FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Remotely-Administered February 2021 Iowa Bar Examination

EXAM SCHEDULE (back to top)

When will the remote exam be administered? The exam will be administered on February 23–24, 2021. The MPT will be administered the morning of February 23, and the MEE will be administered that afternoon. The MBE will be administered in the morning and afternoon of February 24. There will be a mandatory orientation prior to February 23, with further details about the specific date and time to come later.

When is the deadline for registering for the February 2021 Iowa Bar Examination? The deadline for registering was November 1, 2020.

What is the exam schedule for the February 2021 remote exam? The standard administration of the exam will occur on the following schedule (all times are Central Time):

Tuesday, February 23, 2021		
	9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. CST	MPT 1
	11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CST	MPT 2
	2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. CST	MEE 1–3
	4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. CST	MEE 4–6

Wednesday, February 24, 2021		
	9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. CST	MBE 1–50
	11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CST	MBE 51–100
	2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. CST	MBE 101–150
	4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. CST	MBE 151–200

Applicants will be given the exam session password 15 minutes prior to the beginning of each exam session and will be able to start that session any time up to 15 minutes after the scheduled session start time.

Applicants approved for non-standard testing accommodations will be notified separately of their individual testing schedule.

GENERAL BAR EXAM QUESTIONS (back to top)

Will the February 2021 Iowa Bar Examination be a Uniform Bar Exam (UBE), and will I be able to transfer my UBE score to another jurisdiction? Generally, the score from a remotely-administered UBE is considered to be a transferable score. It is anticipated that most of the other UBE jurisdictions will accept a transferred UBE score from jurisdictions that administer the February 2021 UBE remotely, but applicants interested in transferring their scores should check with the individual jurisdictions to verify that to be the case.

What if I signed up for the Iowa bar exam with the intent of taking an in-person exam and do not wish to take a remote exam? Applicants who have registered to take the February 2021 exam have the option to withdraw from the exam and either (1) receive a refund of their Rule 31.6 bar application fee or (2) defer their fee to the July 2021 Iowa Bar Examination. This election must be made by December 31, 2020, in order to be eligible for the fee refund or deferral; any withdrawals after that point in time will be subject to the provision of Iowa Court Rule 31.6, which does not allow a refund or transfer of fees.

GENERAL TESTING SOFTWARE QUESTIONS (back to top)

What computer equipment will I need to take the remotely-administered bar exam? Information about the minimum system requirements necessary to use ExamSoft's software, Examplify, can be found on the ExamSoft website. The following requirements are specifically required for the remote proctoring software, but please see the linked website for full system requirements for the testing software as well. Additionally, applicants are highly encouraged to meet the recommended system requirements, as many potential technical problems can be avoided by having a computer that meets these requirements. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use laptops with internal webcams and microphones for ease of use, but if a laptop is not available, a desktop computer with an external webcam and microphone may be used.

- Examplify version 2.5 or greater (register and download with instructions provided by ExamSoft)
- Hard drive: 4GB or higher available space
- RAM: 8GB or higher strongly recommended to avoid potential technical difficulties; 4GB required
- Webcam: (no virtual cameras or phones as cameras)
- Microphone: (no headphones, no virtual mics)
- Internet: 2.5 Mbps upload speed
- Please note ExamSoft does not support any of the following for the bar exam: Chromebooks, Android Devices, Cell Phones, iPads, Tablets, Multiple Screens, VGA Splitters

How do I register for the software? Applicants will receive registration instructions via email in January. Applicants must pay the registration fee directly to ExamSoft during the registration process.

How much does the Examplify software cost? $130, which is payable directly to ExamSoft through the registration process. Instructions will be emailed to applicants in January on how to register.

How do I become familiar with the software? Applicants will be required to complete two mock exams in January in order to ensure system compatibility and to practice using the software. Additional mock exams will be available for download for continued practice up until a few days before the exam.

Do I need internet access to take the remote exam? Yes, applicants will need a reliable internet connection before each exam session in order to obtain the password for each session, to check in, and to begin each session. Applicants will also need an internet connection to upload their exam answer files and proctoring video files after sessions are completed. An active internet connection is not required during the exam session.

Do I need to upload my exam answer files and proctoring video files immediately after each testing session? Not necessarily. Applicants are encouraged to upload these files during breaks in testing if time permits in order to clear hard drive space. However, files will be stored on the applicant's computer and can be uploaded after testing has concluded for the day.

What if I don't have the proper computer equipment or cannot meet other requirements for taking the remotely-administered exam? Applicants should contact the Office of Professional Regulation by emailing bar.admissions@iowacourts.gov immediately about what, if any, alternative arrangements may be available.

TESTING ENVIRONMENT QUESTIONS (back to top)

Beyond the testing software, what else is required to be able to take the exam remotely? Applicants will need to make arrangements to take the exam in a private room with internet access. This should be a quiet environment without other individuals in the same room. Applicants should be sure the room is well-lit in order for the proctoring software to work properly. As much as possible, applicants should take their practice exams in the same location they will be taking the actual exam to make sure the software works properly in that environment.

What can I have with me in the testing room? Generally, the only thing that should be within reach of you should be your computer. You may not have paper in the room with you or any other item or device that contains notes or study materials. This prohibition includes test instructions. The only exception is that scratch paper and a non-electronic writing utensil is allowed on the MPT only. These materials must be removed from the room for all other exam sessions. You are also permitted to have water in a clear container that does not have a label on it. We highly recommend a container with a lid to avoid spills.

What items are prohibited to have with me in the testing space? Basically, everything other than your computer. A non-exhaustive list of prohibited items includes:
- Cell phones, watches of any kind, calculators, fitness trackers, and any other electronic device
- Notes, bar review materials, or legal reference books
- Pens, pencils, and any other type of writing utensil. The only exception is that non-electronic writing utensils are permitted on the MPT only.
- Food, candy, mints, gum, and similar items
- Beverages other than water

- Beverage containers (the exception to this is a clear container without a label)
- Hats and hoodies, unless a head covering is required for religious purposes
- Headphones, earbuds, headsets, and earplugs
- Billfolds, wallets, cardholders
- Paper of any kind, including exam instructions, except that scratch paper is permitted <u>on the MPT only</u>
- Tobacco products of any kind
- Backpacks, pursues, tote bags, laptop cases, sleeves, or shells
- Diplomas, photographs, or other items that might personally identify the applicant should not be visible to the applicant's webcam during the examination

Can I have food and water? You may not have food in the testing room with you. If you have a condition that requires you to have access to food more frequently than the 90-minute testing sessions would permit, you should contact us at bar.admissions@iowacourts.gov to request a waiver of this rule. You will need to provide documentation demonstrating the need for a waiver. Water is permitted as long as it is in a clear container without a label.

Can I use scratch paper? On most sessions of the exam, no. The only exception is that scratch paper and a writing utensil is allowed <u>on the MPT only</u>. These materials must be removed from the room for all other exam sessions. The Examplify software does have a notes feature, which does permit applicants to write notes within the program. Applicants should familiarize themselves with this and other features of the software during the required mock exams.

Can I wear earplugs? No. You may not use earplugs or have anything else on, in, or over your ears. If your testing environment presents a situation where earplugs would be necessary, you should contact us at bar.admissions@iowacourts.gov to request a waiver of this rule.

Can I use more than one monitor? No. You may only use one monitor to take the exam.

Can I wear a hat, glasses, a face mask, or anything else on my head or face? You may wear prescription glasses as needed. No documentation is required. However, wearing anything else on your head or face is prohibited. This includes tinted glasses that would obstruct the camera's view of your eyes. The only exception to this rule is that religious headwear is permitted; however, you should contact us at bar.admissions@iowacourts.gov to request a waiver. Applicants who test in an environment that requires use of a face mask due to the COVID-19 pandemic should also contact us at the above email address to discuss what procedures need to be followed during the exam.

Can I have my cell phone with me in the room in case I need to contact technical support? No. You should keep your cell phone outside of your testing room. If the need to contact technical support arises, you can go retrieve your phone. If you are testing in an environment that would not reasonably allow for this, you should contact us at bar.admissions@iowacourts.gov in order to explain your circumstances and request a waiver of this rule.

Can I wear a watch? No. Watches and electronic devices are prohibited in the testing room.

TESTING CONDITIONS AND CONDUCT QUESTIONS (back to top)

How will my identity be verified during testing sessions? Applicants will be required to submit a government-issued photo ID electronically to the Office of Professional Regulation prior to the administration of the exam. Instructions will be emailed to applicants about how to submit this ID. The testing software also uses Exam ID to verify applicant identity.

How does ExamID work? ExamID authenticates the identity of applicants to ensure that the person taking the exam is the person who registered for the exam. During the first mock exam, ExamID will take a baseline photo of the applicant. At the start of each actual exam session, ExamID will take another photo of the applicant and will compare that photo to the one taken during the mock exam to authenticate the applicant's identity. If there is a problem authenticating the applicant's identity at the start of a live exam session, the applicant will still be permitted to take the exam, and the Board of Law Examiners will verify the applicant's identity after the exam administration.

How do I ensure ExamID and the software works optimally in recording baseline images and exam proctoring video? The exam and baseline photos should be taken in a well-lit room. Applicants are strongly encouraged to take their mock exams and baseline photos in the same well-lit room they intend to take the exam in. The applicant is required to position his or her webcam directly in front of him or her to ensure a straight-on view of the applicant's face for the duration of the exam.

An applicant has the ability during a testing session to view his or her own video feed to ensure the camera is positioned correctly and is recording. Applicants are strongly encouraged to quickly check their video feeds upon entering each exam session and then proceed with testing. Instructions on how to do this are provided during the first required mock examination.

How does the remote proctoring software work?
- Applicants must remain seated with their faces visible to the camera for the duration of each 90-minute test session. Breaks will be provided between each exam session, during which time applicant may step away from their computers to stretch, use the restroom, get food or water, take medications, etc.
- The proctoring software will record the applicant (both audio and video) throughout each exam session. The recording will be uploaded to ExamSoft along with the examinee's answer files.
- ExamSoft's artificial intelligence program will analyze the recording and flag any unusual behaviors, movements, or sounds. As explained further below, just because behavior is flagged does not mean action will be taken against the applicant for exam misconduct.
- All flagged footage is then reviewed by at least one human proctor to determine whether further analysis into potential cheating is necessary. If no misconduct is detected upon review, the flag will be cleared and no further action will be taken as to that incident.
  - For example: a dog may bark in the background, and the video may be initially flagged by artificial intelligence and cleared upon human review.
- Proctors will not have access to any personally identifying information for examinees. All exam materials and footage are connected to applicants by examinee ID number only. This is why it is important to remove any diplomas, photographs, or other personally-identifying items from the view of the camera.

- The Board of Law Examiners will destroy and/or direct ExamSoft to destroy all video recordings from the examination within a reasonable time after the completion of all grading or after the resolution of any misconduct investigations.

What does being "flagged" mean? If the software flags any unusual behavior, movement, or sound, the footage is reviewed by at least one human proctor to determine whether further investigation is needed or if the flag can be cleared without further investigation. It is anticipated that most flags will be cleared by human proctors.

What type of conduct will be flagged? Conduct that will result in further investigation includes, but is not limited to: disconnecting the webcam or other loss of audio or video, leaving the view of the webcam during a testing session, having a prohibited item in the testing space, using an unauthorized electronic device during testing, accessing or otherwise using notes or other prohibited materials, other individuals being in the testing space, talking, and any other conduct that raises suspicion that an applicant has cheated on the exam.

Will applicants be permitted to leave the testing room or use the restroom during the testing session? Applicants are not permitted to leave the view of their webcams during testing sessions and may not use the restroom or otherwise leave the view of their webcam. However, testing sessions will be 90 minutes in length in order to permit more frequent breaks during the testing day.

What if I have a condition that would require me to leave the testing room more frequently than every 90 minutes? Applicants should contact the Office of Professional Regulation by emailing bar.admissions@iowacourts.gov immediately about what alternative arrangements may be available.

What if I experience technical difficulties during the exam? We will provide some tips on dealing with common technical issues during the exam. ExamSoft will have dedicated phone response available throughout each exam session for examinees in need of technical assistance. Examinees are permitted to access their phones for technical support, but phones must be removed from the testing area immediately after the support call ends.