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Nearly Six in 10 Failed California's July 2018 Bar Exam

The scores, released Friday, mark an almost nine percentage point drop from the July 2017 test. The exam pass rate plunged to a 67-year low.

By Cheryl Miller | November 16, 2018

The **pass rate** (<http://www.calbar.ca.gov/About-Us/News-Events/News-Releases/state-bar-releases-july-2018-bar-exam-results>) for the July 2018 California bar exam plunged to a 67-year low for the summer test, with just 40.7 percent of those seeking to practice law in the Golden State earning a successful score.



The scores, released Friday evening, mark an almost nine percentage point drop from the July 2017 test. The 55 percent pass rate for first-time test-takers was also down eight points from last year.

The results mirror lower bar scores in other states. The percentage of successful test-takers in **Pennsylvania**

(https://www.law.com/thelegalintelligencer/2018/10/10/pa-july-bar-pass-rates-dip-after-last-years-uptick/?cmp=share_twitter), Texas

(https://www.law.com/texaslawyer/2018/10/31/pass-rate-for-2018-texas-bar-exam-down-from-2017/?cmp=share_twitter), New York

(<https://www.law.com/2018/10/23/ny-state-bar-exam-pass-rates-plummet/?et=editorial&bu=Law.com&cn=20181116&src=EMC-Email&pt=Morning%20Minute>),

Florida and Indiana all dipped year over year. And the average score nationally on the multistate bar exam, the 200 multiple-choice section of the test used by many jurisdictions in the country, **also fell**

(<https://www.law.com/nationallawjournal/2018/09/17/multistate-bar-exam-scores-sink-to-34-year-low-pass-rates-sag/>).

But California's nearly six-in-10 failure rate is shocking for a state that has tried to boost scores by shortening the test by a day and conducting studies of the notoriously difficult exam. California has not had more applicants pass the bar exam than fail since 2013.

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"We're ... troubled by a low pass rate, and are working to better understand the reasons behind this national trend," Leah Wilson, executive director of the state bar, said in a prepared statement. "Over the last 18 months we have conducted four distinct studies on the California bar exam designed to determine if the passing score is appropriate

and the content valid. While these studies did not suggest that changes to either should be made at this time, the state bar takes seriously its commitment to ensuring integrity and fairness in the admissions process.”

Wilson said a “job analysis study” underway will help determine what knowledge and skills new attorneys need. That information will be included in a new review of the exam, she said.

First time test-takers from California-based, American Bar Association-approved schools continued to comparatively do better on the exam, posting a 64 percent pass rate as a group. Just 16 percent of repeat test-takers passed.

A list of all the test-takers who passed will be posted on the bar’s **website** (<http://www.calbar.ca.gov/>) Sunday at 6 a.m.

State Bar Releases July 2018 Bar Exam Results news release:



The State Bar of California

News Releases

Media Contact

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State Bar Releases July 2018 Bar Exam Results

Friday, November 16, 2018 Categories:

Today the State Bar of California released the results of the July 2018 California Bar Exam, and announced that 3,284 people (40.7 percent of applicants) passed the General Bar Exam. The pass rate for first-time applicants was 55 percent. If those applicants satisfy all other requirements for admission, they will be eligible to be licensed by the State Bar to practice law in California. The mean scaled Multistate Bar Examination score on the July 2018 Bar Exam in California was 1404 compared with the national average of 1395.

The latest results mirror a national downward trend in scores from the July 2018 bar exams.

- The [redacted] reported that the pass rate for the Multistate Bar Examination fell to a 34-year low in 2018.
- The pass rate in Texas [redacted] 2018.
- The New York state pass rate [redacted] July 2018.
- The California pass rate fell by 8.9 percentage points from July 2017 to July 2018.

>> Read more at The Recorder:

[How Law Schools Fared on Calif.'s February 2018 Bar Exam](https://at.law.com/XBFUxz?cmp=share_twitter)

[\(https://at.law.com/XBFUxz?cmp=share_twitter\)](https://at.law.com/XBFUxz?cmp=share_twitter)

[Here's Who Passed the February 2018 California Bar Exam](https://at.law.com/fNFoRG?cmp=share_twitter)

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[Pass Rate for California's February Bar Exam Sinks to All-Time Low](https://at.law.com/RussgR?cmp=share_twitter)

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[How California Law Schools Fared on July 2017 Bar Exam](https://at.law.com/un3RAb?cmp=share_twitter)

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[Multistate Bar Exam Scores Sink to 34-Year Low, Pass Rates Sag](https://at.law.com/tCvk4T?cmp=share_twitter)
(https://at.law.com/tCvk4T?cmp=share_twitter) (Law.com)

[NY State Bar Exam Pass Rates Plummet](https://at.law.com/gEbLf1?cmp=share_twitter)
(https://at.law.com/gEbLf1?cmp=share_twitter) (New York Law Journal)

[Pass Rate for 2018 Texas Bar Exam Down From 2017](https://at.law.com/xnhvL7?cmp=share_twitter)
(https://at.law.com/xnhvL7?cmp=share_twitter) (Texas Lawyer)

[Pa. July Bar Pass Rates Dip After Last Year's Uptick](https://at.law.com/wY61Px?cmp=share_twitter)
(https://at.law.com/wY61Px?cmp=share_twitter) (The Legal Intelligencer)

[Georgia Bar Exam Pass Rate Dips From Prior Year](https://at.law.com/zECfFF?cmp=share_twitter)
(https://at.law.com/zECfFF?cmp=share_twitter) (Daily Report Online)

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