

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO
FEDERAL BAR EXAMINATION
SAMPLE ESSAY QUESTIONS

The Federal Bar Examination will include a **mandatory essay question** to assess the candidate's certification of his/her ability to read, write and understand the English language. The Court must be satisfied that candidates can provide effective assistance of counsel to their clients under the Sixth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. This essay question will be graded as "pass" or "fail" and, thus, no score will be awarded. Candidates who fail the essay question will not pass the exam.

QUESTION I:

What is single most important trait, characteristic or ability that an attorney must possess to be a successful litigator? Describe specific scenarios or examples that support your selection.

You must develop a written essay of at least 200 words. Remember that your writing must be legible.

QUESTION II:

Do you believe that federal government employees are entitled to receive back pay for the time they worked without pay during the most recent federal government shutdown?

You must develop a written essay of at least 200 words. Remember that your writing must be legible.

QUESTION III:

Article II, Section 2 of the United States Constitution grants the President of the United States the power "... to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offences against the United States, except in cases of impeachment." The scope of the President's pardon power is quite broad, almost plenary. In fact, the explicit language of the Constitution does not preclude the possibility of a President pardoning him or herself of a crime.

In your own opinion, should the President of the United States have the power to pardon him or herself of a criminal act while holding office?

You must develop a written essay of at least 200 words. Remember that your writing must be legible.

QUESTION IV:

While attending a Continuous Legal Education Training seminar, the lecturer asks you, along with all other attorneys present, to write down the three attributes that each attorney feels makes them an effective legal counselor and to elaborate on each one. The lecturer emphasizes that these attributes should reflect both who you are as an individual and as a legal advocate.

In the space provided herein, complete the lecturer's exercise identifying the attributes that you believe make you an effective legal counselor and how these attributes reflect who you are as an individual and as legal advocate.

You must develop a written essay of at least 200 words. Remember that your writing must be legible.

QUESTION V:

Since 2010, the United States District Court in Puerto Rico has implemented a Civil Pro Bono program (Local Rule 83F), where a group of bar members are randomly selected to receive *Pro Bono* appointments from indigent litigants in civil proceedings. All active bar members of the District Court of Puerto Rico are eligible to be selected to receive appointments for a term of one year. Among the types of cases bar members have received civil *Pro Bono* appointments are civil rights, employment discrimination, foreclosure, social security appeals, and many others.

Should the District Court require all active bar members to be eligible for Civil Pro Bono appointments? Alternatively, should participation in this Civil *Pro Bono* program be voluntary for bar members of the United States District Court in Puerto Rico?

You must elaborate a written essay of at least 200 words. Remember that your writing must be legible.