

# July 2020 Michigan Online Bar Examination

## Frequently Asked Questions

June 12, 2020

Document will be updated as additional information becomes available.

### Computer Requirements

#### 1. Suitable computer

Applicants are solely responsible for procuring their own computers, securing a permitted location in which to take the exam, completing the exam in their own testing environment, and ensuring internet connectivity before and after each module of the exam. Each applicant will be video recorded during the exam sessions and use of the remote proctoring software is a consent to the use of video recording. All computers used for the remote exam must have audio and video capability. Any applicant having concerns about video monitoring may contact the Board and transfer, at no cost, to the February 2021 exam.

#### 2. How do I know if my computer will work with the ExamSoft software?

You will need to check the required specifications on ExamSoft's website at:

Mac: <https://examsoft.force.com/etcommunity/s/article/Exemplify-Minimum-System-Requirements-for-Mac-OS-X>

Windows: <https://examsoft.force.com/emcommunity/s/article/Exemplify-Minimum-System-Requirements-for-Windows>

#### 3. Does my computer have to have functioning video and audio?

Yes.

#### 4. My computer meets the ExamSoft specifications but I am still concerned it will not work on exam day, how do I know it will?

You are required to take the mock exam to ensure your computer functions with the software and to become familiar with the features. As part of the mock exam, you will also submit your photo for the facial recognition software. If you experience difficulties while taking the mock exam, you need to contact ExamSoft at (866) 429-8889 x. 3 or <https://bar.examsoft.com>. The software can only be registered to one computer so it is extremely important to check the specifications. Anyone who does not complete the mock exam will not be allowed to take the bar exam.

For the July 28, 2020 exam, applicants will be provided with the phone number to contact ExamSoft if assistance is needed on exam day. The phone number will be included with the exam day laptop instructions that will be emailed to all applicants prior to the exam.

## **Software and Computer Related Questions**

### **1. How do I register my computer?**

ExamSoft will send everyone who registered for the exam an email with the registration information in the latter part of June. The registration email will go to the email address that was provided to the BLE. If you have changed your email address, please notify the BLE as soon as possible at [BLE-INFO@courts.mi.gov](mailto:BLE-INFO@courts.mi.gov).

### **2. Will it cost applicants more to use the remote proctoring software?**

No.

### **3. What will the essay questions look like?**

The essay questions will be attached in a PDF form to enable applicants to view the entire question rather than scrolling through a text box. Applicants will be instructed in the question section to use the attachment to access the question. You will be able to familiarize yourself with these features during the mock exam.

### **4. Can I use spellcheck?**

No. Spell check is not enabled for any Michigan bar examination whether in person or remote.

### **5. Can I highlight within the questions?**

No. Due to the software and the questions being in PDF format, there will not be an option to highlight within the questions.

### **6. Can I use scratch paper?**

No. No papers or other foreign material is allowed at your workspace. There will be a pop up notes feature for applicants to use. You will have the ability to copy and paste from the notes section into your answer space.

### **7. Can I use an external keyboard or mouse?**

Yes. Applicants can use an external keyboard and mouse the same as allowed when testing in person.

## Exam Day Related Questions

### 1. Will the essay questions cover both the BLE Rule 3 topics and the MBE topics?

The exam questions are based on the BLE Rule 3 topics. No changes to the essay topics from prior exams have been made. Prior essay exam questions and examiners' analyses are posted on the BLE site to assist people with their studies under the past exams feature at:

<https://courts.michigan.gov/Courts/MichiganSupremeCourt/BLE/pages/admission-to-the-bar.aspx#test>. Please note that the examiners' analyses are NOT model answers. Due to the time constraint of approximately 20 minutes per essay question, the Board does not expect as complete an answer as the examiners' analyses. The examiners' analyses provide deeper guidance to the graders on issues being tested. Applicants are expected to identify the issues, applicable law, and provide analysis and a conclusion, which is the same as any prior exam.

### 2. If my computer malfunctions during the exam, will I be allowed extra time or a chance to take the exam later?

No. Due to the online nature of the exam, if there is a computer malfunction during one of the modules, the work completed up to the time of the malfunction will be graded. There is no ability to answer the questions later. It is critical to ensure your computer is in good working condition and to take the mock exam.

### 3. What if I lose my internet connection when taking the exam?

An internet connection is required to download each exam module and to upload your answers and video. During the exam itself, internet access is blocked. The Board will announce the upload deadline and this information will be posted in future FAQ documents and included with your exam day laptop instructions.

## Rules

### 1. Is the exam open book?

No. *You may not access any outside information in any format to assist you.* No papers or phones are allowed in your work space.

### 2. Can I take the exam in a room with someone else?

No. You are required to take the exam in a room by yourself. A pet in the room or another person will cause the software's artificial intelligence to flag the video. Depending on the circumstances, this may be considered a cheating incident.

### 3. Can I get up to use the restroom during the exam module?

No. The exam modules are in one hour sessions consisting of three questions with a short break in between modules and a lunch break. The duration of the breaks between sessions and the lunch

break are yet to be determined by the Board. Examinees will be notified by additional updates of specific time details.

## **Miscellaneous**

**1. I am not a great typist and look at the keyboard a lot, will this create problems with the remote proctoring and artificial intelligence within the software?**

Eye movements are tracked, however, an in-person review of the video and audio will be conducted for any “flags” that are raised. If someone is simply glancing at their keyboard to determine which keys they are hitting, this should be apparent during the in-person review of the footage.

**2. My driver’s license photo is very old and does not really resemble my current appearance, what should I do so that upon review of my identification and facial recognition photo the Board knows it is me?**

If your appearance has changed and you do not think you currently appear like your driver’s license photo, please send to the Board along with your driver’s license photo a more current form of photo identification such as your law school ID or employee ID.

**3. Will there be timing adjustments or accommodations for those testing at home with children or other possible distractions?**

No. Due to the nature of the exam, all applicants will start each module at the same time. Childcare and arrangements for other potential distractions should be made the same as would be required if you were testing in person.

**4. I live with another person who will also be taking the bar exam, is this an issue?**

As long as each person is in their own private room to take the exam, it is not an issue that two people residing together are taking the exam. The audio and video will verify that no collaboration took place.

**5. Can I ask for clarification if I do not understand the final exam specific instructions that will be released by July 1?**

Yes. Applicants are encouraged to contact the BLE at [BLE-Info@courts.mi.gov](mailto:BLE-Info@courts.mi.gov) if they are uncertain about any of the exam day instructions so that clarification can be provided. If there are multiple questions on the same topic, the FAQs will be updated.

**This document will be updated on an ongoing basis. Additional updates will appear at the end of this document with the date the information was added.**

## **Additional FAQs June 26, 2020**

### **Computer/Software**

#### **1. Am I limited on the amount of time I spend learning the features in the mock exam?**

There will be a mock exam and a voluntary practice exam. The mock exam is mandatory and is limited to nine minutes. The mock exam is when you submit your baseline photo identification for the facial recognition feature. Anyone who does not take the mandatory mock exam will not be allowed to take the bar examination.

The second voluntary practice exam will be structured like the July 28 bar exam. It will have three question files and the pop-up notes feature enabled, but will not have the monitoring features enabled so that applicants are not limited on the amount of time spent learning the other features. You may take the voluntary practice exam up to five times. Applicants are strongly encouraged to take the voluntary mock exam in order to spend time becoming comfortable with the layout and Examplify features that will be utilized on exam day.

#### **2. Can someone use two monitors if using the same hard drive (they have a small screen)?**

No. Applicants are expected to use one monitor. If the size of your monitor is of concern, efforts should be made to borrow or procure a suitable computer. If attempting to use more than one monitor once Examplify is launched, the monitor will go black and cannot be used.

#### **3. Can I copy and paste from the exam questions and the notes section?**

The questions will be in PDF format and applicants will not be able to copy and paste from the questions. Applicants will be able to copy and paste from the notes section. The notes section is limited to 1,072 characters, which is approximately 150 words.

#### **4. Can I use a highlighter feature within the questions, notes and answer sections?**

Due to the questions being in PDF format, there is no highlighter feature available. There is also no ability to use a highlighter within the notes or answer field.

#### **5. What if my computer does not function for the mock exam, can I download the software to a different computer?**

If you experience difficulties during the mock exam, contact ExamSoft at the support number that is provided in the registration emails.

## **6. Is the upload deadline being extended due to the addition of video/audio files?**

Due to the addition of video/audio files, the Board is extending the normal upload deadline to the following day, Wednesday, July 29 at 5 p.m. This information will be included in the exam information packet the Board will email to all applicants the first full week of July.

## **7. What if I have difficulty uploading my answer and video files or the ExamSoft site crashes due to people uploading?**

ExamSoft's support number to contact them for assistance before, during, and after the exam is [866.429.8889](tel:866.429.8889), ext. 1. In the event of a difficulty with the ExamSoft site, ExamSoft is pre-authorized to extend the upload deadline by 24 hours. Applicants will not be penalized in the event of a failure of the ExamSoft site. Applicants will be contacted via email and updated with instructions if the site were to be down beyond the pre-authorized 24 hour extension.

## **Exam Rules**

### **1. Can I wear ear plugs during the exam?**

No. The use of ear plugs or devices in the ear of any type raise security concerns that cannot adequately be monitored remotely. If your home environment raises concerns about noise, suitable arrangements should be made to test elsewhere (i.e. family, friend, hotel room).

### **2. Can I wear a watch during the exam?**

No. Due to security concerns, the same restrictions against watches of any kind are in place that are in place for in-person exams. The ExamSoft software will have an alarm timer that starts counting down at the five minute marker. It is silent and appears at the top of the screen in yellow. Applicants are also able to set two additional alarm timers. In the longer optional mock exam, one of the questions will walk applicants through how to set these two additional optional alarm timers.

### **3. Can I have coffee/pop or other beverage at my workstation?**

Applicants are permitted only to have a clear plastic bottle of clear water with the label removed or a clear glass with water in it at their workstations.

## **General**

### **1. When do I need to have my government identification to the Board?**

Applicants must submit their government photo identification to the Board no later than July 21, 2020. Failure to submit a photo identification to the Board may result in an exam not being graded.

**2. What if I am taking the exam while I am in another time zone?**

All applicants will begin the exam modules at the same time, irrespective of the time zone in which the applicants are taking the exam. The exam will be set for Eastern Time. Applicants must plan accordingly.

**3. When and how will I receive the exam day information on the rules and other information about exam day?**

All applicants will receive their “exam packet” information via email the first full week of July. This information will also include the specific timing of the modules, breaks and lunch period. The Board’s website will continue to be updated with any additional pertinent information on an ongoing basis as needed. Applicants have the affirmative obligation to check the Board’s website for updates, instructions, and other vital information.

**4. Will this exam be graded differently than prior exams?**

No. The Board’s grading criteria for the essays that is available in its posted Rules, Statutes and Policies document is the same criteria that will be used for this exam. The document can be accessed at <https://courts.michigan.gov/courts/michigansupremecourt/ble/pages/rules,-statutes,-and-policy-statements.aspx>

Information on the cut score and scoring formula will be posted on the Board’s website by July 1.

## **Additional FAQ's**

July 6, 2020

### **Computer/Software**

#### **1. Can I use a docking station with my laptop?**

Yes, you will want to ensure it functions with the practice exam. However, applicants are expected to use one monitor (see prior FAQ). Since many PCs do not have an internal camera, an external camera may be used. If the size of your monitor is of concern, efforts should be made to borrow or procure a suitable computer.

#### **2. What if I have problems with the identity verification process?**

If you are not able to complete the identity verification process at the start of any exam session, please contact Maribeth Graff with the Michigan State Board of Law Examiners at (517) 373-4452 to verify your identity through other means. If your identity can be verified over the phone, you will be provided with a resume code so that you can begin the exam.



## FAQ updates

July 16, 2020

### Computer/Software Questions

**1. Will I be able to navigate between the questions within the module or do I have to answer the questions in the order they are presented?**

Applicants are not required to answer the questions in the order they are presented. Each question will appear as its own PDF in the module. Applicants will be able to navigate between questions and answer fields. The practice exam that will be available July 21<sup>st</sup> will be set up this way for applicants to become more familiar with ExamSoft's navigation and other features that will be enabled on exam day.

**2. I took my mock exam baseline photo with a hat on, will this affect my facial recognition?**

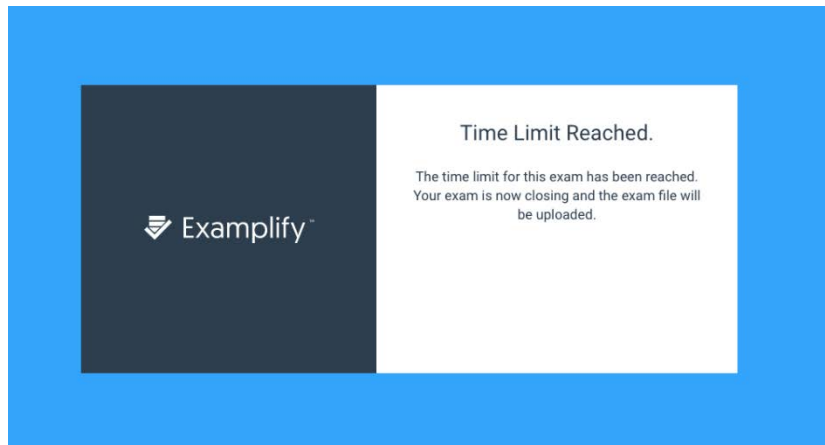
Yes. If you took the mock exam baseline photo with a hat, which are not allowed on exam day, please contact the BLE at [BLE-INFO@courts.mi.gov](mailto:BLE-INFO@courts.mi.gov) so that arrangements can be made for you to have another baseline photo taken.

**3. What happens when I reach the end of my exam time, do I need to do anything to end the exam module that will take away from my testing time?**

Applicants do not have to take any affirmative action to exit the specific exam module. The exam module will shut down automatically when the time for that module expires and begin the upload process. Applicants can use the entire time for testing.

Applicants who finish before the module time expires may exit as soon as the exam is complete per the ExamSoft instructions. Applicants who complete the module early must log out prior to leaving the view of the camera. As referenced by ExamSoft, be aware that once you exit the exam module, you cannot reopen that module.

Below is the notification screen applicants will receive when the module time limit expires. After this notification, the exam will close, and the upload process will begin.



## **Exam**

**1. I am worried that the cut off score is the same for this exam but there are fewer points available with no MBE, do I need to score higher on the essays for this exam due to that?**

No. Additional points are not required on the essays due to the MBE not being administered. The exam scoring formula, developed by the Board's testing expert, has been adjusted to account for the absence of an MBE score.

## **Exam Rules**

**1. What if I need to use my cell phone on exam day to call ExamSoft for assistance or to verify my identity with the BLE in order to receive a resume code?**

There will most likely be some applicants who will need to work through issues by calling ExamSoft or the Board *prior to* starting an exam module. The Board is aware that applicants will need to use their cell phone or a landline to do this. This will occur *prior to* entering the exam module. Applicants will need to have their cell phones out of their work station area once the issue is resolved and prior to entering the exam questions. As stated in prior posted information, the Board has built in a small "start window" in order for applicants who experience issues to resolve them. The Board emphasizes the importance of applicants timely starting the log in and verification process in the event they need assistance getting started.

**2. I am taking the exam in an office where there are books and other things on the shelves, do I have to remove or cover these?**

No. As long as books and other items are outside of the applicant's immediate work space, closed items such as books on shelves do not have to be removed from the testing room. No study aids or materials should be open and within view of applicants.

# FAQ Updates

July 20, 2020

## Software

**1. Will I have to enter my ExamSoft unique ID and user password as well as the exam password on exam day?**

No. After downloading the exam files (available July 21, 2020), you will not need to enter your ExamSoft information (unique Applicant ID and user password) to begin each module of the exam. You will only need to enter the exam day password for each module. The exam module passwords are short and easy to remember, for example, flower123.

**2. Will an applicant need to give a 360 degree view of the room they are in with the camera before they begin?**

No. Applicants have their facial photo taken at the start of each module in order to verify that their identity matches the baseline photo that was submitted as part of the mandatory mock exam. On exam day, the computer camera will be filming and audio recording during each exam module and applicants must remain seated with their faces in view of the camera while testing.

**3. Is there any way to check that my baseline photo submitted as part of the mandatory mock exam will work on exam day?**

Yes. A short practice mock exam will be available starting July 21 with the facial identification feature enabled in order for applicants to ensure there is no problem with the baseline mandatory mock exam photo that was submitted. Applicants are strongly encouraged to take the practice mock exam.

**On exam day, any applicant who is unable to have the software verify their identity after three attempts should contact the Board of Law Examiners at (517) 373-4452 to answer questions to verify their identity and then receive a resume code to start the exam.**

**4. Some people have reported the software unexpectedly quit during the mandatory mock exam. Will this negatively impact me?**

Anyone experiencing a freeze during the upcoming practice mock exams should contact the **ExamSoft support line at (866)429-8889, option 1 then 3.**

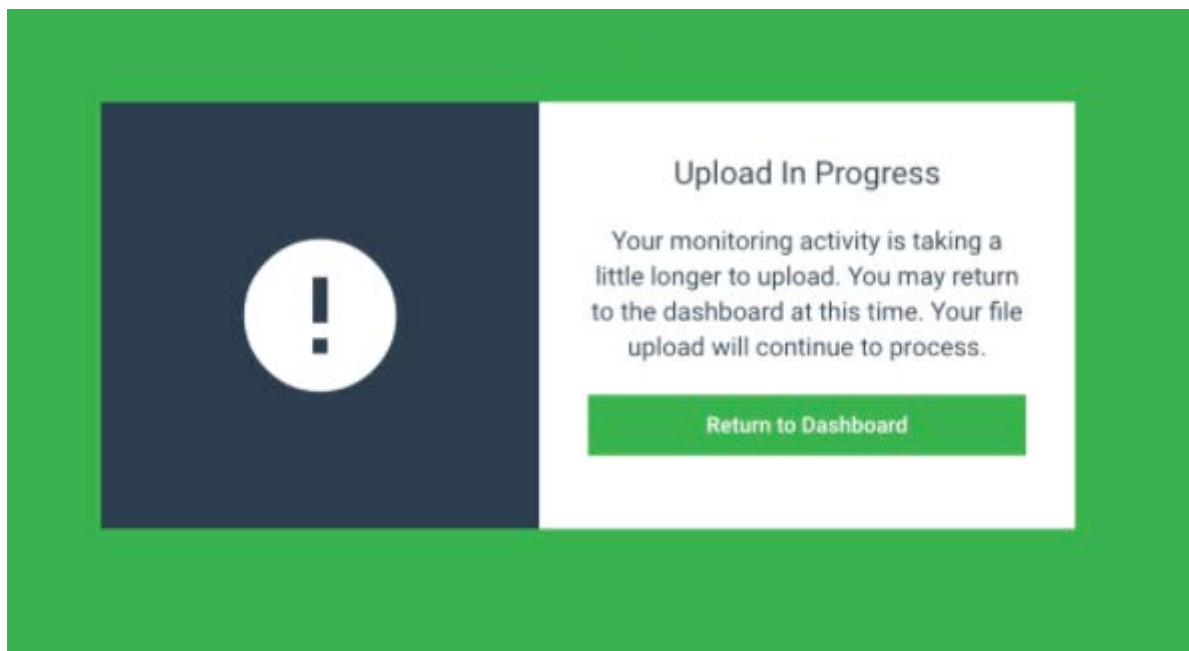
Taking the practice mock exams will ensure compatibility of a computer and Examplify, ExamID and ExamMonitor. While freezes may occur during the exam, this is a rare occurrence and in those

instances rebooting a computer should fix it. After the reboot, applicants will return to the exam within 60 seconds from where they left off (Examplify saves every 60 seconds).

- While no additional time is provided for technical issues, time to complete the exam is not lost when the device is powered off. The module timer restarts once the freeze is resolved and applicant is returned to Examplify. If an applicant is out of the exam for longer than 10 minutes, he or she will be prompted for a resume code in order to continue with the exam. To re-enter, contact ExamSoft Support for the resume code **Exam Day Technical Support: (866) 429-8889, option 1 then 3.**

**5. After the first module is completed, will I return to the ExamSoft site for the second module or will it be a different screen for the remaining modules?**

Below is the screen applicants will see after they complete the exam module. Applicants will select “Return to Dashboard” and it will route them to the Examplify homepage. From the dashboard, applicants can see if the proctoring files are still in “Pending Upload Status.” Once the answer file and the proctoring files have been uploaded, the file status will change to the “Completed” section with a green checkmark.



Below is a link to ExamSoft’s support article that provides a step-by-step guide to taking an exam with ID and Monitor.

[Examplify with ExamID and ExamMonitor](#)

## Exam Day

### 1. How can I contact the ExamSoft support line if I can't have a cell phone on exam day?

The Board understands that applicants experiencing any difficulty prior to or during the exam will need to use either a cell phone or landline to contact the **ExamSoft support line at (866) 429-8889, option 1 then 3** or the Board to verify their identity at (517) 373-4452.

The exam modules will not begin until applicants go past the “stop sign.” Prior to beginning the exam modules, cell phones must be put away. During the exam if applicants experience a technical problem that they are not able to resolve by rebooting, applicants will need to use a cell phone or landline to contact the support line. The phone must be put away once the issue is resolved and testing within the module either begins or resumes.

Taking both of the practice mock exams referenced in this current set of FAQs will enable applicants to work through any potential issues with ExamSoft prior to exam day. The Board strongly encourages all applicants to take the practice mock exams.

## Practice Exam

### 1. Do each of the practice exams have just one module or 3 questions?

Due to concerns received from applicants about photos submitted during the mandatory mock exam, ExamSoft created two practice mock exams that will be available July 21. The first is a shorter practice exam that will have the ID verification and video features enabled so that applicants can ensure there is no problem matching the baseline photo submitted for the mandatory mock exam.

The second practice mock exam consists of three essay questions from the February 2020 bar exam. This practice exam can be taken up to five times and there is no time limit on how long applicants spend practicing in the exam.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to take the practice mock exams as a way to better learn the features, determine if there are any problems with their computers, and have their baseline photo comparison made. This will enable ExamSoft to proactively assist anyone experiencing difficulties. **Anyone who experiences difficulty with the practice mock exams should contact the ExamSoft support line at (866) 429-8889, option 1 then 3.**