

Notice of Public Hearings: Uniform Bar Exam

In November 2014, Chief Judge Jonathan Lippman appointed an Advisory Committee to study the proposed adoption of the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) in New York. The Committee, which is chaired by the Honorable Jenny Rivera, Associate Judge of the New York Court of Appeals, and includes representatives of law schools, the judiciary, the State Board of Law Examiners, and the bar, is charged with studying the potential implementation of the UBE in New York.

In connection with that responsibility, the Committee will hold public hearings throughout New York in early 2015. The purpose of the public hearings is to receive the views of interested individuals, organizations and entities on the possible transition to the UBE. After the public hearings, the Advisory Committee will make a recommendation to the Court of Appeals as to whether the current New York bar examination should be replaced with the UBE.

The hearings will take place as follows:

- **CUNY Law School**, Wednesday, January 21, 2015, at 10 a.m., 2 Court Square, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101
- **New York State Court of Appeals** Tuesday, February 3, 2015, at 10 a.m., 20 Eagle Street, Albany, N.Y. 12207
- **Appellate Division, Fourth Department** Thursday, February 26, 2015, at 2 p.m., 50 East Avenue, Rochester, N.Y. 14604

The current New York bar exam consists of five essays and 50 multiple-choice questions testing on New York State law, one Multistate Performance Test (MPT) question developed by the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE), and the 200 multiple-choice question Multistate Bar Examination, also developed by NCBE. In contrast, the UBE, which has been adopted in 14 other states, consists of six essays developed by NCBE that test the law of general application, two MPT questions, and the 200-question MBE. Unlike the current New York bar exam, the UBE produces a portable score that can be used to gain admission in other states that accept the UBE, provided the applicant satisfies other jurisdiction-specific admission requirements.

The State Board of Law Examiners has proposed that if the UBE is adopted in New York, bar applicants also should be required to pass a separate state law-specific component, the New York Law Exam (NYLE), which would consist of 50-multiple choice questions.

The Advisory Committee seeks testimony on the following issues (the list is not exhaustive):

- The advantages and/or disadvantages of the current New York bar examination and the proposed UBE
- The extent to which adoption of the UBE would result in changes to law school curricula and bar exam preparation
- How UBE score portability would impact New York law graduates and graduates of law schools in other jurisdictions, and the law profession as a whole
- The importance of requiring bar applicants to separately pass a New York-law specific component
- Whether the NYLE should be administered in conjunction with the UBE and/or on additional dates.

The Advisory Committee's hearing panel will consider both oral testimony and written submissions. All testimony is by invitation only. If you are interested in being invited to testify at the hearing, please send an e-mail to UniformBarExam@nycourts.gov no later than 14 days in advance of the scheduled hearing at which you propose to testify. Proposed testimony should not exceed 10 minutes in length, unless otherwise instructed by a panel member.

If requesting an invitation, please (1) identify yourself and your affiliation; (2) attach a prepared statement or a detailed outline of the proposed testimony, and specify which, if any, of the topics described above will be addressed, and; (3) indicate at which of the hearings you would like to deliver the testimony. In advance of the hearing, invitations to testify will be issued and will include an approximate time for each presenter's testimony. For those not invited to present oral testimony, the proposed testimony will be deemed a written submission for consideration by the Advisory Committee.

Persons unable to attend a hearing or interested in only making a written submission may submit their remarks by e-mail to UniformBarExam@nycourts.gov at least seven days in advance of the hearing, or by mailing the submission to the Advisory Committee at:

Advisory Committee on the Uniform Bar Examination
c/o The Honorable Jenny Rivera, Associate Judge
New York State Court of Appeals
20 Eagle Street
Albany, N.Y. 12207

For further information, please visit the Advisory Committee's webpage at www.nycourts.gov/ip/bar-exam