

# Guide for Families of USD Law Graduates Taking the Bar Exam



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## Law School Was Not Bar Prep

Law school prepared graduates to become lawyers. They learned how to “think like lawyers” and the skills lawyers need. But law school was not a bar prep program, so graduates must study in the period between graduation and the bar.



## The Study Period Is Intense

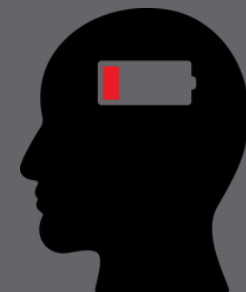
The bar prep courses are essentially ten-week cram sessions. Students are expected to study 50+ hours per week, 6-7 days per week. Some prep courses have only a few days off the entire 10-week period.

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## The Bar Exam Is Demanding

The bar exam is two days (longer for accommodations), where takers must answer 200 multiple-choice questions across 7 topics, write 5 essays chosen from 13 topics, and do 1 performance test that tests the skill of legal writing.



## The Bar Exam Is Hard

About 65% is required to pass the bar exam. Even after cramming for 10 weeks, most bar takers answer about 65-70% of the questions correctly. Many bar takers receive failing scores on practice tests during the study period.

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## The Bar Exam Is Expensive

Because they study 50+ hours per week, bar takers cannot work during this expensive study period. On top of regular room and board, the bar itself costs about \$1,800, and the bar prep course can cost as much as \$4,000.



## Support Them Emotionally

Don't put too many demands or requests on your bar taker. Save requests for spending time together, travelling, etc., for after the bar exam. And sometimes, a bar taker needs a good cry and an empathetic ear.

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## Support Them Materially

If you can afford it, most bar takers could use help getting by, even if it is just making some food or helping with a laundry run. Send them a pizza maybe. They can't work, and student loans are no longer available.



## Believe In Them

Learning science tells us that test takers who believe they will pass do better on exams. Your bar taker needs to hear that you know they will pass. On days of self-doubt, lend an ear and help get them to a place where they believe.

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