

Bar Loan FAQs

Why should I consider applying for a bar loan?

Bar loans are intended to be used for expenses related to completing the bar exam. The cost of sitting for the Bar (usually a few hundred dollars) can be covered with a GradPLUS loan, as long as you are still enrolled, with proper documentation. Living expenses can only be obtained from a private lender. Borrowing these loans might be a good option if you don't have the funds available and are not receiving assistance for these costs from your future employer.

How much am I eligible to borrow?

Bar loan caps vary by lender (ranging from \$15,000 - \$16,000), but most students find that borrowing \$10,000 or less is sufficient to meet their needs. In general, we recommend borrowing as little as possible.

Where can I find up-to-date interest rate information?

Private loans have a variable interest rate that is usually tied to LIBOR or prime rate. The following website offers information about LIBOR and prime which can be helpful when trying to determine potential interest rates for private loans: www.bankrate.com/cbsmw/ratehm.asp. Private lenders will not provide an interest rate offer until after you have applied for the loan. Further information about private loans is available at: www.finaid.org/loans/privateloan.phtml.

How can I determine which loan is best for me?

Interest rates and fees can vary by lender. We would like to encourage you to visit the following website: www.finaid.org/calculators/loananalyzer.phtml. This comprehensive website allows you to compute the various terms set by each lender, using their listed interest rate, fees, and repayment period.

I have chosen a lender and know how much I want to borrow. What do I do now?

Most lenders offer an online application process. If you feel more comfortable with a hard copy application, you may contact the lender to request one. In order to ensure proper processing, your application must be certified by the school before any lender will disburse funds. This certification can be obtained from Marcie Rechner in Records.

I have completed the loan application and have been approved. When will I receive the funds?

Disbursement of bar loans is different from academic year loans. The bar loan check will be mailed to your current address. You get to choose the disbursement date/dates for the loan. It is a good rule of thumb that the total process takes two to three weeks from the time that you submit your application.

How can I obtain a copy of my Credit Report?

You can request a free copy of your credit report once every 12 months at www.annualcreditreport.com. Any of the following national credit bureaus will send you a copy for a small fee:

Experian: 1-888-397-3742

TransUnion: 1-800-888-4213

Equifax Credit: 1-800-685-1111