

**PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE RULES GOVERNING ADMISSION TO THE BAR
PROPOSAL 2026-030**

March 6, 2026

The Board of Bar Examiners has recommended amendments to Rule 15-202 NMRA for the Supreme Court's consideration.

If you would like to comment on the proposed amendments set forth below before the Court takes final action, you may do so by either submitting a comment electronically through the Supreme Court's website at <https://supremecourt.nmcourts.gov/rules-forms-files/rules-forms/open-for-comment/> or sending your written comments by mail, email, or fax to:

Elizabeth A. Garcia, Chief Clerk of Court
New Mexico Supreme Court
P.O. Box 848
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-0848
rules.supremecourt@nmcourts.gov
505-827-4837 (fax)

Your comments must be received by the Clerk on or before April 5, 2026, to be considered by the Court. Please note that any submitted comments may be posted on the Supreme Court's website for public viewing.

15-202. Qualifications

A. **Required qualifications.** Every applicant for any method of licensure shall prove to the satisfaction of the board that the applicant possesses each of the following qualifications:

- (1) **Age.** Is at least eighteen (18) years of age;
- (2) **Law degree.**

(a) _____ Is a graduate with a juris doctor or bachelor of laws and letters degree [~~(but not only a masters of law degree)~~] from a law school that is:

[~~(a)~~] (i) formally accredited by the ABA; or

[~~(b)~~] (ii) not formally accredited by the ABA, in which event the applicant must also show admission to the practice of law in one or more other states for at least four (4) of the six (6) years immediately preceding submission of an application under these rules;

or

(b) _____ Has completed a master of laws degree from a law school that is accredited by the ABA for the law school's juris doctor program and the applicant:

_____ (i) is applying for licensure pursuant to Rule 15-304 NMRA or Rule 15-305 NMRA; and

_____ (ii) is admitted to practice law in one or more other states for at least two (2) of the four (4) years immediately preceding submission of an application under these rules.

(3) **Good standing.** Is, for every state in which applicant has ever been admitted to practice law, in good standing, by providing a certificate to that effect from each state in which applicant has ever been licensed;

(4) **Child support obligations.** Is in compliance with all child support and spousal support obligations imposed under a “judgment and order for support” as defined in the Parental Responsibility Act, Sections 40-5A-1 to -13 NMSA 1978, or imposed under a child support or spousal support order entered by a court of any state. Any applicant who is subject to an order shall provide evidence acceptable to the board of compliance with all applicable child and spousal support orders. An applicant who has appeared on the State of New Mexico Human Services Department’s certified list of obligors shall submit a certified statement from that department showing that the applicant is in compliance with the judgment and order for support; and

(5) **Certificate of understanding.** Has read and is familiar with (a) the New Mexico Rules of Professional Conduct, including the succession planning requirements set forth in Rule 16-119 NMRA, (b) the New Mexico Rules Governing Discipline, including the trust accounting requirements set forth in Rule 17-204 NMRA, (c) the Creed of Professionalism of the State Bar of New Mexico, (d) the rules of the Supreme Court of New Mexico, and (e) the New Mexico statutes relating to the conduct of attorneys. Proof shall be made by submitting a signed certificate in a form prescribed by the board confirming compliance with this subparagraph, and that the applicant understands those items.

B. **Citizenship or immigration status.** Admission may not be denied solely on an applicant’s citizenship or immigration status.

[As amended by Supreme Court Order No. 13-8300-012, effective May 14, 2013; as amended by Supreme Court Order No. 15-8300-018, effective November 1, 2015; as amended by Supreme Court Order No. S-1-RCR-2023-00036, effective December 31, 2023; as amended by Supreme Court Order No. _____, effective _____.]

Committee commentary. —

[1] The requirements of this rule are intended to assist the board in assessing whether an applicant has demonstrated:

- (a) the ability to reason, recall complex factual information, and integrate that information with complex legal theories;
- (b) the ability to communicate with clients, attorneys, courts, and others with a high degree of organization and clarity;
- (c) the ability to use good judgment on behalf of clients and in conducting one’s professional business;
- (d) the ability to conduct oneself with respect for and in accordance with the law;
- (e) the ability to avoid acts that exhibit disregard for the rights, health, safety, and welfare of others;
- (f) the ability to comply with the requirements of the Rules of Professional Conduct, applicable state, local, and federal laws, regulations, statutes, and any applicable order of a court or tribunal;
- (g) the ability to act diligently and reliably in fulfilling one’s obligations to clients, attorneys, courts, and others; and
- (h) the ability to comply with deadlines and time constraints.

[2] *See* NMSA 1978, § 40-5A-10 (1997) (requirements specified in the Parental Responsibility Act).

[3] *See* Rules 23-101 to -115 NMRA (New Mexico Supreme Court General Rules).

[4] *See* NMSA 1978, §§ 36-1-1 to 36-3-10 (1863-1864, as amended through 2019) (New Mexico statutes relating to the conduct of attorneys).

[5] *See* the Creed of Professionalism of the State Bar of New Mexico.

[Adopted by Supreme Court Order No. S-1-RCR-2023-00036, effective December 31, 2023.]