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COMPUTER-BASED TESTING INFORMATION

Michigan Supreme Court
Board of Law Examiners

<u>Read this informational brochure carefully</u>

DO NOT bring this brochure with you to the examination room.

All necessary exam day instructions and passwords will be provided at the examination.

Table of Contents

BASIC PROCEDURES 1

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 3

ABOUT EXAMSOFT AND THE SOFTWARE 3

Who is ExamSoft? 3
What is SofTest? 3
What is FlexSite? 3

LAPTOP AND TECHNICAL QUESTIONS 3

What are the minimum system requirements for using SofTest and FlexSite? 3
Do I need a floppy disk or other external media drive? 4
May I use more than one laptop for the examination (a backup laptop scenario)? 5
Where can I get further advanced technical information on the hardware requirements and software? 5

SIGNING UP AND REGISTERING FOR COMPUTER-BASED TESTING 5

What is the SofTest registration process? 5
How do I sign up and register? 6
What e-mail address will the notice for software download and registration be sent to? 6
When will I receive an e-mail notice that I can download and register the software? 6
What happens if I do not receive the e-mail regarding the software download and registration? 6
How can I check to make sure I have registered successfully? 7
Do I have to register before the day of the examination? 7
Will my law school version of SofTest work for this examination? 7

PRE-EXAMINATION TESTING QUESTIONS 7

What is the Mock Exam? 7
How do I get a copy of the Mock Exam? 7
How will I know if my Mock Exam answer file was returned? 7

May I practice with the software? 8
May I have my computer checked prior to the Michigan bar examination? .. 8

EXAMINATION DAY PROCEDURES 8

What time should I arrive at the examination site? 8
May I bring my laptop case? 8
Will technical help be available on the day of the examination? 9
What if I have not successfully downloaded the software and exam files by the examination date? 9
Will power be provided at the exam site? 9
Will the essay questions appear on my screen at the time of the examination? 9
May I take the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) on my laptop? 9
May I take my laptop out of the testing room over the lunch break? 9

POST-EXAMINATION PROCEDURES 10

Will there be Internet connectivity at the test site? 10
When do I have to upload my examination answers? 10
How long does this upload take? 10
Should I call the Board of Law Examiners office after the examination to check on the printing of my answers? 10
How will I know my answer files have been uploaded? 10
What if I have problems or questions with the software or uploading? 10

REGISTRATION CHECKLIST FOR LAPTOP USERS 11

INFORMATIVE PROMPTS FOR EACH SESSION OF THE ESSAY EXAMINATION 13

COMPUTER-BASED TESTING REMINDERS 15

RELEASE OF RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT 17

Michigan Board of Law Examiners
Computer-Based Testing

BASIC PROCEDURES

The Michigan Board of Law Examiners is offering applicants the opportunity to use a personal laptop computer for the essay portion of the bar examination through ExamSoft Worldwide, Inc., using software technology called SofTest. This software enables applicants to take examinations using their own laptop computers by blocking access to files, programs, and the Internet during the exam.

Any applicant interested in participating in computer-based testing must check the appropriate box on the *Application to Sit for the Michigan Bar Examination* and provide an e-mail address that he or she will be able to use for several months after the bar examination. The *Application to Sit for the Michigan Bar Examination* is part of the application materials available on the website of the State Bar of Michigan (www.michbar.org). Those applicants taking the examination as re-examinees must check the appropriate box and provide an e-mail address on the *Application for Re-Examination* that was received as part of the applicant's official bar examination results.

Applicants interested in participating in computer-based testing must read/complete the following steps:

1. Read the Frequently Asked Questions portion of this document to ensure you have a good understanding of the computer-based testing procedures.

2. Read the Release of Responsibility Statement (Release) that is part of this document. By participating in the laptop program you are accepting all of the statements in the Release.

3. Ensure that you have access to a dependable laptop that meets the minimum requirements as discussed in the Laptop and Technical Questions section of the Frequently Asked Questions.

4. Check the appropriate box on the *Application to Sit for the Michigan Bar Examination* and provide an e-mail address that you will be able to use for several months after the bar examination. Those applicants taking the examination as re-examinees must check the appropriate box and provide an e-mail address on the *Application for Re-Examination* that was received as part of the applicant's official bar examination results.

5. Approximately eight (8) weeks prior to the examination, you will receive an e-mail with specific instructions regarding downloading the SofTest software.

6. Once you have downloaded and installed the software, you will need to register the software by taking the Mock Exam.

You will NOT be able to test with your laptop computer if you do not successfully download and register the software BEFORE the date of the exam.

7. Once the initial download process is complete, you will download secure examination answer files.

These files are password protected. You cannot open them until the essay day (Tuesday) of the Michigan bar examination.

Please contact ExamSoft at http://support.examsoft.com if you have any questions or problems with the downloading of your examination answer files. You may also e-mail support@examsoft.com or call (866) 429-8889.

8. Complete the Mock Exam once, and take the Practice Exam several times to test your laptop computer. The Mock Exam upload process will familiarize you with the proper procedures.

If you are using a Windows-based computer, your computer will automatically reboot when you exit both the morning and afternoon sessions. Mac laptops do not require a reboot to enter or exit exam sessions. Once you return to your Desktop, you will be prompted to upload your answer files to the secure web server.

9. Following the completion of the essay portion of the examination on Tuesday, you will be required to upload your examination files. In most cases, once you have left the site and acquired a wireless connection, simply launching SofTest again will upload all of your answer files.

NOTE: Your essay answers MUST be uploaded by 11:00 p.m. on the essay day of the bar examination (Tuesday). Answers not uploaded by the deadline will NOT be graded. Applicants who took the examination but did not upload an answer file will receive grades of zero (0) for those answers.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT EXAMSOFT AND THE SOFTWARE

Who is ExamSoft?

ExamSoft Worldwide, Inc. is a software developer specializing in computerized assessment and assessment administration programs. The Board of Law Examiners contracts with ExamSoft to provide technology in administering the essay portion of the bar examination.

What is SofTest?

SofTest is a high stakes assessment program developed and licensed by ExamSoft that enables applicants to take examinations using their own laptop computers by blocking access to files, programs, and the Internet during the examination.

What is FlexSite?

FlexSite is ExamSoft's Internet-based exam delivery option. Using SofTest, you will download your exam files prior to the day of the examination, and upload your answers after the examination via the Internet. You WILL NOT require Internet connectivity during the examination. You WILL require Internet connectivity to download your exam files and upload your answers.

LAPTOP AND TECHNICAL QUESTIONS

What are the minimum system requirements for using SofTest and FlexSite?

SofTest may be used on any modern computer (i.e. purchased within the last three to four years). It is not possible to take the secure exams through a virtual operating system such as Microsoft's Virtual Machine, Parallels or VMware, VMware Fusion, or any other virtual operating system environment. Although SofTest can be installed and registered on virtual platforms, it will only be enabled for nonsecure Practice Exams. The minimum recommended system requirements are:

PC Requirements:

- CPU = 2 GHz Pentium III or industry equivalent
- RAM = 2 GB
- Drives = 1 GB of free space
- Operating System = English 32-bit Versions of Windows XP, 32-bit and 64-bit Versions of Windows Vista and Windows 7
- Software = Internet Explorer 7.0 or later
- Internet access for SofTest Installation, Exam Download, and Upload of Answers
- Screen resolution must be 1024 x 768 or higher
- Administrator level account permissions
- Windows 8 is not supported

Macintosh Requirements:

- CPU = Intel processor
- RAM = 2 GB
- Drives = 1 GB or higher free disk space
- Operating System = MAC OS X 10.6 (Snow Leopard), 10.7 (Lion), or 10.8 (Mountain Lion)
- Server Version of MAC OS X is not supported
- Software = Internet browser
- Internet connection for SofTest Installation, Exam Download, and Upload of Answers
- Administrator level account permissions

Does it matter what type of laptop I use?

The specific model or make of your laptop does not have a direct impact, provided you meet the minimum system requirements listed above. It is imperative that you make sure you are using a dependable laptop and that you test the software on the laptop several times prior to examination day.

Do I need a floppy disk or other external media drive?

No. The FlexSite method employed by the Board of Law Examiners ensures that you have both a primary copy of your exam file, and multiple reliable backup copies on your hard drive. Therefore, a floppy disk drive or any other external media drive (CDRW drive, flash drive, zip drive, etc.) is not required.

May I use more than one laptop for the examination (a backup laptop scenario)?

No. You can use ONLY one laptop for the bar examination. This laptop will be the one you must bring with you to the examination site on the day of the examination. If you have followed all of the registration steps, your laptop should function adequately for the examination. Therefore, no backup laptop would be necessary. If you have any problems downloading software prior to the examination, contact ExamSoft at http://support.examsoft.com. You may also e-mail support@examsoft.com or call (866) 429-8889.

Where can I get further advanced technical information on the hardware requirements and software?

ExamSoft offers further advanced technical support answers on their website at the following location: http://support.examsoft.com.

That site addresses many more advanced computer and software issues, such as:

- Installing Softest for use in more than one jurisdiction.
- Common errors that happen during the examination and troubleshooting.
- Downloading software when a firewall is running on your laptop.
- Having administrator rights for your user account on your laptop.

SIGNING UP AND REGISTERING FOR COMPUTER-BASED TESTING

What is the SofTest registration process?

Provided you have requested to use your laptop computer and provided an e-mail address to the Board of Law Examiners, you will need to register your computer with ExamSoft. This registration process confirms you as an applicant who has been properly enrolled to take his/her essay examination on computer and provides you a copy of SofTest to install on your computer. It confirms you have downloaded and installed SofTest, registered your copy of SofTest, and downloaded your exam(s) so you may use your computer on examination day. This process can ONLY be completed on one computer, so make sure you have a reliable laptop ready before downloading any software.

How do I sign up and register?

Check the appropriate box on the *Application to Sit for the Michigan Bar Examination* and provide an e-mail address that you will be able to use for several months after the bar examination. Those applicants taking the examination as re-examinees must check the appropriate box and provide an e-mail address on the *Application for Re-Examination* that was received as part of the applicant's official bar examination results. Registration instructions will be e-mailed to that address.

What e-mail address will the notice for software download and registration be sent to?

Registration instructions will be e-mailed to the address you provided with your bar application materials. Make sure it is an e-mail address that you will have continuous access to until results are released.

When will I receive an e-mail notice that I can download and register the software?

You will receive notice approximately eight (8) weeks before the examination date. Do not call the Board of Law Examiners before then to see if your e-mail address was received or if the registration period is open. You may check http://www.examsoft.com/mibar to see if the registration period is open.

What happens if I do not receive the e-mail regarding the software download and registration?

The Board of Law Examiners and/or Examsoft will send out e-mail notices to all applicants who have signed up to use their laptop and who have not yet downloaded the software. These e-mail notices will be sent approximately six (6) weeks before the examination. If you do not receive any of these e-mails, check the following:

- Ask your e-mail service provider if they are blocking SPAM.
- If you are using e-mail client software such as Outlook or Outlook Express, make sure you do not have a SPAM blocker enabled. If you do, you can add the following e-mail address to the list of allowable e-mail addresses: ble-info@courts.mi.gov.
- Ensure that you have provided the Board of Law Examiners with a valid e-mail address.

How can I check to make sure I have registered successfully?

Once you register SofTest, you will be advised on-screen and via e-mail that you have done so successfully. You may also access your registration status online at http://www.examsoft.com/mibar.

Do I have to register before the day of the examination?

Yes. If you have not registered within the registration period, you will be required to handwrite your answers for the entire essay portion of the examination. **Your computer-based testing fee will not be refunded.**

Will my law school version of SofTest work for this examination?

No. You will need to download the Bar Edition of SofTest for the Michigan Bar Examination. It is recommended that you remove the law school edition of SofTest before installing the Bar Edition of the software.

PRE-EXAMINATION TESTING QUESTIONS

What is the Mock Exam?

The Mock Exam confirms your laptop is compatible with SofTest and enables users to familiarize themselves with how to open, write, and upload answer files prior to the day of the examination. The Mock Exam **must** be completed to ensure your computer has been configured properly for use on the day of the examination. Failure to do so may require you to handwrite your answers.

How do I get a copy of the Mock Exam?

One copy of the Mock Exam will be automatically downloaded after you have registered your copy of SofTest. You will receive an e-mail confirmation when the download has occurred along with instructions on how to complete the Mock Exam.

How will I know if my Mock Exam answer file was returned?

A visual "progress status" (blue bar) is displayed as the upload takes place. When the upload is complete, a "'success" message is displayed. An e-mail confirmation is then sent to your e-mail address.

May I practice with the software?

Yes. There are two options. We STRONGLY urge you to take advantage of both.

(1) Internet Delivered Mock Exam

Additional copies of the Mock Exam are available to familiarize yourself with SofTest. Internet connectivity is only required to download an additional copy of the exam file and upload the answer file. NO internet connectivity is required while taking the exam. Instructions for downloading additional copies of the Mock Exam, taking it, and uploading the answer file may be found on http://www.examsoft.com.

(2) Practice Exam Built Into SofTest

After registering SofTest, launch the program by double-clicking the SofTest icon on your Windows desktop and then click Launch SofTest. When SofTest opens, click the Practice Exam button.

The Practice Exam allows you to familiarize yourself with the SofTest exam environment and word processing features. The Practice Exam cannot be saved and no answer file will be uploaded. You may use this Practice Exam as many times as you wish.

May I have my computer checked prior to the Michigan bar examination?

No. The Board of Law Examiners will not provide a technical support session. It is your responsibility to contact ExamSoft with any technical problems.

EXAMINATION DAY PROCEDURES

What time should I arrive at the examination site?

Please be at your assigned seat and begin the boot up procedures by 8:00 a.m.

May I bring my laptop case?

No. You cannot take your computer case/bag into the examination room or the testing area, which includes the examination room, rest rooms, and hallway. Leave the case at home, in your hotel room, or vehicle.

Will technical help be available on the day of the examination?

Very limited. ExamSoft-provided technicians will be available to help in exiting of the software after an exam session has ended. They will not help with installing the software or registering your computer. It is your responsibility to ensure your laptop is in working order PRIOR to the examination.

What if I have not successfully downloaded the software and exam files by the examination date?

You will NOT be able to test with your laptop computer if you do not successfully download and register the software PRIOR to the date of the exam. You will be required to handwrite the exam. Proctors will issue the appropriate answer books. You will remain in your assigned seat.

Will power be provided at the exam site?

Yes. Power will be provided, however, it is recommended that all laptops can function on battery power for at least one hour in the event of power loss.

Will the essay questions appear on my screen at the time of the examination?

No. All essay examination questions are provided in a paper handout, which is distributed to each applicant by proctors on the day of the examination. They will not be included in your downloaded examination answer files.

May I take the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) on my laptop?

No. The MBE is a national test and is only available in paper format.

May I take my laptop out of the testing room over the lunch break?

No. Your laptop must remain in the testing area the entire length of the examination (from 8:00 a.m. until approximately 4:00 p.m.). If you should finish the exam early, you may leave the area, but your laptop must remain until the completion of the exam. You must return to the testing area after the examination has finished at approximately 4:00 p.m.

POST-EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

Will there be Internet connectivity at the test site?

No. It is your responsibility to find an Internet connection (hotel, Internet cafe, wireless hotspot, etc.) and upload your answer files by the designated time (11:00 p.m. on Tuesday).

When do I have to upload my examination answers?

You will have until 11:00 p.m. on Tuesday to upload your answer files.

How long does this upload take?

The upload process should take only a few minutes depending on your Internet connection speed and your computer.

Should I call the Board of Law Examiners office after the examination to check on the printing of my answers?

No. You will be contacted either by phone or e-mail if a problem with your upload and/or printing has occurred.

How will I know my answer files have been uploaded?

A visual "progress status" (blue bar) is displayed as the upload takes place. When the upload is complete, a "success" message is displayed. Two separate e-mail confirmations (a.m. and p.m.) are sent to the e-mail address provided when you filed your bar application. The Board of Law Examiners does not send a separate confirmation.

What if I have problems or questions with the software or uploading?

For all support issues and questions, please visit http://support.examsoft.com. Technical support from ExamSoft will also be available to you via e-mail at support@examsoft.com or by phone at (866) 429-8889.

REGISTRATION CHECKLIST FOR LAPTOP USERS

The following checklist is provided as a convenience for applicants to ensure they have met the adequate requirements for computer-based testing. The items on this checklist must be completed prior to the date of the Michigan bar examination if you wish to use your laptop for the bar examination.

☐ **Obtain a Fully Qualified Laptop—**Ensure that you have access to a fully qualified laptop as defined in the Laptop and Technical Questions section of the Frequently Asked Questions. You must be able to have access to this laptop until results are released for the examination. You will only be allowed to download the software to this one laptop. For this reason, please make sure your computer is in optimum operating condition before arriving at the examination. The following procedures will help to prevent common examination day problems:

- Disable all screensavers and power saving features.
- Ensure that the date and time are correct on your laptop.
- Test your laptop with the SofTest Practice and Mock Exams as much as possible PRIOR to arriving at the examination site.

☐ **Sign up for Computer-Based Testing—**Check the appropriate box on the *Application to Sit for the Michigan Bar Examination* and provide an e-mail address that you will be able to use for several months after the bar examination. Those applicants taking the examination as re-examinees must check the appropriate box and provide an e-mail address on the *Application for Re-Examination* that was received as part of the applicant's official bar examination results. Registration instructions will be e-mailed to that address.

☐ **Register—**Once you have received your e-mail notification, visit http://www.examsoft.com/mibar, and click the Exam Takers tab. Use your ID number and password from the e-mail to log into the site.

☐ **Install—**Read the instructions on the screen to download and install SofTest on your laptop computer.

☐ **Complete Registration—**Enter your ID number and password into SofTest when prompted to register.

☐ **Download Exam(s)—**Formatted exam files for recording your answers are automatically downloaded after successfully registering SofTest.

☐ **Take Mock Exam—**Complete the Mock Exam and upload the answer file.

☐ **Review FlexSite Exam Information—**Upon completion of SofTest registration, you will be provided information about using your laptop on the day of the examination.

☐ **Equipment—**You will be required to access the Internet following the examination to upload your answers. Make certain your computer is properly equipped.

NOTE: Following the end of the essay examination, you will be required to upload your two (2) answer files to a secure server.

These procedures must be completed each time you sit for the Michigan bar examination, regardless of any previous ExamSoft registrations you may have completed for the Michigan bar examination or any other examination.

Applicants who have not registered SofTest and downloaded their exam files will NOT be allowed to use their laptop computers for that examination and will be required to handwrite their answers.

INFORMATIVE PROMPTS FOR EACH SESSION OF THE ESSAY EXAMINATION

The following prompts will be displayed after you open your answer file and reboot your system on the day of the examination.

Notice 1
I understand that I am not required to use a computer to take this exam and that I may handwrite my exam.

In NO EVENT will I hold the Michigan Board of Law Examiners or ExamSoft Worldwide Inc., their partners, employees, officers, directors, or affiliates liable to me for any and all damages arising from the use of this software including any loss of my examination answers or any effect it may have on my examination score.

I understand that I have a duty to ensure my computer is in proper working condition before the exam and that I followed all installation instructions. I understand that I will receive no additional time to complete the examination due to any unforeseen complications, for example, power failure, lost data, and/or other technical problems. In the event there is a malfunction with the computer or software, I will begin and/or continue the examination by handwriting my answers in the blue books provided.

I accept the foregoing by clicking OK at the bottom of this screen.

Notice 2
SofTest will save and back up your work EVERY minute.

SofTest will BLOCK access to all other applications on your computer.

SofTest will AUTOMATICALLY format all margins, line spacing, appropriate headings, and page numbers.

Your exam questions are printed on the paper copy of the exam you received from the Proctor—you WILL NOT see the exam questions on the SofTest screen. Use the arrow keys at the top of the SofTest screen to navigate through the exam answer windows.

Notice 3
The ExamSoft file you are using has been formatted for a total of (AM Session--nine questions) (PM Session--six questions).

Please answer each question and all its corresponding parts in the appropriately numbered SofTest window.

Use the blue arrow keys to navigate among the SofTest question windows.

Notice 4
If SofTest, your keyboard, and/or mouse stop responding, do the following:

a) Turn off your computer (press and hold the power button: if that fails, pull the power cord and battery).
b) Turn on your computer.
c) When the "SofTest Exam Restart" window appears, select the "RESUME" button. You will be returned to within 59 seconds of where you left off.

If rebooting does not correct the problem, you must handwrite the remainder of your exam. Your work is safely stored on your computer's hard drive and will be retrieved after your exam is over. You will not be given any extra time because of having to reboot.

Notice 5
The SofTest spell check feature has been disabled for this exam.

Notice 6
This is the last notice window. As instructed below, please do NOT type "begin" and click the BEGIN button until you are asked to do so.

COMPUTER-BASED TESTING REMINDERS

1. Power will be supplied. Please bring an adaptor cord for your computer.

2. An external mouse and/or full-size keyboard are permitted.

3. Disable all screensavers and/or hibernation features currently installed on your laptop computer and, if possible, set all volume controls to the lowest possible setting.

4. Please remove all external media such as DVDs, CDs, floppy disks, USB memory drives, etc.

5. You cannot take your computer case/bag into the examination room or the testing area, which includes the examination room, rest rooms, and hallway. If you bring it to the examination site, you will be required to store it in the unsecured applicant lobby area.

6. If you leave your seat for any reason during testing, block your screen before leaving. You can do so by selecting View, then Hide Exam in the SofTest menu. When you return, you can click anywhere to continue.

7. If you have serious technical issues that cannot be resolved immediately, you should be prepared to handwrite. No additional testing time will be given due to hardware or software failure.

8. If you finish early, you may not use your computer to access the Internet or anything else on your computer. This means NO browsing, chatting, e-mailing, game playing, etc. You may not use your laptop until the end of the session.

9. If you are still working when time is called, you must immediately lift your hands from the keys and close your essay question handout. You will be able to use your mouse ONLY to exit SofTest. You must keep your other hand in your lap.

10. Any attempt to disable or tamper with SofTest's security features will be considered a violation of the Board of Law Examiners Policy on Bar Examination Conduct. (BLE Policy Statement 3-2.)

Questions:

1. There is a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) in the Exam Takers

section of the website or go to http://support.examsoft.com

2. To contact technical support, e-mail support@examsoft.com or by phone, toll-free at (866) 429-8889.

3. Another helpful website is: www.examsoft.com/softestdemo.

RELEASE OF RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

By virtue of participating in the computer-based testing program, applicants acknowledge no additional time will be given due to any unforeseen complications such as, but not limited to, power failure, lost data, and/or other technical problems, etc., that may be associated with using a computer. The Michigan Board of Law Examiners, its staff and proctors, and ExamSoft assume no responsibility for technical difficulties that may be incurred when using a laptop computer during the Michigan bar examination. If there is a malfunction with the computer or software for any reason, the applicant must begin and/or continue the examination by handwriting his or her answers in the answer books provided.

In the event portions of an applicant's essay answers become lost and unrecoverable, only those portions that are able to be retrieved will be graded. If unsuccessful on the Michigan bar examination, applicants cannot request, nor will they receive, any reconsideration or modification of their essay grades for any reason as a result of their answers being lost or unrecoverable. In that event, the Michigan Board of Law Examiners or its agents are not liable for any damages. Such data loss may result from, but is not limited to, power failure, technical problems, software incompatibilities, operator errors, etc. If an applicant experiences data saving and/or retrieval problems, the applicant must immediately and continually assist the Board of Law Examiners staff in every way, including presenting, at the exam site or by mail, his or her laptop computer to the Board of Law Examiners staff or their designated representative in attempts to retrieve any answer data.

Applicants are required to set up their laptop computer at their assigned seat and begin the boot up procedures for the SofTest software by **8:00 a.m**., following the instructions provided. If there is a technical difficulty or malfunction, applicants are to immediately notify a proctor who will provide the applicant with paper answer books to complete the Michigan bar examination by handwriting. If the Softest software is not fully functional when the morning announcements begin, the applicant will be required to handwrite his or her answers. Additionally, if an applicant is late for any reason, the applicant may be disqualified from using a laptop computer for the examination and that, if disqualified, will be required to handwrite answers in the answer books provided.

ALL of an applicant's essay answers must be uploaded to ExamSoft's secure web server when designated. Failure to upload answer files by 11:00 p.m. on the essay day of the Michigan bar examination (Tuesday) may result in the disqualification of the applicant's essay answers, and the applicant will be required to sit for a subsequent Michigan bar examination.

The Board of Law Examiners, or its designated representative, has the final authority to determine an applicant's eligibility to utilize a laptop computer for the Michigan bar examination. The decision of the Board, or its designated representative, is final.

By participating in the laptop program applicants release, discharge, and exonerate the Michigan Board of Law Examiners, its agents, representatives, and/or any affiliate thereof from any and all liabilities of every nature and kind arising out of the option to use a laptop computer for the essay portion of the Michigan bar examination.