

**ORIGINAL**

**FILED**

07/02/2026

Bowen Greenwood  
CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT  
STATE OF MONTANA

Case Number: AF 11-0244

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

AF 11-0244

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JUL 02 2026

Bowen Greenwood  
Clerk of Supreme Court  
State of Montana

IN RE THE RULES FOR ADMISSION  
TO THE BAR OF MONTANA

**ORDER**

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On March 16, 2026, this Court solicited public comment on the petition submitted by the Montana Board of Bar Examiners and the State Bar of Montana to amend the Rules for Admission to the Bar of Montana to require the “NextGen” Uniform Bar Examination used by the National Conference of Bar Examiners as the method of direct examination for admission to the Montana Bar. Following a sixty-day comment period, the Court held a public meeting on June 23, 2026, at which time the Court unanimously approved the petition.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that, beginning with the February 2028 Montana bar examination, Montana will use the National Conference of Bar Examiners’ NextGen Uniform Bar Examination (NextGen UBE) as the method of direct examination for admission to the Bar of Montana. In addition, before being admitted to the Montana bar, all applicants will continue to be required to personally participate in the Montana law seminar component adopted by this Court in July 2012. The requirement of successful passage of the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE) shall remain in effect.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that, beginning with the July 2026 Montana bar examination, a Montana bar applicant’s score on the NextGen UBE earned in another jurisdiction that administers NextGen may be accepted and considered valid for a period of three years from when the score was earned. To be accepted in Montana, NextGen UBE scores must be certified by the National Conference of Bar Examiners to the Montana Bar Admissions Administrator.

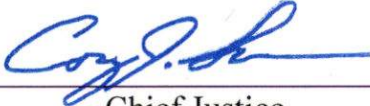
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Board of Bar Examiners shall administer the examination and shall transfer and accept NextGen UBE scores in accordance with the policies governing the NextGen UBE and the procedures of this Court.

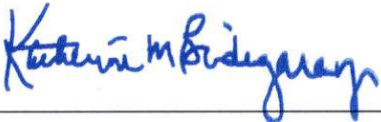
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the existing Standing Committee on matters of bar admission established by the Court's December 20, 2016 Order is reconstituted and shall address issues of implementation, including the recommended passing score that this Court should adopt. The Chair of the Board of Bar Examiners is directed to convene the Standing Committee and to provide the Court with its report on the recommended passing score by August 31, 2026, or sooner. Justice Jim Rice will continue to serve as chair.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Order shall be posted on the website of the State Bar of Montana. The State Bar of Montana is requested to give notice of this Order and of its website posting to the membership by publication in the *Montana Lawyer* magazine and through other electronic and timely means.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of this Court is directed to post this Order on the Court's website and to provide copies to the State Bar of Montana; to Kathie Lynch, Bar Admissions Administrator; to Gary Bjelland, Chair of the Board of Bar Examiners; to Annie Goodwin, Chair of the Commission on Character and Fitness; to Michele Peterson-Cook, Chair of the CLE Commission; to Elaine Gagliardi, Dean of the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana; and to each District Court Judge and each Clerk of the District Court, and each City, Municipal, and Justice Court Judge and Clerk, with a request that each Clerk make the Order available for public review in their respective offices.

Dated this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of July, 2026.

  
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Chief Justice

  
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*Patricia Baker*

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*James McArthur*

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*James John Jones*

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*Angela Smith*

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*John Rice*

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Justices