As applicants read the following FAQs, we hope they take heart in the fact that we will do everything in our power to get them tested in 2020, but they need to apply for the July exam to give us the best opportunity to plan for the exam(s) and venues needed to accomplish this goal. We wish we could give you more concrete answers, but that is not possible given the uncertainty of the COVID-19 crisis. The most prudent advice anyone could give a potential July bar exam applicant is to get your application in as soon as possible, then start studying. If the exam gets postponed or canceled, keep studying. If applicants follow this advice, we should achieve a high pass rate on every exam offered in 2020.

1. **Will Oregon host a July bar exam?**

   Oregon presently intends to host a July 2020 bar exam. The July 2020 exam will be canceled if Federal/Oregon/local public health orders prevent us from hosting the exam.

2. **When will I first know that the July exam has been canceled?**

   Stay informed of required cancellations through the websites of the Center for Disease Control, Governor Brown and Oregon Health Authority, which are located at:
   
   
   https://govstatus.egov.com/or-covid-19
   
   https://govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19

3. **Will Oregon definitely host an exam in 2020?**

   Not necessarily, but we will do everything we can to put on a bar examination provided we can do so in a manner that complies with federal, state, and local public health orders and we can do so in a manner that does not put our examinees, staff, or volunteers at unreasonable risk. We will assess this situation as we get closer to an upcoming exam. Keep in mind that social distancing rules and regulations may be loosened or tightened as events unfold. So, the exam may ultimately be canceled just days away from the exam dates due to events beyond our control.

4. **If Oregon hosts a July exam, and I have applied to take it, what would prevent me from sitting for the exam?**

   While public gathering restrictions in place at the time of the exam may allow us to host an exam, public health orders or recommendations may require spacing between test takers and proctors/staff to such an extent that a seating shortage occurs. We will develop contingencies based upon our July exam applicant pool, but the relevant public health orders or
recommendations could change too close to the exam date for our contingencies to be effective.

5. **What is the current plan for the July exam?**

The current plan of the Oregon State Board of Bar Examiners (BBX) is to sit approximately 500 examinees at four different testing sites with 100 to 150 examinees per exam site. Each site will have four to six exam rooms. Depending on the size of the exam room, a group of 10 – 40 examinees will be tested in the exam room. These groups will be regulated independently with different schedules, staging areas and parking areas that keep them away from other exam groups. This plan achieves at least six feet of distance between all people at all times. Other safety measures include requiring all applicants to wear at least a surgical facemask at all times while at an exam site, and to provide sufficient hand sanitizer and washing stations to ensure a hygienic environment.

6. **If seating is limited for the July exam, how will the Admissions Director determine who receives a seat for the exam?**

Applicants will be seated for the exam on a first-come/first-serve basis, which will be determined by the date the application is received by OSB staff. If applications are received on the same day, priority will be given to the earliest postmark received on that day.

7. **Am I correct to assume that if I receive a July seat assignment, then I will definitely take the July exam?**

Unfortunately no. A local health authority order may require the exam be cancelled at a particular exam. Additionally, an exam venue owner may cancel or terminate an event contract that relates to an exam site. If either of these events occur after exam seats are assigned (on or before July 7, 2020), then the examinees assigned seats at that site will have their exam cancelled.

8. **What happens to my July application if the July exam is canceled?**

We would automatically transfer your application to the next bar exam. Applicants can opt out of this default position by notifying the Admissions Department that they do not wish to take the next exam. If an applicant chooses this option, the applicant would need to fill out a new application for the exam after next.

9. **If I have to travel to take the Oregon bar exam, and I cannot make it to the exam because of travel restrictions, will my application be transferred to the next exam?**

Yes. Any applicant who is otherwise qualified to take the exam, but is unable to attend the exam because a public health order or recommendation restricts travel to the exam location may
request to have their exam application transferred to the next offered exam. Any request to transfer to a future exam should include a description of the basis for the request.

10. What happens to the fees I paid toward the July exam, if it is canceled?

Any monies paid toward the July exam will be given full credit toward the very next exam offered. If an applicant opts out of taking that next exam, the monies would be applied toward the exam after next. If an applicant chooses not to take one of the next two exams following the canceled July exam, then the applicant would be entitled to a partial refund under RFA 4.10(7).

11. Will Oregon offer a subsequent 2020 exam, if the July exam is canceled?

If the July exam is canceled, then Oregon plans to conduct a fall 2020 exam at one of the times and dates selected by the NCBE. The only reason a subsequent exam would be canceled would be due to Federal/Oregon/local public health orders or recommendations that prevent us from hosting the exam or make it logistically infeasible, as determined by the BBX.

12. Will there be seating limitations for any exam offered in 2020?

There may be limited seating for any exam offered while the world is dealing with the COVID-19 virus. Seating limitations could be created by a number of issues, including: demand for the canceled July exam, demand for the replacement exam, social-distancing/public-gathering restrictions in place at the time of the replacement exam, venue availability, seating capacity at the selected venues and proctor/staff availability.

13. If I applied for the July exam, and it is canceled, will I have to send in a new application for any immediately subsequent 2020 exam?

No. If you applied for the July exam, and it is canceled, the default position will be that your exam will be transferred to the next exam offered. Applicants who opt out of this default position will have their fees credited toward the exam after next, but they will have to fill out a new application for that exam.

14. If I applied for the July exam, will I have to send in any new fees for a subsequent exam?

No. Applicants who applied for the July 2020 exam will not have to send in any new fees to sit for a subsequent 2020 exam. That being said, if we offer two subsequent exams, and a July applicant opts out of taking the next exam, they would need to meet the timely filing deadline for the exam after next or be required to pay a late fee.

15. If I did not apply for the July exam, but it is canceled, can I apply for one of the subsequent 2020 exams that are offered?

Given the demand for the July exam, and the resources needed to process new fall applications, the BBX no longer plans to open any fall exam to a new application period. Instead, the plan is to
have any fall exam be populated by July exam applicants who could not be seated due to cancellation or seating limitations.

16. If the Board of Bar Examiners (BBX) administers a July exam, will it attempt to host a third exam in fall 2020 as well?

Not necessarily. Due to the resources needed to process exam applications and administer a bar exam under COVID-19 conditions, the BBX no longer plans to host three independent exams in 2020. Instead, the BBX will host a third exam if a significant population of July applicants are not tested in July due to seating limitations.

17. If the BBX schedules a third exam, will it be held in Portland?

Yes. At least the main exam site would be held in Portland. There may be other exam sites selected outside of Portland. The decision to involve other sites will be made based upon the following considerations: seating requirements for the third exam, budgetary concerns, foreseeable social-distancing/public-gathering restrictions in place at the time of the decision, venue availability, seating capacity at selected venues and proctor/staff availability.

18. If the BBX has a third exam, will there be any seating limitations?

There may be severe seating limitations in place for a third exam. Seating limitations could be created by a number of issues, including: demand for the canceled July exam, social-distancing/public-gathering restrictions in place at the time of the third exam, venue availability, seating capacity at the selected venues and proctor/staff availability.

19. If the BBX has a third exam, will there be a separate application for it?

No. The entire third exam-taking population would come from July applicants who could not be seated through no fault of their own.

20. If the BBX has a third exam, will the fees be the same as the July exam?

As any third exam would be a continuation of the July exam, applicants seated for a third exam will not have to pay any additional fees.

21. Can I send in an application for the July exam with the intent of only reserving a seat at a subsequent fall exam?

No. You should apply for the July exam with the intent of sitting for the July exam. There is no guarantee that there will be a third or fall bar exam.

22. So, if Oregon has a seating limitation for the July 2020 exam, will it defiantly have a fall 2020 exam?
Not necessarily. If the exam-taking population is too small to justify the expenses required for a fall exam (less than 150 examinees), or the July seating restrictions are announced after the time needed to plan for a fall exam has passed, then applicants would be offered a full credit toward the February 2021 or July 2021 exams.

23. If there is no July or subsequent exam in 2020, what are applicants and Oregon employers to do?

Last year, the Oregon Supreme Court accepted recommendations of the Oregon State Board of Bar Examiners to extend the date of law student certifications under the Law Student Appearance Program so that certifications would not expire until one year after a student has graduated from law school. The BBX hopes that this change will offer students and employers the opportunity to continue their relationships until the student is able to take the next bar exam.