

NEWS RELEASE

Arizona Supreme Court
Administrative Office of the Courts



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Supreme Court Launches Arizona Lawyer Apprentice Program to Expand Access to Legal Services Across the State

PHOENIX, AZ – The Arizona Supreme Court is excited to announce the official launch of the Arizona Lawyer Apprentice Program (ALAP), a pioneering initiative designed to increase access to legal services in rural communities and fill vacancies in public law offices throughout Arizona. Eligible candidates can begin to apply on Sept. 1.

Aspiring lawyers in Arizona must achieve a minimum score of 270 on the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) to practice law. The ALAP offers a unique pathway to admission for those who do not meet the minimum but score between 260 and 269. Instead of retaking the UBE or moving to a neighboring state with a lower score requirement, ALAP licensees can practice law in Arizona under the supervision of a qualified experienced attorney.

“Arizona faces a critical shortage of lawyers, particularly in our rural communities,” said Chief Justice Ann A. Scott Timmer. “By launching the Arizona Lawyer Apprentice Program, we aim to close the access-to-justice gap and keep qualified legal professionals in our state.”

Participants must be employed by a public or private law office in a rural Arizona community or employed by a public law office located anywhere in the state. As with all attorneys in Arizona, ALAP participants are required to meet the state's requirements for bar admission, including identical character and fitness requirements. The program maintains the integrity of Arizona's attorney admission standards and allows ALAP licensees the opportunity to begin practicing without delay to gain practical experience over a two-year period.

ALAP addresses a significant gap in Arizona's legal services sector. Arizona currently ranks 49th in the nation for the number of lawyers per capita, making it a "legal desert," which ultimately affects its residents. It aims to change that by retaining talented law graduates who might otherwise relocate to neighboring states like New Mexico and Utah, where the UBE minimum score is 260.

“Each year, we lose potential lawyers to other states because of the difference in UBE passing scores,” said Chief Justice Timmer. “This program will help us keep these individuals here, growing our legal workforce, and supporting the economic and social well-being of all Arizonans.”

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Interested candidates who achieved a UBE score between 260 and 269 on the July 2023 exam or later can apply through the Administrative Office of the Courts. For additional details regarding eligibility, answers to frequently asked questions, and information on how to apply, visit [ALAP - Arizona Lawyer Apprentice Program \(azcourts.gov\)](https://azcourts.gov).

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The Arizona Supreme Court is committed to ensuring justice and legal service accessibility for all Arizonans. Stay informed about our initiatives by visiting azcourts.gov. Follow us on X (formerly Twitter) @AZCourts and on Facebook @ArizonaSupremeCourt.