



Lee Burgess: Welcome to the Bar Exam Toolbox podcast. Today, we're doing another update on COVID-19 and the bar exam. Lots to update. Things are changing every moment. Your Bar Exam Toolbox hosts are Alison Monahan and Lee Burgess, that's me. We're here to demystify the bar exam experience so you can study effectively, stay sane, and hopefully pass and move on with your life. We're the co-creators of the [Law School Toolbox](#), the [Bar Exam Toolbox](#), and the career related website [CareerDicta](#). Alison also runs [The Girl's Guide to Law School](#). If you enjoy the show, please leave a review on your favorite listening app and check out our sister podcast, the [Law School Toolbox podcast](#). If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can reach us via the [contact form](#) on BarExamToolbox.com, and we'd love to hear from you. And with that, let's get started.

Alison Monahan: Welcome back. Well, when we last recorded a podcast on the bar and COVID-19, it was on April 10th, which seems like an eternity ago, but also kind of like it was yesterday, because time basically has no meaning right now. But that's a completely different discussion. Well, a lot has happened in the bar world since April. So we wanted to share some thoughts with you on studying for the test, if your test is delayed, staying sane, and also ways you might be able to make this situation actually work for you. Just so everyone knows, today is Monday, May 18th, and also as a reminder, we have a [COVID-19 information page](#) on our website, if you want to get the most up-to-date information, and we will link to that in our show notes. Well, Lee, the world has changed a lot since April, hasn't it?

Lee Burgess: Oh yes.

Alison Monahan: Understatement.

Lee Burgess: It's an understatement. We have an internal Slack channel that we use for our whole team, and for a while, it just felt like every morning – since we have people all over the country, some people work earlier than others – and you'd turn it on and it'd be like, this is happening in this jurisdiction and this is happening, and a student just told us this. I mean, it's been pretty crazy.

Alison Monahan: It is. I think at this point, it's fair to say probably about half the country is delaying or planning to alter the bar exam in some way, which for these institutions that are not particularly receptive to change, generally, this is a big deal.



- Lee Burgess: Yeah. I think it actually is pretty crazy that this much change is happening this fast. But I think just the state of the world – this is so unprecedented that even these organizations that are not very good at making any changes are having to pivot, because what other choice do you have?
- Alison Monahan: Right, exactly. And they're going in some different directions, so let's talk about some of those. The big one for us really being that we're sitting in San Francisco in separate places recording this – socially distanced, don't worry. So, California is delaying until September 9th and 10th, and also the interesting twist in this one is that they've asked that the bar be given virtually, but there's not really been any update as to the feasibility of that. So we're all in limbo here wondering what that means.
- Lee Burgess: The interesting thing in California is that the committee of bar examiners who are a part of the state bar, who actually writes the test and administers the test and grades the test – all they could do was write this letter where they gave all these recommendations to the state supreme court, who actually is in charge of the test. And then the state supreme court came back and said, "We should delay the test. Oh, and by the way, go ahead and give it virtually. Let us know how that goes." And that was including the first year law students exam, which is coming up in June. In fact, it's almost exactly a month away. So they're supposed to come up with a solution fairly quickly, and as of this morning, there are no updates.
- Alison Monahan: Right. Not to mention you have the problem of the MBE, which there's been no update on that being given virtually either. So I think this is a big, big open question.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. And I was preparing for this podcast, I was on the [NCBE website](#) trying to make sure all of my data was up-to-date. I saw nothing. I went back to the [CalBar website](#) looking – nothing. So even for those of us who are copiously checking for updates, I think the reality is there are still a lot of unanswered questions. And in California, we're talking to everybody that we know who should be in the know, we have our team reading everywhere where information can be updated. There's a lot of uncertainty still at a time when I think people are seeking certainty. So, it's not a great time to have to be sitting for the bar exam, but I guess the reality is, just like everything else in life, we're all learning to live with a little bit of uncertainty.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. And I think the advice that I'm offering to people is really just, you don't have any control over how California decides to give the exam. They've



announced they're doing it on these dates. For now, just assume it is happening one way or the other on those dates and spend your energy studying for the test and not wondering how it might work online, because the reality is, we don't know how it might work. Maybe they come up with a solution and maybe they don't, and it's completely out of your hands.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. I do think there'll be a test in September, I just have no idea how it's going to be administered.

Alison Monahan: I agree with you. I'm just not sure it's going to be administered online. I think that seems relatively unlikely, but hey, if they can do it, more power to them.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. I think the reality is there are so many people who sit for this test. If they don't give it, February is still going to be an open question, because we don't know what the world would be like in February. So, if you just push 5,000 people down the line to February, then I don't know how you'd administer February either. So, this is complicated. I do think if you're planning on taking California in the fall, I think there will be some sort of a test. We just don't know exactly what it's going to look like.

Alison Monahan: Right, exactly. So I think, worry about the things that are under your control, like studying, and not about the things that are like how exactly you're going to be asked to sit for it. Obviously, you want to pay attention in case you need to make travel plans or something, but right now you just don't have information so it's not the best use of your mental energy really.

Lee Burgess: So, going on to the next kind of big jurisdiction, it's probably worth mentioning what's happening in New York.

Alison Monahan: Well, definitely. New York is making some choices. I mean, to give them credit, they're kind of making some choices so you've got to give them credit for that. But it's definitely causing a lot of anxiety for a lot of people.

Lee Burgess: So for those who haven't heard, Alison, why don't you bring us up to date with what's happening in New York?

Alison Monahan: Right. So what basically New York has done is they said, "Hey, we've got a real big problem here. We're not going to be able to use a lot of our test sites, so we're going to essentially use the schools as a lot of test sites, but we're only going to initially allow first-time takers from New York schools to actually register to sit for the exam. So you can imagine how many people have gone up



in arms about this. There's a huge number of people from non-New York schools who want to sit for the first-time, you have repeat takers, you have foreign takers. And they are saying they could potentially open more seats, but in this initial rollout, it's really been a very limited number of people.

Lee Burgess: All those big firms in New York are pulling... If you just say that they're pulling from the Ivy League schools, that's a huge number of people that aren't going to be able to sit.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. And New York has sort of said, "Oh, maybe you can go sit somewhere else", which we'll talk about briefly how feasible that is for people. And they may end up opening more slots and then you can make your own guess about who they might let in. Do they let first time takers in before they let in repeat takers from New York schools? I have no idea. But I think a lot of people are not going to be able to sit who thought they were going to be able to.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, which is tricky. So I guess if you have a job offer in New York and need a New York license and didn't go to law school in New York, you should call your recruiters, because I would like to hope that your jobs are going to be a bit more flexible knowing that it's going to be really hard to try and sit for a...

Alison Monahan: Yeah. Well, I guess the good news is they are UBE states, so potentially you could actually sit someplace else.

Lee Burgess: Another interesting thing that has happened really recently – I think in the last two weeks – is that some states are now considering doing two tests in the fall.

Alison Monahan: Fun times!

Lee Burgess: I know, which seems even crazier. So, as of this recording, the states who are making this choice: Washington, Texas, Nebraska, Kansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Minnesota now are saying you could take July or September.

Alison Monahan: Fun.

Lee Burgess: I know. And that's interesting for a lot of reasons. I know that the NCBE has offered to do tests on both of those dates, but I guess they're just trying to spread out people. I'm not sure what the thought process is around that.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I guess they're just trying to give people options and spread out the numbers. It seems a little strange, but I assume they're not letting people sit



both of those dates. But maybe they will, I don't know. If you feel like July didn't go well, can you sign up for September? I don't know.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. I thought that same thing too, but I didn't quickly see that answer. So if you're in that situation, maybe you do want to ask if they'll let you sit for both. I mean, if you are concerned about passing, there could be benefits to trying to sit for both. I don't know. I mean, this is so unprecedented, but...

Alison Monahan: Yeah, it's definitely weird, but I guess take your pick. Also, it's unclear, do you think they're going to assign people one of those dates or let people pick? I don't know. If you're in one of those states, definitely stay on top of it because you might get notice that, by the way, you're being assigned to take this in a certain time. Obviously, you need to plan for that.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. And a lot of this is also going to depend on how the reopening goes and whether or not there's another wave. I mean, there are so many factors that the states are going to have to take into consideration, which is pretty wild.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. And then you've got Florida – they're just going full steam ahead with the July exam, but they are implementing some interesting safety requirements. One of the most interesting – they, I think, are claiming this is a state requirement potentially, but if you are traveling to Florida from outside of the state for the exam, you may have to go through a two-week quarantine period.

Lee Burgess: Yes, I was rereading the order this morning from Florida, and they were basically citing to some executive orders. So they're basically saying it'll be up to the governor's office to say if people have to be potentially quarantined. So if you're planning on traveling to Florida, I would definitely stay on top of that. They claim that they're going to be able to do this with social distancing, keeping tables six feet apart. They're going to do screening questions and temperature checks. I think this thing about the temperature checks is so fascinating, because it's like what everyone is opting to do now, except that the spread is mostly through asymptomatic people, and only I think 50% of symptomatic people have a fever.

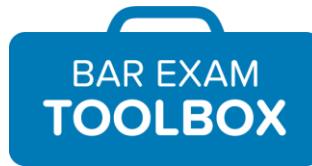
Alison Monahan: Yeah. It's kind of like having to take your shoes off at the TSA checkpoint. Not really sure it's doing much, but maybe people feel better. So I wouldn't really rely upon that. They are going to make people wear masks during the exam, and also when waiting in line, which that's actually a pretty reasonable idea.



- Lee Burgess: Which is a very reasonable idea. And I'm going to guess that if they're doing in-person tests, probably most jurisdictions are going to have some sort of a requirement. So that is an argument if you are on the "I don't like masks" camp, to start shopping around and finding one that you feel comfortable in, because you may need to start practice wearing it so it doesn't become a distraction during the test.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. If you are going to have to wear one, I think it's sort of like earplugs – you want to make sure that you've done that in advance.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah, especially if you wear glasses because of the foggy issue.
- Alison Monahan: Oh, gosh, yeah. You might want to consider contacts, honestly.
- Lee Burgess: I mean, it's tough. Different masks' fabrics do kind of allow for a little more airflow, or the way that it works, or some have vents. Anyway, if you wear glasses and you are sitting for this exam, you've got to figure out what is going to be the best way to wear a mask. I wear glasses, I do not have contacts. I have some that fog more than others.
- Alison Monahan: I have a problem with the sunglasses because I have sensitive eyes, and every time I'm outside with my mask on, I'm constantly like, "Oh God, I can't see anything."
- Lee Burgess: Yeah, I know. It's tough. So you're going to need to experiment. Then we also have some states like North Carolina, Maryland, Colorado, North Dakota, Iowa, and Missouri say that they may postpone, if necessary.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. I talked to someone today who's sitting from Maryland, who says they theoretically are deciding by the end of the week. So by the time you listen to this, maybe they'll have a decision.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah.
- Alison Monahan: Maybe. California also said they were going to have an update on their online status, and we haven't seen that, so we'll see.
- Lee Burgess: A week ago, I think.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly.



- Lee Burgess: So, the ambiguity is not fun for anyone, so just stay on top of it. I do think you've just got to study with the information that you have at the moment. So if it looks like there's going to be a July exam in the jurisdiction, study for a July exam. I think you don't really have any more other choices outside that.
- Alison Monahan: Right, exactly. Focus on what you can control. And then you've got states doing their own fun thing. Indiana's doing its own one-day exam. Nevada is doing an open book exam. Are they also online? I can't remember. I think that might be.
- Lee Burgess: I think they are, yeah. I think it was going to be an online open book – kind of like a law school exam.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. So, a lot of interesting ideas floating around out there.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. So, if you are sitting for the test, I think that the best thing you could do is to just have on your checklist that you're regularly checking the NCBE website. They've got a pretty handy [COVID page](#). They have a map, they have a table. But you can just consistently be checking to see if new stuff is coming out, but you also want to balance being compulsive.
- Alison Monahan: I mean, presumably if you've signed up for an exam and they change something major, they're going to send you an email.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. So I don't think you have to be refreshing five times a day. If you want to check daily, that's fine. But I would just do it and then move on. But yes, you're going to hear through social media, through the state bar – they're going to have to alert you. Unfortunately, like so many other things COVID related, you can just go down the information rabbit hole and keep looking for information that doesn't exist.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. I think the reality is a lot of this information just doesn't exist. You can assume people are working on it, and probably they will not meet their own deadlines for telling you things because everything's more complicated than it seems.
- Lee Burgess: Yep. Alright, so we now know that there's a lot of different stuff happening all over the country and things are still in flux. I think it is important to know what we haven't heard. So like we just mentioned, we have not heard if California is going to commit to a virtual exam. We have not heard if the MBE would have an online option, which is, I think a big question mark. I thought we were supposed to hear about that soon too, but I haven't seen anything.



Alison Monahan: Yeah. Obviously, that would be step one for states deciding to have a virtual exam, is knowing that they could actually access the MBE virtually, which has some security challenges and other things. So, I think there are a lot of things to be worked out there and we'll just have to see.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. So, what about this idea that some people are really having to switch jurisdictions or decide to take it somewhere else because of what New York is doing or the delaying of the dates? This has come up for some of our students that were planning to sit for New York and then found out they couldn't register.

Alison Monahan: No. I talked to someone this morning who was in that situation as an LLM student in a non-New York school, and he was like, "Well, maybe I'll take California." Depending on the state, it may or may not be too late. If you're in a UBE jurisdiction, I think you have a little bit more flexibility. If you have any interest in being barred in a state that is still accepting applications, you could just sit there, get barred, and then transfer your score to wherever else you need it to be. There are also some states that allow what's called "courtesy seating". What this means is you can actually sit and pay them and take the exam, but you don't actually plan to apply for bar membership in that state, and you're doing it really just to get the score.

So the last time we checked, there were two states that actually still have applications open at this time that would let you do this. One of them is [Oregon](#). They have a late filing deadline of May 31st and they actually seem to be encouraging people to do this. And at least at this time, they're still planning to do it in July. So if you are dead set on getting a July UBE score, this could be an option for you. [Alaska](#), interestingly enough – if you feel comfortable traveling there – they have a deadline of June 15th and they also offer a full refund until that date, and they are doing September. So that's obviously a bigger travel ask for people than Oregon might be. But if you are desperate to take a UBE state and you don't want to sit in one that you're going to have to join the bar to get that score, these could be two options for you.

Lee Burgess: You made the point about traveling. I think that as people start making decisions about what they want to do, you have to consider what your travel options are going to be to get to these...

Alison Monahan: When I'm thinking of traveling to Alaska, it's like, "Hmm, this may be questionable."





- Lee Burgess: Right. I think some locations, you might decide you want to drive. Some locations, you may have to fly. Then it depends on which airline you decide to take and what their requirements are going to be. I'm sure everybody saw all this stuff that came out about United after that medical doctor posted a picture of a packed plane. So, there are still a lot of uncertainties. And one of the things I think we'll talk about a little more in a few minutes, but I do want people to also remember that the bar seems like the most important thing, but your health and safety is actually the most important thing. So you also need to be making decisions based on what you think is going to keep you safe and healthy.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. I think there are certain risks that probably are not worth taking just to be able to sit for the bar exam.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. Okay. And then you were also saying that you recently had a chat with someone who's trying to take the UBE and possibly California.
- Alison Monahan: Right, yeah. So I spoke with someone who said, "Well, currently I'm signed up for the UBE in a state that's offering it in July. They may or may not switch. And then I'm considering doing September in California." Which is actually an option. People used to actually take sort of two – before the UBE days, they'd take like New Jersey and New York, or Massachusetts and New York over the course of three days. I mean, this seems like a lot to take on. In that case, it was a more specialized situation. But I think it could work if you're somebody who actually needs both of these admissions and you have the time and you have the energy. I'm not advising it for the average person who thinks it might just be fun to take two bar exams, but if you're highly driven and there's some reason to do this, it could actually be a possibility.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah, it definitely is a possibility that likely won't come up again, so this is kind of a special circumstance. I think that the benefits are you're already studying for the MBE, which is given in both states, and the performance test isn't that different. So you just really have to pivot and learn all that California-specific law. And so, if you didn't go to law school or if you're a foreign-trained attorney and you didn't go to an LLM program in California, there's a good amount of California law tested on the exam, but you would have five, six weeks to study. It's definitely possible.
- Alison Monahan: Oh yeah. I took Massachusetts and then a couple of years later took California. And it would have been way easier for me if I'd just done them both at once when I wasn't working than trying to do that two years later, whatever it was, after I'd forgotten most of the topics anyway, and then having to relearn those



and then also learn California. For the right person, there could be some advantages.

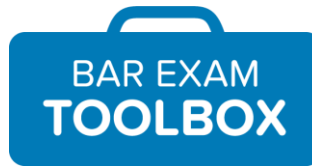
Lee Burgess: Yeah. Something to consider if that sounds attractive to you and if it can work out with travel and whether or not you're working – I would say if you were trying to work and study, taking two administrations like that would probably be pretty intense. But if you're studying full time, you could probably pull it off, especially if you had a good history with exam taking.

Alison Monahan: Right. I'm thinking of somebody who's been successful typically on exams, did well in law school, maybe has the time after the first exam just because their job isn't starting for whatever reason. There are ways it could work.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. So, we have been talking to a lot of people. I counted my number of phone calls last week, which was kind of humbling. But we have been talking to a lot of people who have failed this test or are sitting for the test for the first time and are trying to decide how to approach it. So one of the last things I wanted us to do today was to really give some generalized thoughts on studying for this exam, especially if your exam has been delayed. Because if you're taking the first September test, most people now find themselves considering to study for 16-17 weeks, which is significantly longer than the eight to 10 weeks that most people would prepare for the exam. I'm finding that most people are trying to study early. Alison, what have you been hearing from people?

Alison Monahan: I think that's right. I think there are pros and cons to this approach. I think generally, the pro of starting earlier far outweighs the con. It just means you can't study like a crazy person for that entire time, but that's not actually really a con; that's a pro. So you can spread out your studying. No one can really do 12 hours a day, seven days a week for the next four months. A) that's not necessary, and B) that's not realistic. So I think you've just got to be thoughtful and avoid burnout. One of the reasons I think people need to start sooner is just, we don't know what's going to happen, and I think most people's focus is not 100% anyway. So, what I fear for people is that they think, "Oh, I have all this time", and then they decide to start a few months or a month from now, and then things get compressed and then it's a bad scene. So I think starting sooner – hey, if you're more prepared when the exam comes around, that's awesome.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. I also think that so many people are working and studying, and there's still a lot of uncertainty that will happen with jobs. You may feel like you have all this extra time because you are working remotely, but what if your job decides to



not let you work remotely anymore? Or if some people get laid off and you have more responsibilities. I think there are a lot of unknowns, especially for people who have other responsibilities. And so I'm just like, "You know what the world is like today, maybe tomorrow. So try and bank that time if you can." I agree – don't study like a crazy person, but chip away at it because we don't know what's coming down the pipeline, and cushion is better. You don't know how you're going to be asked to step up between now and the exam date.

Alison Monahan: Right. And I think you can be smart about it too. So when you approach an area, say it's your first review of an area – don't just study something and then walk away from it. Make sure you've done something that has retained that information for you in a way you can then go back to later, because you are going to be looking at this more over time. You want to make sure that when you finish studying an area, you actually have some type of materials that you can then reference later.

Lee Burgess: I think we already mentioned kind of the collective fatigue. I think we've also got these issues with burnout, and just most people are not performing at their best. We always talk about, you need to take care of your health and wellness while you study for the bar. But I think this is even more of a challenge, because even if you're doing all the things, quote unquote, "right" to take care of yourself, most of us still feel somewhat like we're being run into the ground.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, there's a lot of mental overhead when everything is harder than it would normally be. I mean, something simple like, "I need to pop out to the grocery store and get some eggs" – now immediately your brain has to say, "Okay, what are the steps in that process? Is it safe to do that? Where can I go? Is it going to be crowded? Do I need a mask?" All these things. So that's just a lot of mental overhead to literally keep yourself alive, which you cannot then be devoting to learning new material and practicing with it.

Lee Burgess: I also think that we have to try and remain as flexible as we can, because I believe that most bar studiers are going to find out about some sort of requirement that maybe makes them feel a little bit weird, like how you wear masks in the room, or you're going to be taking it in a space that you're not used to, or whatever it might be. And flexibility is something that becomes much harder the more exhausted we are, because it lacks control. So one of the other things I just really encourage people to try and do is stay in a place where they won't be completely blindsided with changing situations.



- Alison Monahan: No, I think that's great advice. I think that also goes to being patient with yourself and what you're able to do in a day and your expectations, and just realizing that you're probably not performing at your best, and that's just the reality you have to deal with. And that's why you might want to use this extra time to deal with it.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. And like we mentioned earlier, there's going to be a balance between becoming obsessive about making this decision and just trying to make it, because it is going to be, I think for some people, a difficult health and safety decision point of whether or not they agree with what the jurisdiction is doing, if they think it's going to be a safe enough environment. This is tricky. There's no playbook written for this. I was reading an article yesterday about how people felt about being out and about shopping in a mall in Georgia.
- Alison Monahan: Oh, I read that.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. That was hard to read for me, because that wouldn't be the choice I would be making for my family right now.
- Alison Monahan: That's definitely not the reality we are living in in California right now.
- Lee Burgess: No. And so, if I was going to sit for the Georgia bar, I think I might personally be more anxious. Everybody's got to find what works for them, but this is kind of a moving target. So I think you need to give yourself some time and space to make these thoughtful decisions, but on the other hand, you can't totally obsess about it and drive yourself crazy.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. And I think if you are someone who has a higher risk profile, whether personally or in your family, it might be worth considering, "I'm just not going to do this next exam", and see how that plays out. And then just plan to sit for February. There is no real harm done in that.
- Lee Burgess: That's true. We don't know what February will look like, but as my husband keeps reminding me, we will know more later than we know now.
- Alison Monahan: Right. I agree, we don't know what the world is going to look like in February, but you will at least know exactly how the jurisdiction that you're planning to sit in handled the previous situation, and you can make better judgements about like, "Okay, I heard that this is what they did and I would or would not feel comfortable doing this again."



Lee Burgess: Good point. Yeah.

Alison Monahan: They're going to do something. Everyone is going to do something, whether the range might be from not have the exam to do it in a huge conference room as they normally would with nothing else. And you can make your choices within that range after seeing what happens.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. That's a very good point. So there will be more information and you can make more thoughtful decisions. I think one thing I said to somebody that seemed to resonate with them when I was talking to them last week was, I said, "This is such a bizarre time in life. If you choose not to sit for this test, or you fail this administration of this test, partly due to what's happening in the world – five years from now, 10 years from now, nobody is going to ask you..."

Alison Monahan: Oh no.

Lee Burgess: "...about when you sat for this test, nobody's even going to notice." There's a blog post on our website that I love, which I think is entitled "[The Question No One Ever Asks Me](#)", which is from an attorney we know, who failed the bar once. And she doesn't call it out on her applications, but nobody asks.

Alison Monahan: Oh yeah.

Lee Burgess: And I think this feels like if you lose this couple of months, it's going to derail your life forever. But in the grand scheme, your career path will right the ship. I mean, I graduated from undergrad in 2001, right as the economy was completely imploding, right before September 11th. I had job offers pulled, I ended up moving, I was temping. I know you were working at that time too. It just felt like our careers were in the toilets, because the world around us was just kind of crumbling. And you end up finding another path, and it's okay. Nobody asks why I took a temp job in 2001.

Alison Monahan: Right. The other thing to think about too, if you are considering postponing is a number of states do have essentially a temporary diploma privilege. And most of them I think are saying, you can delay at least one exam and still have that. So if you do think the fall is looking really uncertain for you and your state offers that, then that is also an alternative that might make sense for you.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. Note that most of those diploma privileges mean you still have to work under a supervising attorney. But still, you could probably go work for a bit or



talk to your job and see if they're okay with you delaying until a time where you may feel more comfortable taking it.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. So I think there may be options that are worth thinking about.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, because if you have small children at home...

Alison Monahan: It's hard to study for the bar on top of that.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. And I've talked to a lot of people that have said, "I'm trying to decide what to do, but it's just going to depend on if my children have childcare or school."

Alison Monahan: Yeah. I talked to someone, he was like, "My daycare just reopened and now I can study."

Lee Burgess: Yeah. These are not easy questions to ask, and every family has to decide what's best for them. So, this is complicated stuff. If you feel like you're struggling, you are in good company. Everybody's just trying to navigate the best situations they can. I think to not obsess and to continue to chip away at your goal is really what you have to focus on, and maybe set deadlines for yourself to make some of these decisions.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think that's right. So yeah, there's a lot going on, a lot of uncertainty still in the world. I guess we'll probably record another podcast in the future saying, "Well, we talked about this in May. Here's what we knew, and wow, we didn't see this coming." I think we're probably over our time now. Any final thoughts on this?

Lee Burgess: I just want to, I don't know, send a lot of kindness and empathy to folks who are trying to decide how to take this test or how to do it safely or whether they can do it. Because I think that it's interesting – everybody keeps talking about the milestones that folks are missing – graduations and things like weddings, which are also heartbreaking. But I think that that is the kind of thing that you just miss and it's kind of over. I think this is a unique challenge, trying to study for an exam like this, which is the gatekeeper to the rest of your career in the middle of this pandemic with all this uncertainty, because the uncertainty is ongoing. And I think that this is a unique situation and a unique challenge for folks in this position.

Alison Monahan: I agree. I think you just have to be as nice to yourself as possible and just make your decisions as best you can, hope for the best, and then whatever happens,



roll with it. I know people say this all the time nowadays, but this is truly unprecedented.

Lee Burgess: It is, yeah. And we're all just doing the best that we can. It's far from perfect, so everybody's just trying to do the best they can.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. So whatever your state decided to throw at you, just roll with it as best you can, hope for the best, and regroup if you need to.

Lee Burgess: Yep. And just remember that your health and safety is the priority.

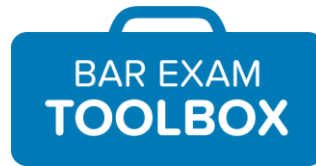
Alison Monahan: Right. It doesn't do you any good to pass the test and then not be around to enjoy that privilege.

Lee Burgess: Exactly. Okay, well, on that happy note... Hang in there, everybody! We want to take a second to remind you to check out our [blog](#) at BarExamToolbox.com, which is full of helpful tips to help you prepare and stay sane as you study for the bar exam. We do have a lot of COVID specific posts recently, so you can go check those out. You can also find information on our website about our courses, tools, and one-on-one tutoring programs to support you as you study for the UBE or California bar exam.

If you enjoyed this episode of the Bar Exam Toolbox podcast, please take a second to leave a review and rating on your favorite listening app. We'd really appreciate it. And be sure to subscribe so you don't miss anything. If you are still in law school, you might also like to check out our popular [Law School Toolbox podcast](#) as well. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to reach out to myself or Alison at [lee@barexamtoolbox.com](mailto:lee@barexamtoolbox.com) or [alison@barexamtoolbox.com](mailto:alison@barexamtoolbox.com). Or you can always contact us via our website [contact form](#) at BarExamToolbox.com. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk soon!

## **RESOURCES:**

[Bar Exam Latest News: COVID-19](#)  
[National Conference of Bar Examiners](#)  
[NCBE COVID-19 Updates](#)  
[The State Bar of California](#)  
[Oregon State Bar Admissions](#)  
[Alaska Bar Association Exam Dates](#)



[Bar Exam Postponement Due to COVID-19](#)  
[Coming Up with a COVID-19 Contingency Plan for Bar Study](#)  
[How to Deal with COVID-19 Uncertainty](#)  
[The Question I've Never Been Asked about the Bar Exam](#)