

Red Flags and Bar Admissions

La. Supreme Court, Rule XVII discusses **character and fitness factors** that would hinder an applicant being considered for admittance to the Bar.

Good Moral Character and Fitness; Factors and Considerations.

While the Committee may consider any factor or circumstance in determining whether or not to further investigate an applicant's character and fitness, any of the following should be considered to be a basis for investigation and inquiry before recommending admissions:

- (1) Arrests or criminal charges, whether or not resulting in a conviction.
- (2) Any unlawful conduct.
- (3) Making or procuring any false or misleading statement or omission of relevant information including any false or misleading statement or omission during the application process for admission to the Bar of this state or any other state.
- (4) Misconduct in employment.
- (5) Acts involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation.
- (6) Commission of an act constituting the unauthorized practice of law.
- (7) Violation of the honor code of the applicant's law school or any other academic misconduct, including undergraduate misconduct.
- (8) Membership in an organization which advocates that the United States Government be overthrown by force, if the applicant indicates a present intent that such be done.
- (9) Abuse of process.
- (10) Litigation.
- (11) Neglect of financial responsibilities.
- (12) Neglect of professional obligations.
- (13) Violation of an order of a Court, including child support orders.
- (14) Military misconduct.
- (15) Evidence of mental or emotional instability.
- (16) Evidence of drug or alcohol misuse, abuse or dependency.
- (17) Denial of admission to the Bar in any other jurisdiction on character and/or fitness grounds.
- (18) Disciplinary action by a lawyer disciplinary agency of any jurisdiction.
- (19) Disciplinary action by a disciplinary agency or governing body of a profession or organization of which the applicant is or was a member.

(20) Conduct of a kind which has been considered by the Court as grounds for suspension or revocation of the privilege to practice law in Louisiana.

(21) Conviction or a plea of guilty or “no contest” to any misdemeanor or felony, including juvenile proceedings.

(22) Any other conduct which reflects adversely upon the character or fitness of the applicant.

Should an applicant have any one or more of these factors in their past, they may need to consult with the Committee on Bar Admissions Character and Fitness attorney or one of the LSBA Panelists listed below. Please note, that failure to disclose any of these factors on the character and fitness report, may in itself be another potential reason to deny admission.

Disclosure is vital. A copy of a sample character and fitness application can be found online at NCBEX.org. Applications should be done online. Further, states other than LA have different regulations concerning the bar admissions process. Potential lawyers need to consult each state’s individual licensing body.

LSBA Ad Hoc Panels:

The LSBA has set up ad hoc panels for each law school to talk to students who may have some of the problem factors that may cause eventual trouble being admitted to the practice of law. If you are concerned that you have one or more of the factors contained above, you may want to contact one of these volunteers or consult an independent lawyer versed in the bar admissions process. Remember these volunteers are there to guide students to the information they might need, **but cannot represent** the individual student. You can always contact the Committee on Bar Admissions Character and Fitness Attorney as well. Their contact information is contained at the end of this document.

The Ad Hoc panels are as follows:

LSU Law Center

Rick Stanley – Email: rcs@stanleyreuter.com Office Phone: 504-523-1580

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WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT OF BAR ADMISSIONS?

Useful Links:

Louisiana Committee on Bar Admissions: <http://www.LASCBA.org>

Louisiana Committee on bar Admissions Character and Fitness:
<https://www.lascba.org/BackgroundInvestigation/CharacterAndFitness.aspx>

Lawyers' Assistance Program: <http://louisianajlap.com/>

Instructions for starting the bar admissions process in Louisiana: <http://www.LASCBA.org>

La. S. Ct. Rule XVII governing bar admissions: <http://www.lasc.org/rules/supreme/RuleXVII.asp>

The ABA Comprehensive Guide to Bar Admission Requirements:
https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/legal_education_and_admissions_to_the_bar/2018_ncbe_comp_guide.authcheckdam.pdf

Louisiana Supreme Court: <http://www.LASC.org>

National Conference of Bar Examiners: <http://www.NCBEX.org>

American Bar Association: <http://www.abanet.org>

MPRE Registration: <http://www.ncbex.org/exams/mpre/>

Committee on Bar Admissions - Contacts:

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Louisiana Supreme Court - Contact

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Thank you and good luck with law school and the bar admissions process.