

## Character and Fitness Application Frequently Asked Questions Index

- [Q: Can I submit my Character and Fitness Application before I submit my application to sit for the bar exam?](#)
- [Q: How long do I have to submit my Character and Fitness Application?](#)
- [Q: How long will it take to process my Character and Fitness Application?](#)
- [Q: How can I check on the progress of my Character and Fitness Application?](#)
- [Q: Am I required to complete the Course on Arizona Law before I submit my Character and Fitness Application?](#)
- [Q: What happens if I have technical problems when trying to complete the Course on Arizona Law?](#)
- [Q: Am I required to pass the MPRE before submitting my Character and Fitness Application?](#)
- [Q: What business or professional licenses must be disclosed?](#)
- [Q: What supporting documents are required with the Character and Fitness Application?](#)
- [Q: What if I can't get all the required supporting documents?](#)
- [Q: Can I be admitted if I have a criminal history?](#)
- [Q: What if I don't have the exact dates for some of my past employers?](#)
- [Q: What if I am or was self-employed, or the employer is no longer in business?](#)
- [Q: What driving records do I need to provide and where can I obtain them?](#)
- [Q: What if I can't find information on a traffic citation, or the citation does not appear on my driving record?](#)
- [Q: Do I need to list every debt I have?](#)
- [Q: What if my credit report is frozen?](#)
- [Q: How can I update my employment after I have submitted my Character and Fitness Application?](#)
- [Q: How can I update my address?](#)
- [Q: How can I get a copy of my Character and Fitness Application?](#)

**Q: May I submit my Character and Fitness Application before I submit my application to sit for the bar exam?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: No. You must submit a bar exam application first and then submit your Character and Fitness Application.

**Q: How long do I have to submit my Character and Fitness Application?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: You may submit your application at any time after you submit your bar exam application; however, your admission process must be completed within five years of successfully passing the exam. Ariz. R. Sup. Ct. 37(a)(1), provides “Failure to take the oath of admission and be admitted to the practice of law in Arizona within five years of successful Arizona uniform bar examination will void all examination scores, and the applicant will be required to successfully retake all required examinations and comply with the required procedures relating to Character and Fitness determinations.” Therefore, you have five years to complete the entire process including passing the bar examination, completing the Character and Fitness Application and investigation, providing a passing score on the MPRE (scaled score of 85 or higher), completing the Course on Arizona Law, and taking the oath of admission. Please note the five years is from the month and year of the examination you passed, not from the date results are released.

**Q: How long will it take to process my Character and Fitness Application?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer:

The Committee endeavors to complete all investigations within four months after receipt of a completed application. Issues that could result in a longer time frame include, but are not limited to an incomplete application, need to request additional documentation on situations that require further investigation or hearing.

It is impossible to predict a timeframe for completion because much depends on the full compliance of the applicant to supply required/requested documentation and the speed with which references respond.

Pursuant to Ariz. R. Sup. Ct. 34(b)(3), “The Committee on Character and Fitness shall endeavor to complete its inquiries, some or all of which may be delegated to the National Conference of Bar Examiners, to be in position to recommend for or against a successful Arizona uniform bar examinee’s admission to the practice of law no later than the time the results of the Arizona uniform bar examination are available for examination applicants. This time limitation is aspirational only and may be extended for further inquiry and formulation of a recommendation when the circumstances of a case so require.”

Much depends on the full compliance of the applicant to supply required/requested documentation and the speed with which references respond. Speed depends upon facts uncovered in the investigation. There are things you can do to speed the process:

- 1) Submit a complete Application and fully comply with all requests for information and documentation; if in doubt about a question or incident, please disclose and explain fully within the application or attachments;
- 2) Contact the people provided as references to alert them we will contact them initially by mail; ask them to return the reference form as soon as possible;
- 3) Respond quickly to all inquiries or requests for more information; and
- 4) Ensure you have completed the MPRE and the Course on Arizona Law.

For exam applicants: If you file your separate Character and Fitness application prior to the exam administration date, our office endeavors to complete the investigation and provide you with your admission status (either eligible for admission or requires further investigation) at the time of the release of bar exam scores. For example, if you file your CF application prior to February exam, you should know your status in mid-May and if you file your CF application prior to the July exam, you should know your status in mid-October.

**Q: How can I check on the progress of my Character and Fitness Application?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: Please allow a minimum of three months for the investigation to be completed and know that if the Committee requires additional information you will be contacted. After that time, you may call Committee staff at (602) 452-3971 and request a status. Please note Character and Fitness status will only be released if an applicant has passed the bar examination. Please also keep in mind all Applications are confidential and staff cannot speak with or answer questions from *anyone but the applicant* unless written authorization has been received.

**Q: Am I required to complete the Course on Arizona Law before I submit my Character and Fitness Application?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: You may complete the Course on Arizona Law at your convenience; however, a final determination on admission cannot be made until the course has been completed.

**Q: What happens if I have technical problems when trying to complete the Course on Arizona Law?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: For technical problems or questions, please email [DLStaff@courts.az.gov](mailto:DLStaff@courts.az.gov).

**Q: Am I required to pass the MPRE before submitting my Character and Fitness Application?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: You are not required to pass the MPRE before submitting your Character and Fitness Application; however, a final determination on admission cannot be made until a scaled score of 85 or higher has been received. Pursuant to Ariz. R. Sup. Ct. 35(b)(8), the minimum acceptable score must be received within two (2) years before the successful bar examination or within the time frame for taking the oath of admission after the successful bar examination.

**Q: What business or professional licenses must be disclosed?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: You must disclose licenses such as, but not limited to, teacher, pilot, accountant, engineer, contractor, patent agent, insurance agent/broker, real estate, notary, legal document preparer, etc.

**Q: What supporting documents are required with the Character and Fitness Application?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: Please refer to the Character and Fitness Application checklist

**Q: What if I can't get all the required supporting documents?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: If you cannot obtain all required supporting documents, provide the steps you took to try to obtain them including the name, title and phone number of the person you spoke with at any court or police agency to try to get the records. If possible, get documentation stating the records are not available.

**Q: Can I be admitted if I have a criminal history?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: There is a presumption, rebuttal by clear and convincing evidence presented at a proceeding, that an applicant who has been convicted of a misdemeanor involving a serious crime or of any felony must be denied admission. Please read Ariz. R. Sup. Ct. 36 to understand the qualifications required of an applicant. If an applicant's criminal history rises to the level of requiring an Informal Inquiry or Hearing, the applicant will have the opportunity to prove, by clear and convincing evidence, that he or she has the requisite character to be admitted to practice law in Arizona.

**Q: What if I don't have the exact dates for some of my past employers?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: The Committee understands exact dates may be difficult to obtain. Please enter dates as close as possible, and then, in the "Reason for Leaving" box, indicate that the dates are estimated. You may also contact the Social Security Administration ([ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov)) for a report of your earnings history, which will give you the names of your employers and the year you worked there.

**Q: What if I am or was self-employed, or the employer is no longer in business?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: You will need to provide a verifying reference who can affirm that employment. Enter the name of your verifying reference and provide that person's contact information rather than the name of the employer or your own name. In the employment description box, you can enter the name of the company you worked for or explain you are/were self-employed and the nature of the employment.

**Q: What driving records do I need to provide and where can I obtain them?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: You will need to provide certified driving records from every state where you have been licensed to drive in the past ten years. The driving records can be obtained from the department, usually a motor vehicle department, that issues driver licenses in each state and must be less than 90 days old at the time you submit your Character and Fitness Application.

**Q: What if I can't find information on a traffic citation, or the citation does not appear on my driving record?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: Not all traffic citations will appear on your driving record(s). It is your responsibility to contact local or regional law enforcement to obtain information regarding the citations. The Traffic Cases History form does not ask or require supporting documents and you may provide a timeframe rather than an exact date. The Committee is looking for the date or timeframe, the type of infraction, the location, and the disposition.

**Q: Do I need to list every debt I have?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: No. You need only disclose any credit cards that have been revoked, any debts that are 90 days or more past due, and any debts on which you have defaulted or have not been resolved. The Committee will run a credit report during its investigation.

**Q: What if my credit report is frozen?** ([Return to Index](#))

Answer: If your credit is frozen at the time Committee staff tries to run a credit report, you will be contacted and asked to lift the freeze. Once the credit report has been obtained, you will be notified so you can reinstate the freeze.

**Q: How can I update my employment after I have submitted my Character and Fitness Application?**

[\(Return to Index\)](#)

Answer: You can find a Description of Employment Form on the Attorney Admissions website (<https://www.azcourts.gov/cld/Attorney-Admissions/Miscellaneous-Forms>). Once you complete the form, you can either email it to Attorney Admissions ([attorneyadmissions@courts.az.gov](mailto:attorneyadmissions@courts.az.gov)), or mail it to Attorney Admissions at the Arizona Supreme Court with a note stating you are updating your Character and Fitness Application.

**Q: How can I update my address?** [\(Return to Index\)](#)

You can find a Change of Address Form on the Attorney Admissions website (<https://www.azcourts.gov/cld/Attorney-Admissions/Miscellaneous-Forms>). Once you complete the form, you can either email it to Attorney Admissions ([attorneyadmissions@courts.az.gov](mailto:attorneyadmissions@courts.az.gov)), or mail it to Attorney Admissions at the Arizona Supreme Court with a note stating you are updating your address.

**Q: How can I get a copy of my Character and Fitness Application?** [\(Return to Index\)](#)

Answer: Pursuant to Ariz. R. Sup. Ct. 37(c), records are confidential and may be released only to the applicant. Application records are retained for a period of up to seven years. If you need a copy of previously-submitted materials, please email Attorney Admissions ([attorneyadmissions@courts.az.gov](mailto:attorneyadmissions@courts.az.gov)) with the following information: your name as it was at the time of your application, your current name (if different), date of birth, and date (month/year) of the most recent exam applied for. If the record is available, a fee of \$30 must be paid by check or money order payable to the Arizona Supreme Court. If you need the information for another jurisdiction and the records are no longer available, we can send a letter to the jurisdiction at no cost.