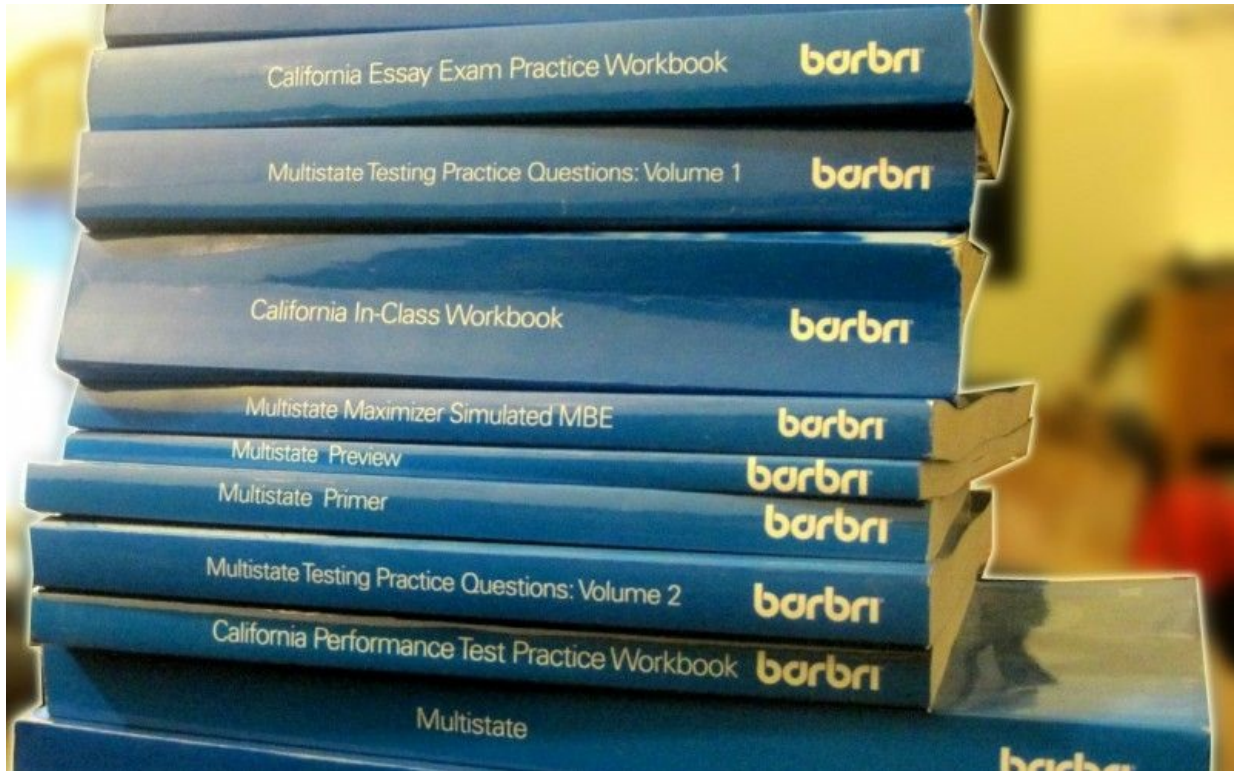


BarBri, Inc Settles Over Claims of Discrimination



Summary: The host of largest bar prep course reached a settlement with a group of blind law students claiming they were discriminated against by not being able to access all the materials.

BarBri, Inc is the provider of the country's largest bar prep course. Numerous blind law students have enrolled in the bar exam course but found themselves unable to access all of the provided materials. The students alerted the company to the problem they were having utilizing the mobile application, website and course materials but the company did nothing about it. The students eventually filed a suit against the company, alleging they denied fair and equal access to the important resources.

The company settled the claims this week accusing them of preventing blind students full access to course materials that they had paid for and were thus contractually entitled to plus undermining the ability of the students to properly prepare for the bar exam. As part of the agreement, BarBri must update their online products so they can be recognized by industry web accessibility guidelines. The court-enforced agreement also forces the company to improve internal processes, training and staff resources to ensure they comply with the industry standards.

The students were represented by the Washington Lawyers' Committee, the Texas Civil Rights Project, and [Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll](#).

Jonathan Smith, Executive Director of the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, said, according to Cohen Milstein, "The bar exam is the final step for entry into the profession and bar review courses have become an essential part of preparing to take the exam. This settlement clears unreasonable and unlawful barriers standing in the way of blind bar exam takers and ensures that the legal profession is open to all."

Shaylyn Cochran, co-counsel and a member of Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll's Civil Rights & Employment practices, added to the law firm's announcement of the settlement, "The settlement marks an important victory for blind students, who despite years of hard work and dedication, often face significant hurdles in achieving their professional and academic dreams. Far too often, our society fails to recognize the significant challenges that those with disabilities face, often fueled, as in this case, by the blatant disregard for the rights guaranteed to them by law. We are proud to have helped secure this measure of justice for our clients and hope it strengthens the ability of BarBri and others across the education sector to better serve all students."

BarBri, based in Dallas, provides legal education and certification courses for not only American students but international students as well. Their course "BarBri Bar Review" is considered the largest bar exam prep course in the country. The course offers in-person activities like live lectures and classroom sessions as well as online and mobile-based resources such as practice questions, chat rooms, test guides and other digital platforms that give instant feedback and assessment. The company states these digital resources are critical to fully preparing for the exam.

The lawsuit against them was filed in a Texas federal court in 2016. Named plaintiff Christopher Stewart said, "As a blind professional, I, like many other professionals with disabilities, must often carry a burden of injustice while pursuing my dreams, and that's why I'm proud that my co-plaintiffs and I were able to hold a company like BarBri accountable to all students. Everyone who seeks to make their world a better place through hard work, diligence, and perseverance should have a fair and equal opportunity to do so. With the consent decree enforceable for the next three years, my co-plaintiffs and I are committed to ensuring BarBri's course is accessible for all. We encourage blind students to seek our help if they experience any challenges or issues, and I look forward to a great user experience when I prepare for a second state's bar exam next year."

The actions of BarBri, according to the plaintiffs was a violation of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990. They saw BarBri as a "place of education" that failed to provide full and equal access to key components of the prep course.

Do you think this will affect BarBri's popularity? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

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- [5 Ways to Address Potential Red Flags for the Bar Exam](#)
- [How Best to Prepare for the Patent Bar](#)
- [40 Best Law Schools for Bar Exam Preparation](#)

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