



# LAWYER LICENSURE GUIDE

## FOR FOREIGN-TRAINED PROFESSIONALS IN MAINE

*New Mainers Resource Center, Portland Adult Education*



# **LAWYER LICENSURE GUIDE**

## ***FOR FOREIGN-TRAINED PROFESSIONALS IN MAINE***

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### **New Mainers Resource Center – Who We Are**

The New Mainers Resource Center (NMRC) is a program within Portland Adult Education serving area immigrants and refugees. Our offerings are designed to help New Mainers overcome barriers in order to enter the US workforce. These include: career guidance and employment case management, assistance with credential review and licensing requirements, intensive classes focused on job readiness skills, networking groups, workshops and other offerings.

### **The Purpose of this Guide**

One major challenge faced by skilled professionals, such as lawyers, is to successfully navigate complex certification requirements if they want to practice as lawyers in Maine. The purpose of this guide is to provide foreign-trained lawyers with the information they need to make informed decisions about becoming re-licensed or pursuing other jobs in the legal field in Maine.

### **For additional information or assistance from the New Mainers Resource Center contact:**

New Mainers Resource Center, *Maine's Welcome Back Center*, Portland Adult Education 14 Locust St. Portland, Maine 04101 Phone: 207 874-8155, Website: [www.nmrcmaine.org](http://www.nmrcmaine.org), Email: Sally Sutton, Program Coordinator, [suttos@portlandschools.org](mailto:suttos@portlandschools.org).

# **LAWYER LICENSURE GUIDE**

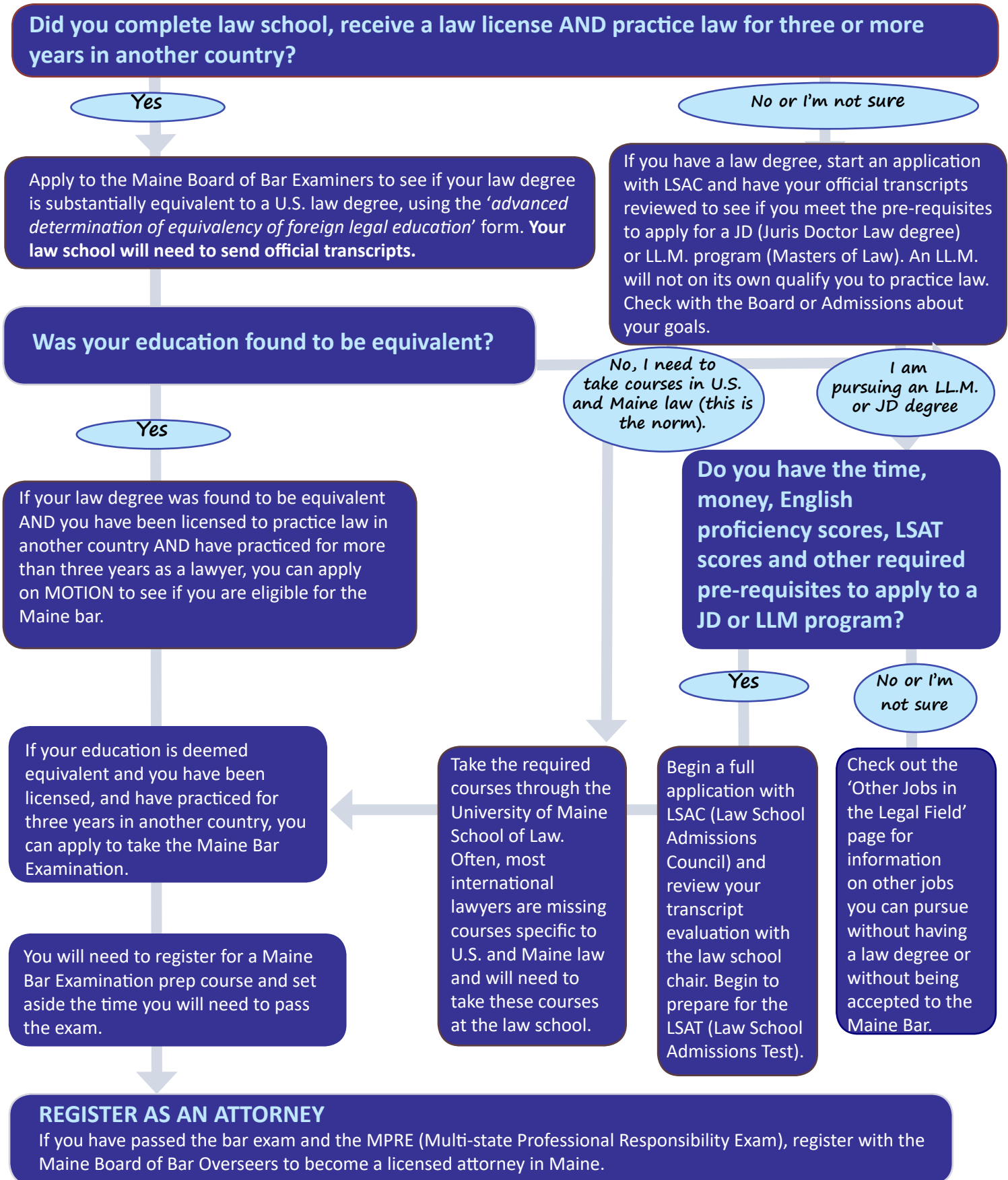
## *FOR FOREIGN-TRAINED PROFESSIONALS IN MAINE*

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# OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

If you are a lawyer who is trained and licensed in another country, review the process below to understand what you will need to do to be able to become a licensed lawyer in Maine.



# 1 OTHER JOBS IN THE LEGAL FIELD

## OVERVIEW

Many foreign-educated and experienced lawyers will find out that it will take time, money and work to be able to practice as lawyers in Maine. Most foreign-educated lawyers do not have the background in U.S. or Maine law that is required to sit for the bar exam. While it is possible to take some courses to fill this gap, some lawyers will need to return to school for an LL.M. Masters, or a JD (Juris Doctor) law degree. While a JD program will most likely qualify you to take the bar exam, the LL.M. program does not in itself qualify you (unless you have already completed the advanced determination of equivalency with the Board). These programs are difficult, require high English proficiency and are expensive and time consuming. See page 6-7 for details on the entrance requirements for these programs. If you face significant barriers to entering these programs, be advised that there are plenty of job opportunities in the legal field even for those without a law degree. **The most significant hurdles to attaining a good job will be a lack of spoken and written English proficiency, a lack of computer skills and a lack of familiarity with how U.S. organizations and companies are run.** There are plenty of jobs in the public sector and with non-profit organizations which will help you to develop these needed skills. Review the different career opportunities below and see what is a good fit. Look for work that is in some way related to the kind of law you did or want to do, and remember that some employers may be supportive in helping you achieve your educational and licensure goals. Keep in mind that your educational credentials and degree will need to meet the requirements of a job, and an evaluation from an approved evaluator can help to show this to the employer.

## SAMPLE JOBS FOR THOSE WITH A BACHELORS OR LL.M. / LL.B. DEGREE:

### PARALEGAL / LEGAL ASSISTANT:

Paralegals assist lawyers (generally in a law firm) in preparing for court and do many tasks similar to what lawyers do (drafting contracts and mortgages and maintaining financial records etc.). There are a few ways to become qualified to work as a paralegal. A bachelors or associates degree is usually required. There are also associates programs in paralegal studies. However, if you already have a bachelors, you can earn a certificate in paralegal studies. Here are some ways to earn credentials for a paralegal position:

- A certificate program typically costs less than an associates or bachelors, can take from 6 months to 2 years to complete, and is offered by vocational schools, community colleges, and some universities. However, it should be noted that some certificate programs require the student to already hold an associates or bachelor's degree upon enrollment.
- Here is one example of a paralegal certificate program: <https://www.uma.edu/academics/check-sheets/psc/>
- Here is another example of an on-line paralegal program through Boston University: <https://paralegalonline.bu.edu/>
- National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) - for Legal Assistants and Paralegals outlines some other standards and training opportunities: <https://www.nala.org/>

### INTERPRETER FOR COURTS:

Court interpreters are often in high demand in Maine and across the country. To be an official court interpreter in the Maine court system, a bachelors degree is required, as well as a training, a written examination and an oral proficiency interview. See more information here: [http://courtsmaine.gov/maine\\_courts/admin/interpreters/index.html](http://courtsmaine.gov/maine_courts/admin/interpreters/index.html). There are also opportunities to interpret in the federal and county court systems, and for law firms.

### CLAIM ADJUSTER:

Claims adjusters, appraisers, examiners, and investigators evaluate insurance claims. They decide whether an insurance company must pay a claim, and if so, how much. A high school diploma or equivalent is typically required for a person to work as an entry-level claims adjuster, examiner, or investigator, although some positions may require a bachelor's degree or insurance-related work experience.

### FINANCIAL SERVICES AND COMPLIANCE WORK:

Compliance officers are often needed in many different industries. The primary duty of any compliance officer is to make sure a company is being run legally and ethically and is adhering to relevant regulations. A bachelor's degrees is normally a minimum requirement, and some employers may look for advanced degrees, like a law degree or a master's degree in business administration (MBA), especially to qualify for a higher-level position. Certifications could include: Certified Compliance and Ethics Professional Program (CCEP) through the Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics (SCCE). The CCEP requires participation in an intensive prerequisite course along with the successful passing of an exam. For this work, it is very important that you have high English proficiency and familiarity with how U.S. companies and organizations are run.

### MEDIATOR:

As a mediator, you can work with independent firms, or you can work through the Maine judicial system as a Mediator, Arbitrator or Early Neutral Evaluator for the Court. For each of these positions, there are specific qualifications, standards and procedures you must comply with. These can be reviewed here: [http://www.courts.maine.gov/maine\\_courts/adr/become\\_neutral.html](http://www.courts.maine.gov/maine_courts/adr/become_neutral.html). Most independent mediation programs impose their own training or experience standards on mediators. Currently, Maine

does not have any rules regarding licensing or behavior of independent mediators of ADR (alternative dispute resolution) practitioners. See more about unofficial standards for mediators here: <https://www.mainemediators.org/Standards-of-Conduct>. Advanced English skills and familiarity with U.S. law required.

## **OTHER RELATED FIELDS TO CONSIDER:**

### **PUBLIC SECTOR JOBS:**

There are many administrative, organizational and management positions available in the public sector that would be good opportunities for foreign lawyers. This could mean working for the courts, municipalities, any of the different state and state departments or work for the public school systems. Pursuing a job in the public sector, whether or not it is directly related to law, will have many benefits. You will become familiarized with the organizational structures and management systems of public organizations in Maine. You will also be able to improve your spoken and written English, and hopefully make important connections with individuals and organizations that can support you later on. Some examples of public sector jobs could include program administrator or manager, planner, policy or budget analyst. Other examples include case management in the human services, or work in the corrections field. Correctional officer and police officer are some of the most in-demand jobs in Maine. Here is a portal to help you explore public sector jobs in Maine: <https://www.maine.gov/portalemployment/jobs.html>.

### **WORK AT A NON-PROFIT:**

Make connections with local non-profits who are doing work you are interested in, such as health care, the environment or social services. While non-profits may be interested in hiring someone familiar with the law, there are many other positions that will give you necessary experience in U.S. organizations. Work could include: advocacy, policy, analysis, program management, human resources, regulations compliance, business and financial compliance, or work pertaining to the language, culture and customs of other countries. For example, non-profits who work with immigrant communities often look to hire individuals familiar with the cultural, legal and linguistic background of that community. Any position that allows you to become experience with how organizations are run will serve you well as you pursue more specialized legal work or administrative positions.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES:**

Human resources (HR) have positions at a variety of levels. A background in law could be very beneficial for certain positions within human resources. A background in labor law or employment legislation could make you an attractive candidate for certain HR positions. Even entry-level human resources positions can allow you to become familiar with how organizations and companies are run in the U.S..

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT OR CRIMINOLOGY:**

There are often many law enforcement positions available, each position has its own qualification requirements and certifications and trainings. Some training and certificate programs (such as police officer), require that you have a high school degree to apply. A certificate in criminal justice or criminology is an opportunity for individuals to gain specific instruction in an area of law enforcement. An associates degree in law enforcement prepares graduates for police careers. The associate degree usually takes two years to complete, is a well-rounded degree with general education courses mixed in, and serves as a stepping stone to the bachelor's degree. Prior college coursework may be counted toward these degrees. Entrance requirements for the Maine Criminal Justice Academy include a physical fitness test, and the ALERT test, which is essentially an English test similar to the SAT.

## **ENTRY LEVEL:**

### **RECEPTIONIST (OR ADMINISTRATIVE / OFFICE ASSISTANT) AT A LAW FIRM**

While there are not required qualifications for receptionist and administrative assistant work, excellent English and communication and computer skills are required. Receptionists and office assistants manage schedules, greet clients, provide administrative support, and do many other duties related to running an office. This job is a great way to break into the legal field since these positions can work in law firms, government offices, non-profits, corporate legal departments and courthouses. Possibilities for promotion include legal receptionist supervisor, legal secretary or paralegal.

### **OTHER THINGS TO WORK ON:**

- **Volunteer.** Look to see if you can find an organization that needs volunteers or interns. This is a great way to get to know how things work, to gain experience in a U.S. organization, and to make yourself known to individuals who may be interested in hiring you down the road. This is a great way to gain experience in a substantive area that is of interest to you and you will gain familiarity with the organizations and individuals doing this work. This is also a great option for someone who is not yet authorized to work.
- **Document all that you do at your position,** volunteer or paid. It will benefit you to show work experience at a U.S. organization of any kind. If you drafted and wrote memos, or interpreted legal documents etc., make sure you keep records of this work.
- **Work on your English.** Take some free courses available on-line not for credit. Consider auditing some classes in the law school if you are granted permission.

# 2

## APPLYING FOR EDUCATION EQUIVALENCE

**OVERVIEW:** If you have completed a law degree in another country, you can submit your transcripts to the Maine Board of Bar Examiners to see if your education is equivalent to a U.S. ABA- (American Bar Association) accredited law degree. This is called the '*advanced determination of equivalency of foreign education*'. The Board will use their own educational standards to see if your education is equivalent. Review the checklist below to see if you have the required documentation and education to submit your transcripts to the Board.

### How long will this take?

- The checklist and application must be returned with the required documentation at least two months before the BAR application deadline (advanced determination deadline is March 20 for July exam, October 20 for February exam).
- Responses will be issued within 4 weeks of receiving a complete application.

### How much will it cost?

- The fee is \$250.00, by check or money order, made payable to the Maine Board of Bar Examiners. The fee is nonrefundable, but may be used as a credit towards bar exam application, in the event applicant is found eligible.

## DOCUMENTS YOU WILL NEED TO PROVIDE

*for the Advanced Determination of Equivalency of a Foreign Education:*

1. **TRANSCRIPTS** from all foreign and U.S. law schools, directly from the issuing institution with certified English translation if applicable. The transcript will need to show grades, and should include a description of the school's standard grading system. All documents must be sent to the Board directly from the school and must be certified as copies of the originals. If the documents are not in English, they must be accompanied by a translation.
2. **A CONCISE DESCRIPTION OF THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE COURSES TAKEN.** Include a letter identifying which courses on the applicant's transcript(s) meet the Board's regulation. That writing must specifically identify the following: The 24 semester credit hours reflected on the applicant's transcripts dealing with either the law of the United States or the law of one of the U.S. states. 16 of those 24 semester credit hours fall within at least 5 of the following categories: (1) Constitutional Law (2) Evidence (3) Taxation (4) Procedure (5) Uniform Commercial Code (6) Decedents' Estates (7) Real Property (8) Corporations or Business Organizations (9) Torts.
3. **DESCRIPTION OF U.S. COURSES (if any)** or a link to a web-page describing courses that deal with either the law of the United States or the law of one of the 50 states, with English translation if applicable.

## PLEASE NOTE:

- Generally, the transcript review by the Maine Board of Bar examiners will find that a foreign legal degree does not show evidence of a background in U.S. law and Maine law. Most of the time, the Board will recommend that an individual take courses at the law school specifically in U.S. and Maine law. If the applicant is missing significant educational requirements, the Board may recommend a LL.M. or JD degree. Therefore, it is possible that you would know before applying that you are deficient in these areas. Consider contacting the University of Maine School of Law to inquire about these courses before applying to the Board, potentially saving you the \$250.00 non-refundable application fee.

See checklist and application here:

<https://mainebarexaminers.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/10Foreign-Ed-checklist-1017.pdf>

Letters of inquiry should be addressed to: Executive Director, Maine Board of Bar Examiners

P.O. Box 140 Augusta, ME 04103 or email [execdir@mainebarexaminers.org](mailto:execdir@mainebarexaminers.org)



# 3

## APPLYING TO THE BAR BY EXAM

**OVERVIEW:** If you have a degree which is found to be substantially equivalent, and you have been admitted to practice law in the same jurisdiction where you studied, and you have three or more years of practicing law (out of the past five years), then you can apply to take the bar exam in Maine. You can only do this after you have completed the ‘advanced determination of equivalency of foreign education’ process.

### How long will this take?

- Please note that all application requirements must be completed within one year of the date of filing the application.
- Your completed application must be received in the Maine Board of Bar Examiners on May 20 for the July examination and by December 20 for the February examination.

### How much will it cost?

- For most foreign-trained lawyers who have been admitted in any jurisdiction for more than one year, the fee is \$650.00, plus a fee of \$105-\$500 (this fee varies, depending upon the NCBE application required), paid directly to NCBE for a separate NCBE application.
- If you have completed the ‘advanced determination of equivalency of foreign education’, the \$250.00 that you paid for this can go towards the application fee.

You are only ready to apply to sit for the Maine bar examination IF you have completed the ‘advanced determination of equivalency of a foreign education’ and your education was found to be equivalent OR if you have taken the required coursework mandated by the Board of Bar Examiners, and been re-assessed for educational equivalency. You are only ready to apply for the bar exam IF, in addition to having an equivalent education, you have ALSO been licensed to practice in another country AND have practiced for three out of the past five years.

### WHAT WILL YOU NEED?

1. **‘ADVANCED DETERMINATION OF EQUIVALENCY OF FOREIGN EDUCATION’** will need to be complete and will need to show that your education is equivalent to a U.S. law degree.
  2. **PROOF OF BEING ABLE TO PRACTICE LAW IN ANOTHER COUNTRY** (US or international), including:  
(a) Date(s) of admission (b) Confirmation of good standing (c) An explanation of any breaks in good standing status (ie. Administrative suspension, inactive status).
  3. **PROOF OF PRACTICING LAW FOR 3 YEAR:** Evidence that the applicant has been engaged in the active practice of law (or the teaching of law) for at least the last 3 out of the past 5 years in a jurisdiction in which the applicant is admitted to practice law (e.g. a sworn statement from employer describing the work that was done), including: (1) a detailed description of the attorney’s practice or teaching throughout the three-year period of active practice, including position(s) held, and (2) a description of the work conducted, and dates and location(s) of employment. (In the case of an applicant seeking Admission by Motion, the evidence must show active practice in one or more United States jurisdictions for three of the past five years.)
- Please read the application procedures carefully here: <https://mainebarexaminers.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/AppPro0417.pdf>
  - You can access the forms to apply to sit for the Maine Bar exam here: <https://mainebarexaminers.org/exam-forms/exam-application-forms/>
  - If you are admitted in another jurisdiction for more than one year, you must also complete the NCBE application form, which can be found at <http://ncbex.org/ea>. If you will have been admitted to the bar of any jurisdiction for one year or more by the deadline for filing applications, you must complete the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) application form (request for NCBE character report) and the Maine Supplemental Application for Applicants Admitted in Another Jurisdiction for One Year or More. The online NCBE application form can be found at <http://ncbex.org/ea>. The Maine Supplemental Application is found on the Board’s website <https://mainebarexaminers.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Exam-NA-10-17.pdf>

## CONTACT INFO

Applications and inquiries about applying:

Executive Director at (207) 623-2464 or by e-mail to : [execdir@mainebarexaminers.org](mailto:execdir@mainebarexaminers.org).

Send in your application to:  
**Maine Board of Bar Examiners**  
P. O. Box 140  
Augusta, ME 04332-0140



# 4

## PURSUING A DEGREE OR COURSEWORK

**OVERVIEW:** If you have a foreign law degree, the Maine Board of Bar Examiners will likely require that you take some coursework in U.S. and Maine law before being eligible to sit for the bar exam. In other situations, because of your educational background, you may have decided that you need to pursue either a JD /Juris Doctor (U.S. law degree), or an LL.M. (Master of Law degree). The JD program is a standard three-year law degree program, while the LL.M. is only available to those with completed law degrees and is usually one year long. The LL.M. is generally considered a 'post-professional' degree for lawyers seeking to specialize, but could be appropriate for a foreign-trained lawyer seeking licensure. The University of Maine School of Law is the only ABA accredited law school in the state. Remember that pursuing a U.S. LL.M. or JD program will be an expensive, difficult and time consuming process. Review the overview to see which program is a good fit for you, and read entrance requirements for these programs to see if you will be able to apply.

### OVERVIEW:

Before deciding on any program or enrolling in any courses, you should seek the advice of the Maine Board of Bar Examiners, the Maine School of Law, or any individual who understands what you need to be eligible to take the Bar Exam. Additionally, you can either do the advanced determination of equivalency of foreign education (described on page 4) and then enroll in courses based on their requirements OR, if you are certain you are lacking coursework in U.S. and Maine law, you can contact the law school and present your situation even before doing the equivalency inquiry with the Board. The law school has some familiarity with the situation. Generally, if you do not have a law degree, you will need to complete the JD program. If you do have a law degree, you may only need some courses, or in some cases, it may make sense to do the LL.M. degree. If you do need a degree based on the Maine Board of Bar Examiners recommendation, you may be eligible for the LL.M. program. You will still need a transcript review and successful TOEFL scores. If you only have a bachelors degree in law from another country, you will be able to pursue the JD program. However, you will need to have your transcripts evaluated for BA / BS equivalency, and if you can attain the required LSAT and TOEFL scores, you will be eligible for JD admissions. Remember that it is very challenging and competitive to get into these programs, and also remember that once you are enrolled, there may be very limited financial aid if any.

### UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SCHOOL OF LAW

**CONTACT:** *University of Maine School of Law*

*246 Deering Avenue, Portland, ME 04102*

*207.780.4355 · [mainelaw@maine.edu](mailto:mainelaw@maine.edu)*

*Admissions 207.780.4341 · [lawadmissions@maine.edu](mailto:lawadmissions@maine.edu)*

### JD (JURIS DOCTOR) LAW DEGREE

#### WHY DO THIS PROGRAM?

If you do not have the equivalent of a U.S. law degree and you would like to be eligible for the bar, you will need to complete an ABA accredited JD program. Earning a JD is usually very expensive and can easily reach \$100,000 for 3 years, not including living expenses. See link to the Maine School of Law JD program here: <https://mainelaw.maine.edu/admissions/jd/>

#### ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS:

1. As an international J.D. candidate, you will need to determine if your undergraduate degree can be evaluated by the Credential Assembly Service (CAS): <https://www.lsac.org/applying-law-school/jd-application-process/credential-assembly-service-cas> by looking at the criteria outlined in the LSAT/CAS Registration and Information Book. If your undergraduate degree can be evaluated by the Credential Assembly Service (CAS), a CAS Report (including LSAT scores, college transcript(s) and analysis of college transcripts) is required. See the LSAC website for CAS registration: <https://www.lsac.org/>
2. If your undergraduate degree **cannot** be evaluated by the CAS (which is the case if you cannot obtain official transcripts) you will need to: Take the LSAT and have your score(s) sent to LSAC, and obtain an analysis of your transcript from a U.S. transcript evaluation service to determine its equivalency of a U.S. baccalaureate degree (use a NACES approved evaluation company: <http://www.naces.org/members.html>). Translated and certified transcripts should be sent to Maine Law School along with the analysis from the evaluating agency when you apply.
3. Applicants for whom English is not their first language may be required to take the TOEFL. English proficiency scores of: TOEFL score of 79 or above (internet-based), or IELTS score of 6.5 or higher will also need to be submitted to LSAC.
4. Please see much more detail on the additional reference letters, statements and documents required as part of the application process for international students: <https://mainelaw.maine.edu/admissions/jd/international-students/>

## **LL.M. PROGRAM:**

### **WHY DO THIS PROGRAM:**

The LL.M. is a masters of law degree offered at the The University of Maine School of Law. It is designed for both U.S. and foreign students who already have a law degree and have practiced law. LL.M. candidates learn about many aspects of the U.S. legal system as well as international law. The LL.M. academic program usually takes 1 to 1.5 years to complete and requires students to complete twenty-four credits. Sometimes this program will be necessary to ensure a foreign-educated lawyer has the required educational background in U.S. law. However, it could be possible to earn these requirements through a course or two, so speak with admissions or a counselor before enrolling.

### **ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS:**

- LL.M. degree candidates must have completed a law degree at an ABA accredited law school in the United States or earned an equivalent degree at an accredited foreign university. Follow this link: <https://www.lsac.org/llm-other-law-program-applicants/application-process-llm-other-law-programs/llm-eligibility-chart> to see which degree is required based on the country you are coming from.
- You will need to get your OFFICIAL transcripts evaluated by the Law School Admissions Council: <https://www.lsac.org/llm-other-law-program-applicants/application-process-llm-other-law-programs/application-0>. This evaluation will need to show that you have the equivalent of a U.S. law degree. Arrange to have your official academic records sent to LSAC through Transcript Request Forms which are available through your LSAC account. Schools should send your official documents to LSAC / LL.M. *Credential Assembly Service / 662 Penn Street / Dept. 8511 / Newtown PA 18940-8511 / USA*.
- LL.M. degree candidates must be qualified to practice law in a foreign country, or possess the equivalent as determined by the LL.M. Admissions Committee.
- English proficiency scores of TOEFL score of 79 or above (internet-based), or IELTS score of 6.5 or higher will also need to be submitted to LSAC.
- Applicants will also need to submit a writing sample for review by the LL.M. Director and/or LL.M. Admissions Committee, as well as completion of a telephone/videoconference interview with the LL.M. Program Director or other LL.M. Admissions Committee members.
- Please click here for other application requirements and instructions: <https://mainelaw.maine.edu/admissions/llm/apply/>.

## **ABOUT THE LSAC (LAW SCHOOL ADMISSIONS COUNCIL)**

The Law School Admissions Council (LSAC) is in charge of administering the LSAT exam (a requirement for admissions to a JD program) and also assembling and assessing credentials for admissions to LL.M. and JD programs. Essentially, they gather your credentials and materials before you apply to your law program. You will have to send transcripts and letters of recommendation to LSAC, who will then send it on to the law programs you apply for. The CAS (credential assembly service) is usually required of all JD admissions and can be found here: <https://www.lsac.org/applying-law-school/jd-application-process/credential-assembly-service-cas>. The LL.M. CAS can be found here: <https://www.lsac.org/llm-other-law-program-applicants/application-process-llm-other-law-programs/llm-credential-assembly>, and is required of most LL.M. program admissions. Both assembly services have their own fees, ranging from \$100-\$200 dollars.

## **ABOUT THE LSAT (LAW SCHOOL ADMISSIONS TEST)**

The Law School Admission Test (LSAT) is a challenging and rigorous test that is required of all students looking to begin a JD law degree program. It is a half-day standardized test administered six times each year at designated testing centers in each state. The LSAT intends to assess reading comprehension, logical, and verbal reasoning proficiency. See more information about the LSAT here: <https://www.lsac.org/lsat>. There is free preparation provided here: [https://www.khanacademy.org/prep/lsat?utm\\_source=lsacsite&utm\\_medium=lsac&utm\\_campaign=lsac-postlaunch&utm\\_term=about-bodycopy](https://www.khanacademy.org/prep/lsat?utm_source=lsacsite&utm_medium=lsac&utm_campaign=lsac-postlaunch&utm_term=about-bodycopy). There are also plenty of prep courses available online and in-person for a fee.

# 5

# TAKING THE BAR EXAM

**OVERVIEW:** If you have been admitted to the Bar by examination (see page 5 for details on applying) you will need to begin a rigorous course of study for the exam. Maine uses the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE) which includes the Multi-State Bar Exam (MBE), the Multi-state Essay Exam (MEE) and the Multi-state Performance Test (MPT). In addition to the UBE you will need to take the Multi-state Professional Responsibility Exam (MPRE) which is administered separately. The National Conference of Bar Examiners administers all tests.

## HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?:

- The UBE exams are given the last Tuesday and Wednesday in February and July of each year. The MPRE is administered separately, see below for timing.
- Consider how long it will take you to be adequately prepared for the test.
- It takes approximately two months for UBE scores to come out.

## HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

- See page 5 for information on test fees.
- MPRE regular registration fee is \$95, and the late registration fee is \$190.
- Consider the cost of the prep programs.
- See more details on the fees here: <https://mainebarexaminers.org/exam/exam-information/>

1. The Bar exam is very difficult. U.S. law students often dedicate months to full-time test preparation. The passing rate is between 60% and 70% in Maine. There is no passing rate specific to foreign-educated lawyers, but New York gathered data in 2011 and showed that it passed only 33% of foreign-educated candidates for the Bar. The National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) has information booklets for each of its tests with extensive lists of content areas and practice questions. NCBE also offers an on-line practice test for a fee. However, you may also want to seriously consider paying for a Bar exam preparation class for additional and structured study.
2. The UBE passing score is a scaled score of 276. The total score is 50% MBE (Multi-State Bar Exam) scaled score and 50% converted essay (MEE) score.
3. You may request copies of past MEE (Multi-state Essay Examination) and MPT (Multi-State Performance Test) questions from NCBE through their website. Click here for all exam information specific to Maine: <http://www.ncbex.org/jurisdiction-information/jurisdiction/me>
4. To register for the UBE through the NCBE website, click here: <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/ube/registration/>
5. **MPRE: (MULTI-STATE PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY EXAMINATION)** In addition to the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE), you will need to pass and submit your scores for the Multi-state Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE). The National Conference of Bar Examiners administers the MPRE. This test is the ethics portion of the bar. The MPRE is offered at separate times than the other bar exams in March, August, and November. The MPRE tests two bodies of law. The first knowledge area is the American Bar Association's Model Rules of Professional Conduct, which dictate lawyer ethics. It also tests ABA's Model Code of Judicial Conduct. The minimum required score on the MPRE is a scaled score of 80. Under Maine Bar Admission Rule 11, bar exam applicants must have taken and obtained a passing score on the MPRE sometime in the 15 years prior to the date on which the application for licensure is filed.
6. Once you pass, you will register as an attorney with the [Board of Overseers of the Bar](#) 97 Winthrop Street P. O. Box 527 Augusta, Maine 04332-0527 Telephone: (207) 623-1121 Fax: (207) 623-4175 Email: [board@mebaroverseers.org](mailto:board@mebaroverseers.org)

## EXAM PREP:

Most BAR preparation courses are over a thousand dollars. Review some of the options below to choose materials and courses that are right for you. It will take some research and time to find the best course. Consider what formats you learn best in when choosing your preparation course.

- Compare some Bar prep courses side-by-side here: <https://crushbarexam.com/best-bar-review-course/>
- Maine Bar review course: <https://www.kaptest.com/bar-exam/courses/maine-bar-review-course>
- MPRE exam prep from Kaplan, free: <https://www.kaptest.com/bar-exam/courses/mpre-online-course>
- Official study aids from the test makers NCBE (National Conference of Bar Examiners): <http://www.ncbex.org/study-aids/>



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New Mainers Resource Center  
*Maine's Welcome Back Center*  
Portland Adult Education  
14 Locust St.  
Portland, Maine 04101  
207 874-8155  
[www.nmrcmaine.org](http://www.nmrcmaine.org)  
[nmrcmaine@gmail.com](mailto:nmrcmaine@gmail.com)