

## **BAR APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

Revised 8/24/2020

- **Start early and submit early!** Allow plenty of time to complete the application. It will take *much longer* than you think it should. Ideally, start gathering information as much as 6-8 months in advance of your application deadline. In Kansas, you can submit your application as early as the day after the last filing date for the previous bar examination. If you have a complicated application with several disclosures, it is in your best interest to file early to give the Admissions Attorney plenty of time to review the file and to certify you to sit for the examination.
- Read any state-specific Application Checklist or FAQs carefully before starting the application. *Follow all application instructions very, very carefully.* On the **Kansas** application, some information must be typed in boxes on the application form and supplemental information inserted directly into the application following the question. **Missouri**, and some other states, have a 2-part application process. Missouri uses an online application system and you must complete both the “Bar Exam Application – First Time Filer” **and** the separate “Application for Character & Fitness Report.”
- **Disclose all required information.** For Character & Fitness, **when in doubt, disclose!** Lack of candor gets more people in trouble than actual disclosure. Potential areas of concern: substance abuse; prior criminal record; prior professional misconduct; debt/failure to pay taxes/financial irresponsibility; mental health; or evidence of dishonesty. Read the question **carefully** and report as required. Depending on the wording of the question, expunged or juvenile criminal convictions may need to be reported, despite what a lawyer may have told you previously. *Most states require copies of all records related to any disclosures you need to make - requesting those documents can take time.* **Disclosure exception:** With respect to questions about **mental health**, most states do NOT require disclosure of situational counseling, medication, or other treatment, but do require disclosure of current conduct that affects your ability to practice law in a competent and professional manner. Consult with Dean Lowry, Dean Mastrosimone, or Dean King before unnecessarily disclosing mental health conditions pursuant to this line of inquiry.
- Provide as much information as you can about requested items. If you can’t obtain required information, describe the **due diligence** you used to find the specific information requested. If a court or law enforcement agency won’t provide records or no longer has records, ask for a letter stating so and submit the letter with your bar application. *If your state requires disclosure of traffic violations*, call local courts to see if they still have the records of any traffic tickets, so that your information is as accurate as possible. **Colorado** requires detailed information regarding traffic violations received in the past 5 years but not a copy of the ticket. **Kansas** does not require disclosure of traffic violations, but be aware that some violations, such as a failure to maintain liability insurance, are criminal misdemeanors and not traffic violations. Misdemeanors must be reported.
- Request an **official transcript** be sent from every higher educational institution you’ve attended. Again, read your state’s requirements carefully. **Kansas** requires that the transcripts be mailed by the institution. Request your official transcript from OneStop in Morgan Hall or online and check the box “hold for degree” so that it will be sent after your degree posts. <https://washburn.edu/student-life/policies-forms/forms/transcript-request.html>
- Submit any **separate laptop application** or registration, if required by your state, and pay associated fees.
- Submit one or two sets of **fingerprints**, depending on your state’s requirements. **Kansas** requires use of its special fingerprint packet. **Missouri** has special instructions in its FAQs regarding out of state fingerprints. The PDO typically hosts the KBI fingerprinting service once during the fall semester and once during the spring semester as a convenience for students. (**Note:** Due to COVID, KBI will not come on campus Fall 2020).
- Submit any required passport-sized, recent **photos**. Kansas requires such photos be attached to applications. Missouri requires that photos be uploaded to the online system (you can use a passport photo app and take the photo with your phone). AAA takes inexpensive passport photos – members get even steeper discounts.

- If required by your state, obtain your **law school application** and any addendums from Donna Haverkamp or Donna McMurry. Contact Dean Lowry ASAP if you need to supplement your admissions application with anything that you failed to disclose at the time you applied to law school. Your law school application disclosures **must** match your bar application disclosures. **Kansas** requires law school applications.
- Submit any **Special Testing Accommodation Requests**. Most states require that requests for testing accommodations be filed at the time of your bar application. Read the state’s rules carefully and submit all required documentation.
- Check your jurisdiction’s deadline and determine if it’s a **“postmarked by”** or a **“received by”** deadline. When in doubt, err on the side of **“received by.”**
- Request a copy of your **birth certificate** and **driving record**, if required by your jurisdiction. **Missouri** requires submission of a certified birth certificate (or naturalization certificate or green card) and driving record. **Colorado** requires a driving record.
- Complete any required **“Dean’s Certification.”** Some states require that the law school complete some sort of certification of your completion of your JD, but states vary regarding the procedure. READ the rules and instructions CAREFULLY. Some states require that you fill in your name and send the otherwise blank form as part of your application. The Board of Law Examiners then sends the Certification to the law school Registrar for completion. Other states require that you give the certification directly to the Student Records Administrator/Registrar, Donna Haverkamp, for completion.
- Request character references, character affidavits, or character certificates, as required by your state. Allow plenty of time for completion and return to you before the application deadline. For **Kansas**, the character affidavits should be **handwritten** (not typed) by your character reference **and** properly notarized. Kansas may or may not accept scanned character affidavits – make every effort possible to submit the original, notarized document with your application. **Missouri** and **Colorado** only require contact information for your references.
- Most states require **address and employment information since age 18 or the past 10 years**. Do the best you can and make a good faith effort to find the requested information. Old W2s or tax returns, doing a public records search on Lexis or Westlaw, or requesting a free credit report might help - <https://www.annualcreditreport.com>). Also, the US Social Security Administration can provide you with a list of employers - <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/online/ssa-7050.pdf> (there is a fee and it may take up to 120 days).
- Use **Adobe Acrobat Reader** to complete the **Kansas** bar application - it’s a free download. *The PDF viewer that is pre-installed on your computer, especially on Macs, may not be compatible with the Kansas form – use Adobe Acrobat instead.* For Kansas, you may not be able to save the application and return to it to add information later. We recommend that you print the entire application, handwrite your responses initially, and then carefully type those responses into the application form. Print a copy of each page as you complete it to avoid having to retype the information if you cannot save it.
- Get your application **notarized** – Cindy Moyer, Debi Schrock, Donna Haverkamp, Kerri Pelton, Shirley Jacobson, and Donna McMurry are all notaries. You must sign the application in front of the notary.
- Keep a photocopy of your application for your files. In **Kansas**, you must submit the original application **and** an exact copy of the application to the Board of Law Examiners. You may use the photocopier in the PDO.
- Some UBE states, including Missouri and Colorado, require completion of a state specific component prior to admission. For **Missouri**, you can complete the online state specific component immediately *after submitting your application*. <https://www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=325>. Upload your Certificate of Completion to the online application system. For **Colorado**, you must attend a one day **“Practicing with Professionalism”** course.