. You must be able to have access to this laptop until results are released for the examination. You will only be allowed to download the software to this one laptop. For this reason, please make sure your computer is in optimum operating condition before arriving at the examination. The following procedures will help to prevent common examination day problems:
 - Disable all screensavers and power saving features
 - Ensure that the date and time are correct on your laptop
 - Test your laptop with the SofTest Practice and Mock Exams as much as possible PRIOR to arriving at the examination site.

- ➡ **Enroll for the Laptop Option with the Office of Professional Regulation**– File the Enrollment & Release form, from the Laptop Option package you received after applying for the bar exam. If you file the Enrollment & Release form, you will receive email notification for the next step when registration opens.

- ➡ **Register** – Once you receive email confirmation, visit www.examssoft.com/IABLE. You will need your credit card now for payment. Click the Exam Takers Tab. Use your applicant ID number and password from the email to log in.

- ➡ **Install** – Read the instructions on the screen to download and install SofTest on your laptop.

- ➡ **Complete Registration** – Enter your applicant ID number and password into SofTest when prompted to register.

- ➡ **Download Exam(s)** – Formatted files for recording your answers are automatically downloaded after successfully registering SofTest.

- ➡ **Take Mock Exam** - Complete the Mock Exam and upload the answer file.

- ➡ **Review FlexSite Exam Information** – Upon completion of SofTest registration you will be given information about using your laptop on the day of the bar exam.

- ➡ **Equipment** - You will be required to access the Internet following the bar exam to upload your answers. Make certain your computer is properly equipped.

These procedures must be completed each time you sit for the bar examination, regardless of any previous ExamSoft registrations you may have completed for this bar examination or any other examination.

Applicants who have not registered SofTest and downloaded their exam files will not be allowed to use their laptop computer. They will be required to handwrite their answers.