April 27th, 2020

The Honorable Chief Justice Debra L. Stephens
415 12th Ave. SW
Olympia, WA 98501

CC:
President Rajeev Majumdar
Washington State Bar Association
1325 Fourth Ave., Suite 600
Seattle, WA 98101-2539

Memorandum

TO: Chief Justice Stephens, Washington State Supreme Court
FROM: 3L Law Students and Graduates of Washington State’s Law Schools
SUBJECT: Impact Survey Findings

From April 21st until April 26th, student representatives from the three in-state law schools, as well as several students coming from out of state, circulated an impact survey for those taking the July 2020 Uniform Bar examination. This survey provides data behind the assertions made about the circumstances of those seeking to enter into the practice of law this year.

Moreover, this survey responds to Washington State Court General Rule 12.1 and 12.2. First, GR 12.1 encourages the Washington Supreme Court to regulate licensure in a manner that advances “the administration of justice,” promotes “meaningful access to justice,” and ensures “progress and inclusion among legal services GR 12.1(b)-(c); 12.1(j). Second, GR 12.2 encourages the Washington State Bar to “[p]romote an effective legal system, accessible to all,” “[f]oster diversity and equality in the courts and the legal profession,” and “[a]dminister admission . . . in a way that protects the public and respects the rights of the applicant.” GR 12.2(a)(2); 12.1(a)(6)-(7). We believe the information below will assist the Washington Supreme Court in making an informed decision to satisfy the goals of GR 12.1 and 12.2.

The survey collected 297 responses across nine questions concerning the July UBE, job prospects, and personal life; six questions requesting demographic information; and one question asking for additional comments not already covered by the survey. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide comments after each question of substance. The full list of questions is as follows:
RE: Impact Survey Findings

**Demographic information**
- What Law School do you or did you attend? (page 4)
- When will you, or when did you graduate from Law School? (not shown)
- OPTIONAL: What is your age? (not shown)
- OPTIONAL: What gender do you identify as? (page 5)
- OPTIONAL: Are you a member of the LGBTQ+ Community? (page 6)
- OPTIONAL: What Race or ethnicity do you identify with? (page 7)
- OPTIONAL: Do you have a disability or condition that would require accommodation with the UBE or in the practice of law? (page 8)

**Examination Impacts**
1. Are you currently registered to take the July 2020 Uniform Bar Examination (UBE)?
   (pages 9 & 10)
2. If the UBE is held in the month of July, in any configuration, would you take it? (pages 11 & 12)
3. Are you currently enrolled in a commercial Bar Examination Prep Course? (pages 13 & 14)

**Impacts to employment**
4. Do you currently have a job offer? (pages 15–17)
5. If you do not currently have a job offer, which of the following reasons, if any, apply? (pages 18 & 19)
6. Would you be forced to seek employment, outside the practice of law in the event the July UBE is canceled/postponed? (pages 20–22)

**Impacts on personal life**
7. Would you face financial hardship if the July UBE is canceled or postponed? (pages 23 & 24)
8. Are you or someone in your household considered high-risk, according to the Centers for Disease Control guidance, for contracting COVID–19? (pages 25 & 26)
9. Do you believe that you can adequately prepare for the UBE, regardless of when, while social distancing and/or stay at home orders are in place? (pages 27 & 29)
   - Additional comments not addressed in survey (pages 30 & 31)
ASSUMPTIONS & OTHER DATA

- No single respondent replied more than once to this survey.
- 95% confidence in responses received being true and accurate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registrants for July 2020 UBE†</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registrants from an in-state school</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrants from out-of-state schools</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>39.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrants from WA law clerk Program</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLM Registrants</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>683</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of registrants not taking for the first time</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

SUMMARIZED FINDINGS:

- The survey reflects about (297 of 683) 43% of the total number of registrants to take the July UBE.
- The overall “margin of error” for this survey is Between 6.7%:
  - Base margin for a survey this size is 4%; in addition to
  - 2.7% from the eight Respondents that replied they never registered to take the July UBE. This accounts for 2.7% of respondents creating a margin of error in that amount.
- A 3% margin of error exists when considering ONLY in-state registrants. 289 of the total respondents are from in-state schools, reflecting 75% of the in-state schools.
- Nine respondents indicated that they were from “out-of-state,” this reflects less than one percent of the out of state population and creates a margin of error of 33–42% when considering only that demographic.
- Respondents closely split in terms of having secured a job offer versus being in various stages before having a job offer.
- About 2/3 of the respondents will need to seek employment outside of the practice of law on a temporary or permanent basis if July UBE is canceled or postponed.

† Per communication on April 22nd, 2020 with Chief Regulatory Counsel Jean McElroy
RE: Impact Survey Findings

- About 3/4 of the respondents indicate impending financial hardship if the UBE is canceled or postponed.
- Almost half of the respondents do not believe they can adequately prepare for the UBE while social distancing or stay-at-home orders are in effect.
- Non-whites were disproportionately affected out of identified demographics. Most notably, non-white students account for 22.2% of respondents to this survey, but represent 39.6% of respondents who believe they will not be able to adequately prepare for the UBE while social distancing/stay-at-home orders are in effect.
Returns per answer:

- Gonzaga University School of Law (61 responding = 20.5% of respondents)
- University of Washington School of Law (121 responding = 40.7% of respondents)
- Seattle University School of Law (106 responding = 35.7% of respondents)
- Georgetown University Law Center (3 responding = .09% of respondents)
- University of California, Hastings (1 responding = .03% of respondents)
- Pennsylvania State School of Law (1 responding = .03% of respondents)
- Washington University School of Law in Saint Louis (1 responding = .03% of respondents)
- New York University School of Law (1 responding = .03% of respondents)
- Sandford University School of Law (1 responding = .03% of respondents)
- Norther Eastern University School of Law (1 responding = .03% of respondents)
Returns per answer and baselines:

- 108 Male (36.9% baseline)
- 170 Female (58% baseline)
- Six Non-Binary\(^2\) (2% baseline)
- 4% margin of error based on 13 nonresponsive answers to the question.

\(^2\) Demographic Baselines are the theoretically ideal percentages that would be reflected in each question’s response rate. Response rates are considered disproportional when they return a rate in excess of the margin of error for that baseline.

\(^3\) “non-binary” includes the “female/non-binary” response
Returns per answer and baselines:

- 45 Yes (15.5% baseline)
- 223 No (76.6% baseline)
- 5% margin of error based on 23 nonresponsive answers to the question.

Demographic Baselines are the theoretically ideal percentages that would be reflected in each question’s response rate. Response rates are considered disproportional when they return a rate in excess of the margin of error for that baseline.
Returns per answer and baselines:

- 62 Non-White (22.2% baseline)
- 217 White (77.8% baseline)
- 5% margin of error based on 20 nonresponsive answers to the question.

Demographic Baselines are the theoretically ideal percentages that would be reflected in each question’s response rate. Response rates are considered disproportional when they return a rate in excess of the margin of error for that baseline.
OPTIONAL: Do you have a disability or condition that would require accommodation with the UBE or in the practice of law?
291 responses

Returns per answer and baselines:

- 26 Yes (8.9% baseline)
- 242 No (83.2% baseline)
- 5% margin of error based on 23 nonresponsive answers to the question.

Demographic Baselines are the theoretically ideal percentages that would be reflected in each question’s response rate. Response rates are considered disproportional when they return a rate in excess of the margin of error for that baseline.
QUESTION 1: Are you currently registered to take the July 2020 Uniform Bar Examination (UBE)?

297 responses

Returns per answer:

- Yes, I am registered to take the UBE (282 responding = 94.9% of respondents)
- Yes, I am registered to take the UBE, but plan on withdrawing my registration (6 responding = 2% of respondents)
- No, I am not registered to take the UBE because I have withdrawn my registration (1 responding = .03% of respondents)
- No, I was never registered to take the UBE (8 responding = 2.7% of respondents)

Selected Additional Comments from Question #1:

- “Three members of my immediate family are at high risk because they are immuno-compromised. While I had every intention before the Pandemic of taking the July bar, I can not justify it when it may compromise the health and lives of so many of my family members.”
- “I am seriously considering withdrawing my application because of the accommodations deadline. Because of Covid-19 I have found it nearly impossible to schedule re-testing for

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7 Eight respondents replied that they were never registered to take the July UBE accounting for 2.7% percent of the respondents and thus creates an overall margin of error due to the assumption that all respondents were or are intending to take the July UBE.

8 All selected additional comments are presented as submitted, verbatim.
my learning disability. The testing that the bar examiners require seems far too extensive to be done remotely, but I am still trying to make that deadline. I may have to withdraw so I can recoup some of the money I am losing. I am very worried and very poor at this time.”

• “I am registered to take the Bar in July. However, I am afraid of taking it in July. I have underlying conditions. My whole family has underlying conditions. Since I live with my parents and brother, I do not want to put their lives at risk. I am thinking about not taking the Bar in July so I could protect my family's health.
**QUESTION 2: If the UBE is held in the month of July, in any configuration, would you take it?**

297 responses

- **Yes, I would take the UBE if offered in July** (248 responding = 83.5% of respondents)
- **No, I would not take the UBE if offered in July** (49 responding = 16.5% of respondents)

**Returns per answer:**
- Yes, I would take the UBE if offered in July (248 responding = 83.5% of respondents)
- No, I would not take the UBE if offered in July (49 responding = 16.5% of respondents)

**Returns by demographic for “No” response:**
- 28 Female (57%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 16 Male (32.7%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- Three non-binary (6.1%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 13 LGBTQ+ (26.5%)—Disproportionate; 11% above baseline; 6% above margin of error.
- 19 non-white (38.8%)—Disproportionate; 16.6% above baseline; 11.6% above margin of error.
- 10 with disability/condition requiring accommodation (20.4%)—Disproportionate; 11.5% above base line; 6.5% above margin of error.
Selected Additional Comments from Question #2:

- “I do not feel confident that my safety or others can be ensured with a July bar so I do not foresee being able to take the bar in July. Furthermore, I am having to move back across the country because of a loss in income and will likely need to work during my planned study time so a July bar is not feasible for my study schedule now due to complications from covid-19.”

- “I would not take the UBE under any circumstance because as of right now this test cannot be safely administered without students having to jeopardize our personal health and those of others. Currently I'm in California with my parents and just recently recovered from Covid-19 after being sick for three weeks. I'm fortunate that I didn't need hospitalization, but my own experience is not the same for everyone. Knowing how severe a moderate case is, I'm not willing to compromise another person's life or that of their family's for this exam.”

- “I would take the July bar exam ONLY because I am concerned about the extreme detriment to my career it would have not to. I am concerned about getting a job and paying back my loans, and to opt not to take the bar exam (even in the face of a global pandemic) I feel would basically label me as not hirable.”

9 All selected additional comments are presented as submitted, verbatim.
Returns per answer:

- Yes, I am enrolled in a commercial Bar Prep Course (277 responding = 93.3% of respondents)
- No, I am not enrolled in a commercial Bar Prep Course (20 responding = 6.7% of respondents)

Selected Additional Comments from Question #3:¹⁰

- “I have signed up, but currently am unable to pay for the study materials because I lost my part-time job due to COVID-19.”
- “I feel like I need info on if it is actually going to happen. This process is taking way too long. I just want to know when or if the bar exam will actually happen before dropping over $1000. Becoming a lawyer is expensive. I’m willing to pay, but I NEED CLARITY ABOUT WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN SO I CAN PLAN MY LIFE ACCORDINGLY!”
- “I have not yet signed up for a prep course and am now waiting until I know if and when I will be taking the bar. I do not want to sign up now for fear that I would lose money if

¹⁰ All selected additional comments are presented as submitted, verbatim.
RE: Impact Survey Findings

the bar was cancelled, but I am also concerned about prices increasing and when materials will be available to me if I wait much longer, since we are close to the date when materials would normally be available to July test takers.”
QUESTION 4: Do you currently have a job offer? (Check all that apply)
297 responses

No, I do not have a job offer at this time. 140 (47.1%)
My job offer will be materially affected. 63 (21.2%)
My job offer may be materially affected. 54 (18.2%)
My job offer may be contingent on me taking a delayed start date or losing a job. 57 (19.2%)
My job offer is not sure if he can remain if not paid. 1 (0.3%)
I was supposed to start in the beginning. 1 (0.3%)
Not sure if offer will remain if not paid. 1 (0.3%)
I am not sure how my job offer will be. 1 (0.3%)
I am not sure how my job offer will be. 1 (0.3%)
My job offer will not be affected by this. 1 (0.3%)
Not entirely law job. 1 (0.3%)
I need to take bar exam and my offer may be affected if I don’t hear how it is. 1 (0.3%)
I haven’t heard how it is. 1 (0.3%)
I’m not sure if the affect on my job. 1 (0.3%)
Selected Additional Comments from Question #4:

- “I have a job offer, but the firm already has 3 Rule 9 students and could not hire me in any capacity if I were unable to be hired as a fully licensed practitioner. They are at their limit for Rule 9 licenses, and I would lose any and all job prospects with them if I were forced to work with only a Rule 9 license.”
- “I am an international student. Not being able to fully practice (due to either the postpone of the bar exam or only practice under Rule-9 license) may impact the firm’s employment offer extended to me, and, consequently, may impact my immigration status in this country.”
- “While my offer is contingent on bar passage, my law firm's board has indicated that a diploma privilege will not alter my offer. However, a delayed exam will likely result in no pay and delayed start, at best, or revocation of my offer, at worst.”
- “I am concerned that if I cannot begin practicing as a fully licensed attorney soon after the typical time it takes to become licensed after the July bar that my office (a public agency) will need to hire an actual attorney and my slot will be lost. They don't have the luxury of waiting to see when I could become of use to them, particularly with the economic crunch and being a government agency.”
- “I currently have a job offer at a public defender office. If I were not allowed to take the July bar the position the office would be forced to fill any available positions with a licensed attorney. I could maintain employment, but do to the nature of rule nine employment/budget concerns, I could only receive payment for approximately 5 months. Also, with the economy taking a downturn, my employer would be less willing to hire me over practicing attorneys who have been laid off start applying.”
- “I had a job offer that I had to turn down due to the uncertainty of when the Bar Exam will be administered. If administered in Sept., I would not be able to start working full-time in July/August like the job required. Not because I would not have my license, but because I do not think I can study for the bar and working full-time before taking the exam. If I were to work full-time and then going home in the evening to study for hours, I

1) All selected additional comments are presented as submitted, verbatim.
RE: Impact Survey Findings

would not be able get the recommended hours of sleep or exercise during those months, which I find extremely important (especially during a global pandemic).”

- “I am a United States Marine and cannot move on in my career path and start drawing pay until I license as an attorney. Until that time I am an unpaid reserves officer who has to finance himself.”
Selected Additional Comments from Question #5:\n
- “I have interviewed for positions, but those organizations are waiting to hear decisions about administering the bar and their own funding considerations before extending an offer.”
- “Jobs I have applied for have postponed hiring decisions due to the ongoing pandemic. There are jobs I am concerned about applying for because their start dates are almost immediately after the July bar exam or before the September exam date, and I am apprehensive as to what that might mean for these jobs and taking employment with them.”

\(^{12}\) All selected additional comments are presented as submitted, verbatim.
RE: Impact Survey Findings

- “I am looking for legal aid jobs that would be best serve if I can be barred as soon as possible. Diploma privilege would certainly help in my representation of vulnerable communities.”
- “I don't have an official offer, but most prosecutors offices, including Snohomish where I was Rule 9, don't offer until you have a bar card. If I had diploma privilege I could and would start working within a week.”
QUESTION 6: Would you be forced to seek employment, outside the practice of law in the event the July UBE is cancelled/postponed
294 responses

Returns per answer:

- No, I would not need to seek employment on a temporary or permanent basis if the July UBE is canceled/postponed (103 responding = 35% of respondents)
- Yes, I would need to seek temporary employment outside the practice of law if the July UBE is canceled/postponed (176 responding = 59.9% of respondents)
- Yes, I would need to seek permanent employment outside the practice of law if the July UBE is canceled/postponed. (15 responding = 5.1% of respondents)
- Total answering in the affirmative: 191 = 65% of respondents

Returns by demographic for “yes” response:

- 110 Female (57.6%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 68 Male (35.6%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- Four non-binary (2.1%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 29 LGBTQ+ (15.2%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 49 non-white (25.7%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error

Only 294 responses were recorded to this answer due to it being listed as an optional question for first 12 hours of circulation. The missing 3 responses creates a margin of error of 1% on this question.
RE: Impact Survey Findings

- 19 with disability/condition requiring accommodation (9.9%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error

**Selected Additional Comments from Question #6:**

- “If I can’t begin my post graduate job offer on time I would have to get a job in order to cover living expenses and my student loan payments. It would be a huge hardship to prepare for a delayed bar exam and work to live at the same time, but I’m also not willing to risk my health just to take the bar. This situation puts all of us in an untenable bind, emotionally, financially and physically.”
- “I don't have the resources to not work until November or December when we get the test results back. Also I'm not willing to gamble on the test being held in September. They keep predicting a second wave and if it happened in September and the bar was postponed again I wouldn't be able to work until this time next year. That is far too long to go without an income.”
- “Although temporary employment would be necessary to continue to have money to buy food and essentials, my previous job was as owner of a restaurant and the restaurant industry has ceased to exist as it was before. No restaurants are hiring, 30% of all restaurants are expected to close permanently, and even if there were jobs available they wouldn't go to someone who has a law degree and is likely to move on if they can find a legal job.”
- “If I can't get a job in the practice of law I will need to find work elsewhere and with my $125,000 of loans plus the fact that my family is starting to struggle with the COVID-19 economic crisis, I will likely have to start preparing for the bar only part time while I am working and I'm not sure that I will have the time or resources to do this after this summer.”
- “My disability limits job opportunities in the event of further waves of COVID, so I don't think finding outside job opportunities is a prospect.”
- “As an international student, my OPT clock starts in August, meaning I must find a law related job within the three-month cumulative employment period, otherwise, I have to

14 All selected additional comments are presented as submitted, verbatim.
RE: Impact Survey Findings

leave the U.S. OPT also requires my job to be major related, i.e., I cannot practice outside of law. Therefore, it's vital for international students to be licensed to practice as soon as possible.”
QUESTION 7: Would you face financial hardship in the event that the July UBE is cancelled or postponed?
297 responses

Returns per answer:
- Yes, I would face financial hardship in the event that the July UBE is canceled or postponed (224 responding = 75.4% of respondents)
- No, I would not face financial hardship in the event that the July UBE is canceled or postponed (73 responding = 24.6% of respondents)

Returns by demographic for “yes” response:
- 136 Female (60.7%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 75 Male (33.5%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 5 non-binary (2.2%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 36 LGBTQ+ (16.1%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 69 non-white (30.8%)—Disproportionate; 8.6% above baseline; 3.6% above margin of error.
- 22 with disability/condition requiring accommodation (9.8%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
Selected Additional Comments from Question #7:15

- “I won’t be able to pay rent or afford my payments on my students loans if the bar exam is delayed or cancelled. My student loan payments become due October 1 and my first year associateship start date has already been pushed back until January. I am personally quite scared because I (nor my parents) do not have sufficient resources to pay back my loans starting in October. Moreover, the delay has already forced me to move away from Washington because I cannot afford to rent in Seattle (or anywhere in Washington for that matter) for 6-8 months without full time legal employment.”

- “I would absolutely face financial hardship if I was not licensed to practice law starting this summer, however that does not mean I think it is safe to take the July UBE. I in no way think that taking the July UBE will be feasible or possible. That being said, I cannot afford to lose my job because I will not be able to pay for anything without a job. [My law school]16 required $186,000 of loans that have already accrued more than $16,000 of interest. I worked part time jobs all three years of law school and still was unable to save money. If I lose the job I lined up I will suffer severe financial impacts.”

- “I'm a single parent and do not have the financial reserves to provide for my family if I'm unable to practice law as previously anticipated in mid-September. If I'm unable to practice law, it will be necessary to obtain temporary employment which will make it doubly difficult to take time to study for the bar exam, because my financial resources intended for the study period post-graduation/pre-bar exam will be exhausted, and I will not be able to build additional financial reserves working a low-wage temporary job that would allow me to take time off while preparing for the bar exam.”

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15 All selected additional comments are presented as submitted, verbatim.
16 Brackets added to anonymize respondent and law school which was referenced.
QUESTION 8: Are you or someone in your household considered high-risk, according to the Centers for Disease Contacted COVID-19? (check all that apply) 297 responses

Returns per answer:
- No, neither myself, nor anyone in my household are considered High-Risk for contracting COVID-19 (177 responding = 59.6% of respondents)
- Yes, I am considered high-risk for contracting COVID-19 (54 responding = 18.2% of respondents)
- Yes, someone in my household is considered high-risk for contracting COVID-19 (88 responding = 29.6% of respondents)
- 40.4% of respondents are considered high-risk or have a member of their household who is considered high-risk.

Returns by demographic for “yes” response:
- 73 Female (60.8%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 39 Male (32.5%)—Disproportionate; 5.4% below baseline; .4% below margin of error
- 5 non-binary (4.2%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 24 LGBTQ+ (20%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 38 non-white (31.7%)—Disproportionate; 9.5% above baseline; 4.5% above margin of error.
RE: Impact Survey Findings

- 19 with disability/condition requiring accommodation (15.8%)—Disproportionate; 6.9% above baseline; 1.9% above margin of error.

**Selected Additional Comments from Question #8:**

- “My mother is immunocompromised and my father has a pre-existing health condition. Both rely on me to assist them with groceries and other household needs during this time.”
- I have an autoimmune disorder and heart problems
- “My wife and I currently live with my in-laws as my wife just gave birth to triplets via emergency cesarean section. My wife is therefore at risk as are our three girls. My father-in-law is of an at-risk age group, and my mother-in-law is immunocompromised.”
- “I live with my adult son and he has several underlying health conditions that make him high-risk including a history of asthma, a high BMI, and high blood pressure. Based on available data, I am very concerned that if he contracts COVID-19 that he will suffer severe illness or death.”
- “I live with my parents and my brother. My mother had three cancer surgeries and went through chemotherapy and radiation. My father has diabetes, and my brother has pre-asthmatic condition. I have been suffering from chronic issues with breathing since childhood.”

17 All selected additional comments are presented as submitted, verbatim.
QUESTION 9: Do you believe that you can adequately prepare for the UBE, regardless of when, while social distancing and/or stay at home orders are in place?

297 responses

- Yes, I believe will be able to adequately prepare for the UBE while social distancing and/or stay at home orders are in place. (176 responding = 59.3% of respondents)
- No, I do not believe I will be able to adequately prepare for the UBE while social distancing and/or stay at home orders are in place. (121 responding = 40.7% of respondents)

Returns per answer:

- Yes, I believe I will be able to adequately prepare for the UBE while social distancing and/or stay at home orders are in place. (176 responding = 59.3% of respondents)
- No, I do not believe I will be able to adequately prepare for the UBE while social distancing and/or stay at home orders are in place. (121 responding = 40.7% of respondents)

Returns by demographic for “no” response:

- 70 Female (57.9%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 43 Male (35.5%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 3 non-binary (2.5%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 20 LGBTQ+ (16.5%)—Proportionate; inside margin of error
- 48 non-white (39.6%)—Disproportionate; 17.4% above baseline; 12.4% above margin of error.
- 17 with disability/condition requiring accommodation (14%)—Disproportionate; 5.1% above baseline; .1% above margin of error.
RE: Impact Survey Findings

Selected Additional Comments from Question #9:18

- “I am single parent with children who are not in school and I cannot afford to find care for them while I study. I cannot even find a place for my children to go to for childcare right now. Social distancing has taken a mental toll on me and I need normalcy before I can be in the right mindset to study for the bar.”

- “I do not have a quiet place to study at home. I cannot even afford, nor do I own, a desk because I did all of my studying in the law school library. I currently attend my classes from a couch and a coffee table because that is all I really have to work with. Furthermore, my roommate is a corporate accountant and his company has ordered them to stay at home through June, at least. He is constantly on conference call, giving presentations, and the like. It is incredibly hard to study given these and other factors, and I hope that this is a genuine consideration for the Court.”

- “I am currently in lockdown at my family’s home in Indiana, and I do not have WiFi access because it is in a remote, rural area and companies do not provide wifi in our location”

- “I will have to immediately seek other employment and will be unable to afford to take the time off to adequately study for a bar if it is postponed. In addition, I will have to study with no bar prep because I have already paid for guided bar prep for the July bar and I can not afford to pay for it again if it is canceled/postponed. I may also have to find alternative housing to protect my family members who are high risk if I am forced to find a job, as most of the jobs that are currently hiring put you at direct in-person risk of contracting the virus. That additional financial strain would make it impossible for me to take even a week off to study for the bar.”

- “I can prepare to the best of my abilities under the circumstances if that is what is required of me. But it is very hard to not have a quiet and predictable place to study, like the school library that I paid for access to. Currently I have to do all work in my apartment while dealing with noise and disruptions from neighbors and people outside. I do not have access to a printer, which will add complications to studying online materials. The biggest issue with adequate preparation is when should we begin? I was

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18 All selected additional comments are presented as submitted, verbatim.
planning on starting a week or so after graduation, but in the months leading up to the test it is entirely probable that large gatherings will still be banned. This creates an unprecedented level of anxiety because I can put all my time and effort into studying, just to have the bar cancelled or postponed, in which case I will have to start the process over again. During all this time I will be running out of money and job opportunities, as I may need to stop working abruptly once the bar is announced.”

• “As an international student, I have to admit that I have a lot on my plate to worry about already. For instance, I constantly worry about the hate crime against Asian and don’t feel safe when I have to go out to take Uber or public transportation (I cannot drive). Further, would WSBA allow us to wear a facial mask during the exam if it is held in July as originally planned? I cannot bear the thought of sitting amid of hundreds of people without any protection…”

• “I am at home with my infant, and because of the pandemic I no longer have child care for her for the summer. My mother was going to come and stay with us this summer and watch my daughter while I study. But my mother is seventy years old and can’t risk travelling across the country to stay with us. I find it very difficult to get anything accomplished while taking care of my infant full time.”

• “I am completing an externship outside today of the country. I don’t know when it is safe to travel yet back to Seattle. All of my bar prep books are back in Seattle”
SELECTED MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS: 19

• “I am really scared about my exposure to COVID-19 because I have lived with severe asthma throughout my life. But, I have also dreamed about being a lawyer throughout my life. If I don’t take this test, I may not be able to be competitive and gain employment at the Prosecutor’s office. If I do take the test, I could get seriously sick and the job offer doesn’t matter anyway. If it’s not me that doesn’t fall seriously ill, then it’s someone else. That is a guarantee.”

• “These unprecedented times call for an exception to the normal rules. Expecting peak performance from students who are completely overwhelmed puts us at an extreme disadvantage. All of these things going on have caused severe stress and anxiety for me and most of my peers, so compassion for struggling students would go a long way towards alleviating a major concern. All of law school is supposed to prepare us for practice, so let us prove we are adequately prepared.”

• “Safety for us students, assistance with the costs associated with taking the bar exam, and a beefed up Rule 9 are top priorities. Safety needs to be a priority. I need to know that I'm not going to be walking into a dangerous situation to take the bar exam or that I will have to self-quarantine after taking it. That would be incredibly depressing. I also think we need the WSBA to advocate on behalf of students and waive the fees associated with taking the bar. It is WAY too expensive to become a lawyer. We paid a ton of money for tuition and then had to pay a ton of money to take the bar. Paying for the bar is like paying a month and a half of rent. It's beyond ridiculous. With the current COVID-19 crisis it's really hard to find a job and a lot of jobs are being furloughed. Help us by returning the fees we had to pay to take the bar exam. That stuff really helps people with debt and who have no income and no job lined up. On top of that, we are dealing with a pandemic like everyone else. We have families. We don't want to get our families sick after taking the bar. We don't want to get our housemates and roommates to get sick from us after we take the bar exam. We need you all to be creative and empathetic right now. This is a messed up situation and it is ridiculous it is taking this long to come up with a practical solution. Create a beefed up version of Rule 9 that lets us practice law for two years and requires us to take the bar exam. Let us realize all the work we put in and let

19 All selected additional comments are presented as submitted, verbatim.
us help other people. In addition, there are a ton of low income people who are going to need lawyers after this situation. The legal demand is going to be super high. There will likely be a lot of home foreclosures that we can help with too. We can meet the demand and help these people, but we need you to create a practical solution to this novel issue.”