

# BOARD OF LAW EXAMINERS

*S.B. 303 Watson (S. Thompson)*

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## **Licensing**

- Require the board to develop guidelines to assist decision making for character and fitness determinations, probationary licenses, and waiver requests to promote fairness in decisions impacting a person's ability to practice law.
- Remove specific licensing and examination deadlines from statute and require the Supreme Court to adopt deadlines and a schedule of late fees in rule to allow flexibility to make needed adjustments to benefit both applicants and the board.
- Remove an outdated requirement for applicants to attest they do not have a mental health diagnosis to ensure licensing decisions are based on present conditions and conduct and are in line with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Authorize the board to use a licensed mental health professional to evaluate an applicant who may suffer from chemical dependency instead of a treatment facility.
- Remove the unnecessary requirement that applicants submit a notarized, verified affidavit form, allowing for online application submittal while still giving the board access to information needed to properly investigate applicants.
- Clearly authorize the board to delegate routine matters to the executive director to allow the board to focus on higher-priority issues and reduce application processing time.

## **Governance**

- To align with board members' bar exam duties, amend statute to change the end date of board member terms from August 31 to May 31.
- Update a standard Sunset good government provision to ensure board members are adequately trained on their responsibilities.

## **Rulemaking**

- Prohibit rulemaking action that would violate religious freedom protections in Chapter 110, Civil Practice and Remedies Code.

## **Continue**

- Continue the Board of Law Examiners for 12 years.