

Board of Law Examiners
Appointed by the Supreme Court of Texas

DECLARATION OF INTENTION TO STUDY LAW

This form is to be filed by all persons who have begun their law study at ABA-approved law schools in Texas and intend to apply for licensure in Texas. Do not file this form until you have actually started law school.

You are responsible for reading the current *Rules Governing Admission to the Bar of Texas* and the applicable statutory provisions found in Texas Government Code, Sec. 82.001 *et seq.*, all of which are contained in the booklet titled: *Rules Governing Admission to the Bar of Texas*. The rulebook is available in downloadable format on the Board’s website, www.ble.state.tx.us.

Carefully follow these instructions and complete this form, typing or printing your answers. Use blue or black ink if you choose to print your answers. Keep a copy of your Declaration for future reference, as you may be charged for any copies you request from the Board’s file.

Before you file your Declaration, verify that you have fully answered all questions, leaving no blanks and that you have completed all required Continuation Forms, Civil Litigation Forms, and Criminal History Forms. (If a question is inapplicable, write “N/A.”) **Incomplete Declarations may be returned and, if applicable, a late fee of \$150.00 will be imposed.**

Your Declaration will not be considered filed and may be returned to you if it is incomplete. Examples of incompleteness include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. failure to provide supervisor information, where required;
- b. failure to provide telephone numbers, where required;
- c. failure to provide complete mailing addresses, including zip codes, where required;
- d. failure to answer any question or subquestion;
- e. failure to provide completed Continuation Forms, Civil Litigation Forms and Criminal History Forms **for each question requiring them;**
- f. failure to send the required fees;
- g. any signature notarized more than 90 days before the date received in the Board’s offices;
- h. alteration of any of the language of the Declaration, Affidavit or Authorization and Release; or
- i. failure to sign any document requiring your signature and/or failure to have your signature notarized where required.

If you have not enclosed required documentation that you must obtain from third parties (i.e., certified copy of birth certificate, court records, etc.), detail on a Continuation Form as required in Question 21. You must make a good faith effort to provide these items within 30 days of our receipt of your Declaration. Your failure to meet this deadline may cause your Declaration to be returned to you as not being properly filed. This 30-day grace period DOES NOT APPLY to the Continuation Forms, Civil Litigation Forms, and Criminal History Forms, which must be filed with your Declaration, if applicable.

[1] **Filing Fees:** Your check, money order, or bank cashier’s check should be made payable to the **Board of Law Examiners (NOT the State Bar of Texas)**. Check the charts below to determine the amount of fees you owe.

TIMELY FILING DEADLINES		FEES OWED	
Fall Entrants	October 1	If filed on or before timely filing deadline	\$190.00
Semester Hr/Spring Entrants	May 1	If filed after timely filing deadline	\$340.00
Quarter Hr/Spring Entrants	June 1		
Summer Entrants	September 15		

Do not postdate your check. A Declaration is not considered filed until all associated fees are received in the Board office. If your check for fees is returned for insufficient funds or is otherwise dishonored by your bank, you will be assessed a returned check charge. In addition, you will be assessed a late fee if the timely deadline has passed which will result in fees totaling \$340.00. All fees due after that time must be paid by bank cashier’s check or money order. A \$150.00 late fee will be incurred for Declarations filed after the timely deadline, which will result in a total of \$340.00 in fees. A late Declaration will be accepted with the payment of the late filing fee provided that the Declaration and required fees are filed in accordance with the application filing deadlines set forth in Rule IX. However, regardless of the date a Declaration is filed, the Board shall have 270 days from the date the Declaration is filed to conduct its character and fitness investigation and notify the Declarant of the Board’s determination, as provided in Rule VIII(a). There is NO refund of fees in the event of withdrawal or rejection of a Declaration.

[2] **Filing of Declaration:** Mail or deliver your Declaration and **all required fees** to the Board as shown below:

MAILING ADDRESS:
Board of Law Examiners
P.O. Box 13486
Austin, TX 78711-3486

DELIVERY ADDRESS:
Board of Law Examiners
205 West 14th Street, 5th Floor
Austin, Texas 78701

All filing deadlines are **postmark** deadlines (i.e., if your envelope bears a postmark date on or before the deadline, it will be considered timely filed). If the Postal Service fails to postmark your envelope or the postmark is illegible, your Declaration will be deemed to have been filed on the day preceding its receipt by our office. Therefore, you are **strongly advised** to mail your Declaration by certified mail, return receipt requested, and have your receipt postmarked at the post office, so that you will have documentation of the date you mailed it. If you file your Declaration in person, it must be **received** in the Board's office on or before the applicable deadline. The Board office is not open on weekends or state holidays. Declaration filing deadlines are strictly construed. The Board will acknowledge receipt of your Declaration by letter. If you do not receive an acknowledgment within 30 days, please contact the Board's office.

- [3] **Authorization/Release Forms:** Provide two (2) **ORIGINAL, SIGNED** and **NOTARIZED** Authorization/Release forms. Do not send copies. Blank forms are attached for your use. **These forms must be filed simultaneously with your Declaration.**
- [4] **Proof of Citizenship Status:** You must provide the applicable documents requested in Question Number 7. **These documents become part of the Board's permanent file and will not be returned to you.** Photocopies of birth certificates will not be accepted.
- [5] **Proof of Name Change:** You must provide a **certified copy** of an amended birth certificate or portion of divorce decree or court order which changes your name. If your name changed by marriage, submit a **legible** copy of your marriage license. **These documents become a part of the Board's permanent file and will not be returned to you.**
- [6] **Continuation Forms:** One of these forms is attached to your Declaration on page 14; make additional copies as needed. We suggest that you analyze the Declaration carefully to determine how many forms you will need before you mark on the one copy provided. Use this form as directed in various questions in the Declaration to provide an explanation for "yes" answers and to continue your answers if additional space is required to complete responses to any question or statement for which a specifically designated form is not provided. **Be sure you respond to only one question or statement on each Continuation Form. If applicable, these forms must be filed simultaneously with your Declaration.**
- Do not forget the requirement in Question 21 to list on a Continuation Form all documentation not provided with your Declaration.
- [7] **Criminal History Forms:** One of these forms is attached to your Declaration on page 13; make additional copies as needed. Use this form as directed in the Declaration. **If applicable, these forms must be filed simultaneously with your Declaration.**
- [8] **Expunged and Sealed Offenses:** Matters expunged pursuant to Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 55.02, or pursuant to another State's statute with the same force and effect, need not be disclosed. While expunged or sealed offenses, arrests, tickets, or citations need not be disclosed, it is your responsibility to ensure the offense, arrest, ticket, or citation has, in fact, been expunged or sealed. It is recommended that you obtain a copy of the Court Order expunging or sealing the record in question. Failure to reveal an offense, arrest, ticket, or citation that is not in fact expunged or sealed, raises questions related to truthfulness in addition to questions regarding the offense itself.
- [9] **Orders of Non-Disclosure:** Pursuant to the Govt. Code [§552.142 (b)], if you have criminal matters that are the subject of an order of non-disclosure you are not required to reveal those criminal matters on this form. However, a criminal matter that is the subject of an order of non-disclosure **may become a character and fitness issue.** Pursuant to other sections of the Government Code [411.081(d), 411.081(i)(5), 411.083(b), 411.084(a), 411.087(a), and 411.100], the Texas Board of Law Examiners is entitled to access criminal history record information that is the subject of an order of non-disclosure. Therefore, if the BLE discovers a criminal matter that is the subject of an order of non-disclosure, even if you properly did not reveal that matter, the BLE may ask you to provide information about that criminal matter.
- [10] **Civil Litigation Forms:** One of these forms is attached to your Declaration on page 12. Make additional copies as needed. Use this form as directed in the Declaration. **If applicable, these forms must be filed simultaneously with your Declaration.**
- [11] **Employment History:** (a) **If an employer is no longer in business,** you should enter the phrase "no longer in business" on the line for the supervisor's name, instead of listing the name of your supervisor.
- (b) **If your immediate supervisor is no longer employed by an employer,** you have a choice: either list the name of another supervisor still employed by the employer who will be able to respond to an inquiry from the Board staff as to your honesty, etc. or list the current address of your former supervisor, wherever that person is now.
- (c) **If you cannot locate any documentation that indicates the exact dates you were employed,** list the approximate dates, but indicate that they are approximate.
- (d) **If you were employed in a non-paid, intern-type position,** you should list such employment situations. Board staff will elicit responses as to your honesty, etc., so the fact that you were not paid is not important.
- [12] **FBI Fingerprint Check:** A fingerprint check with the Federal Bureau of Investigation is mandatory. The staff of the Board of Law Examiners cannot complete the investigation of your Declaration without the results of your FBI fingerprint check. Current information on the fingerprinting requirement is available on the Board's website, www.ble.state.tx.us, under the link Fingerprint for Declarations.
- [13] **Court Records:** You must provide **legible** copies of all requested court records as specified on the Declaration.
- [14] **Law School Application:** Provide a legible, signed copy of the application you filed with each law school you have attended.
- [15] **Change of Address:** This packet contains a change of address notification form on page 18. Keep this page and use it to submit any address change to the Board office, as the Board will rely on your last known address in its communications with you. Do not rely on the BLE staff to change your mailing address of record based solely on your return address listed on other correspondence

sent to this office.

- [16] **TDD Contact:** To contact the Board from a Telecommunication Device for the Deaf call Relay Texas at 1-800-RELAYTX.
- [17] **Full Disclosure:** It is **imperative** that you honestly and fully answer all questions, regardless of whether you believe the information requested is relevant. Your responses on your Declaration are evaluated as evidence of your candor and honesty. An honest “yes” answer to a question on your Declaration is not definitive as to the Board’s assessment of your present moral character and fitness, but a dishonest “no” answer is evidence of a lack of candor and honesty, which may be definitive on the character and fitness issue.
- [18] **Obligation to Update:** You are obligated to update the Board of any matters required by the language contained in the Affidavit section on page 11.

CAUTION!!

The Declaration is the first step in a two-step process for admission to the Bar of Texas. You cannot take the Texas Bar Examination based solely upon the filing of this Declaration. A separate Application and a separate filing fee will be required when you apply to take the Texas Bar Examination. Refer to the *Rules Governing Admission to the Bar of Texas* for application filing deadlines.