



# Oregon State Bar

## Supervised Practice Portfolio Exam

### *SPPE Update*

Helen Hirschbiel, OSB CEO  
Western States Bar Conference  
April 4, 2025



# Relationship Context

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Oregon Supreme Court (OSC) has inherent authority to regulate the practice of law in Oregon

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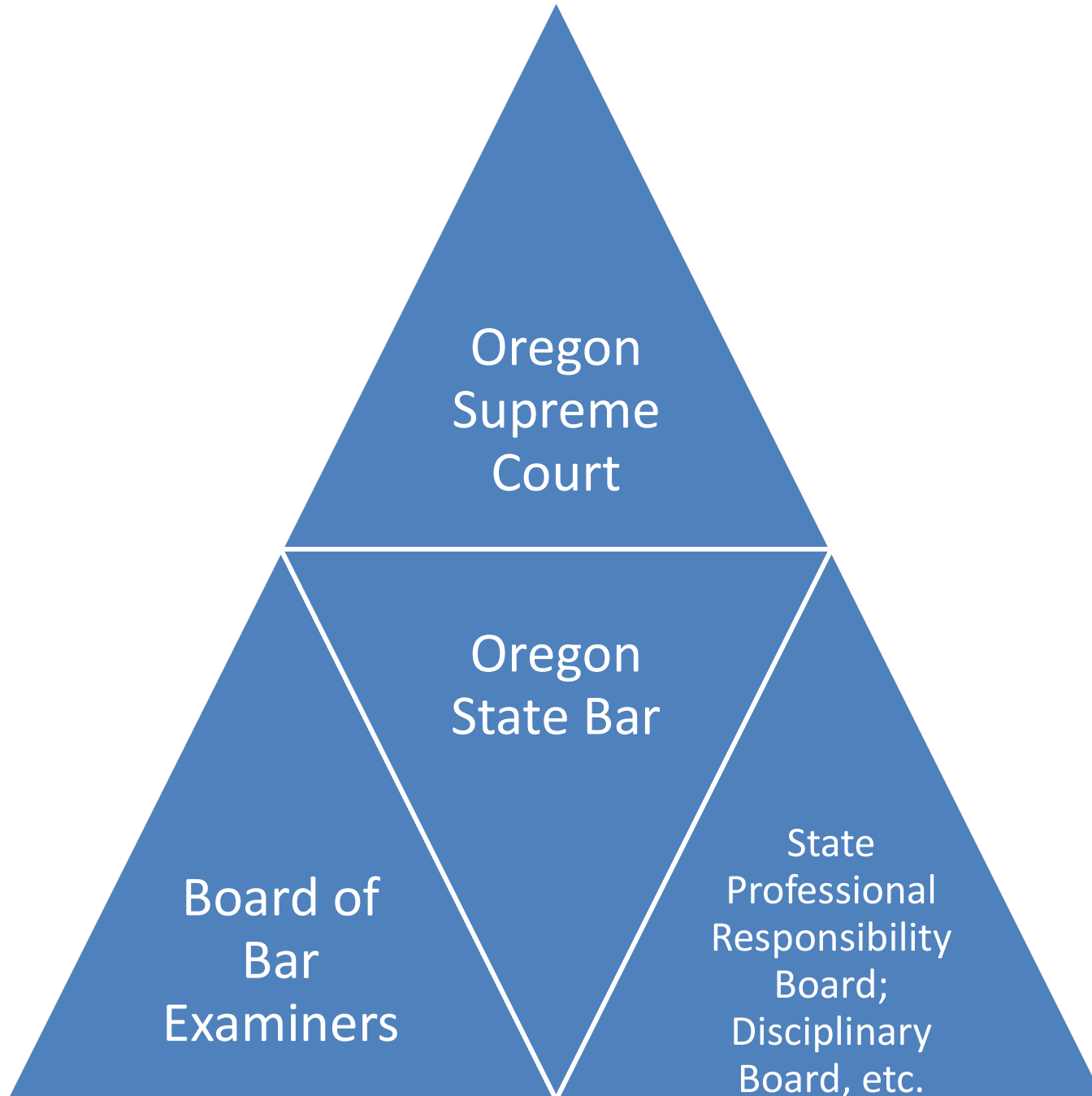
Oregon State Bar (OSB) is instrumentality of the Judicial Branch of Oregon

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OSC delegated to OSB administrative responsibility for admissions functions

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Oregon Board of Bar Examiners (BBX) is appointed by the Court to make recommendations to the Court regarding admissions



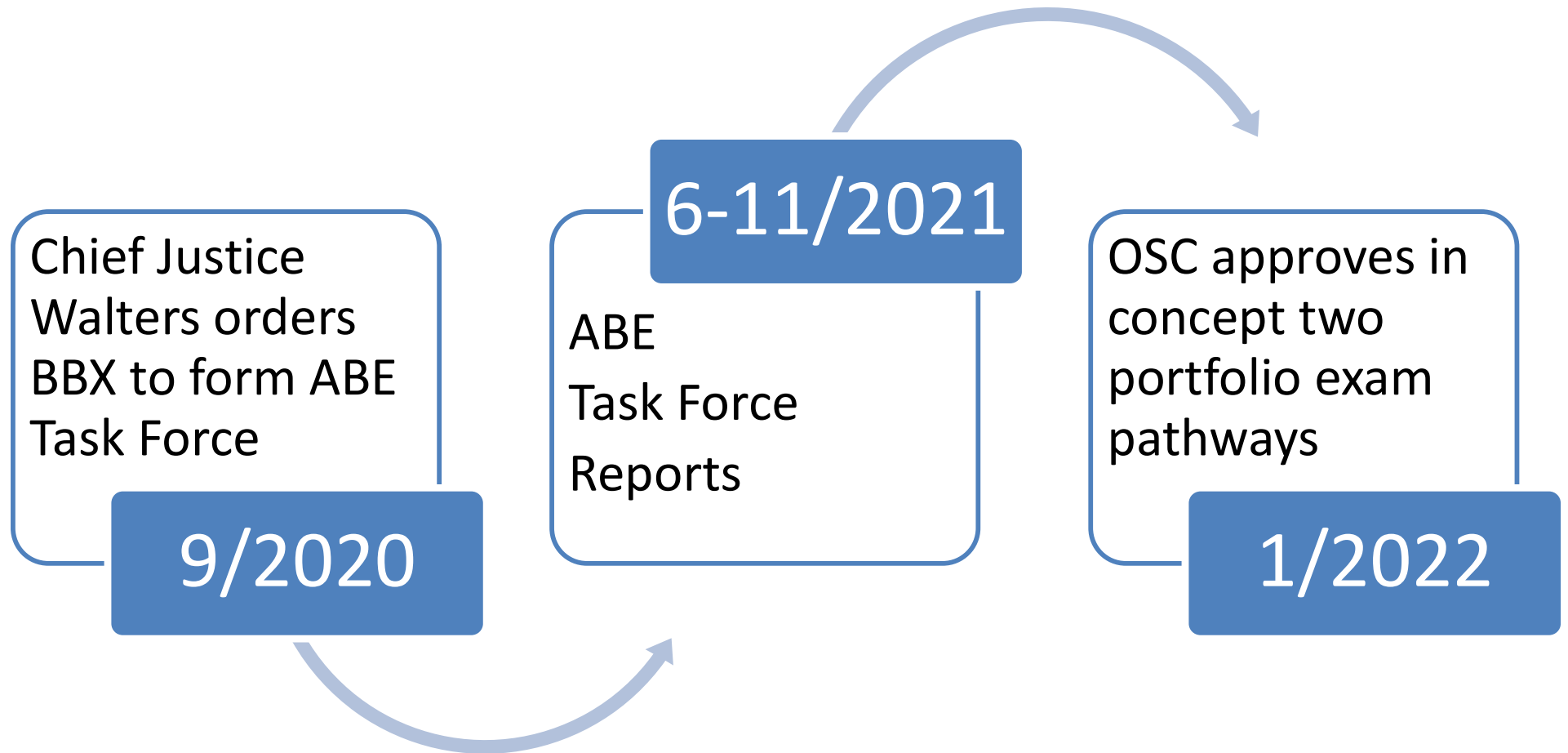


# Admission Requirements

- 18 years old
- Of good moral character and fit to practice law
- Has the requisite learning and ability necessary for admission ... tested by an examination
- “Requisite learning and ability” traditionally demonstrated through a bar exam



# Alternatives to the Bar Exam Consideration Process





# Licensing Pathways Development Committee

## Organizing Principles

- **Ensure Consumer Protection**  
(Oregon Essential Eligibility Requirements and IAALS Report of Building a Better Bar)
- **Increase Equity**  
(by removing unnecessary barriers and expanding ways applicants can demonstrate learning and ability)
- **Ensure BBX Oversight**  
(independent assessment of requisite learning and ability)

## Nine Voting Members

- BBX Members (4)
- OSB Board of Governor member (1)
- OSB CEO
- Oregon law schools (1 each)
- Lawyer outside Willamette Valley (1)
- Lawyer from private practice (1)
- Lawyer from state court criminal practice (1)
- Law student/recent law graduate (1)

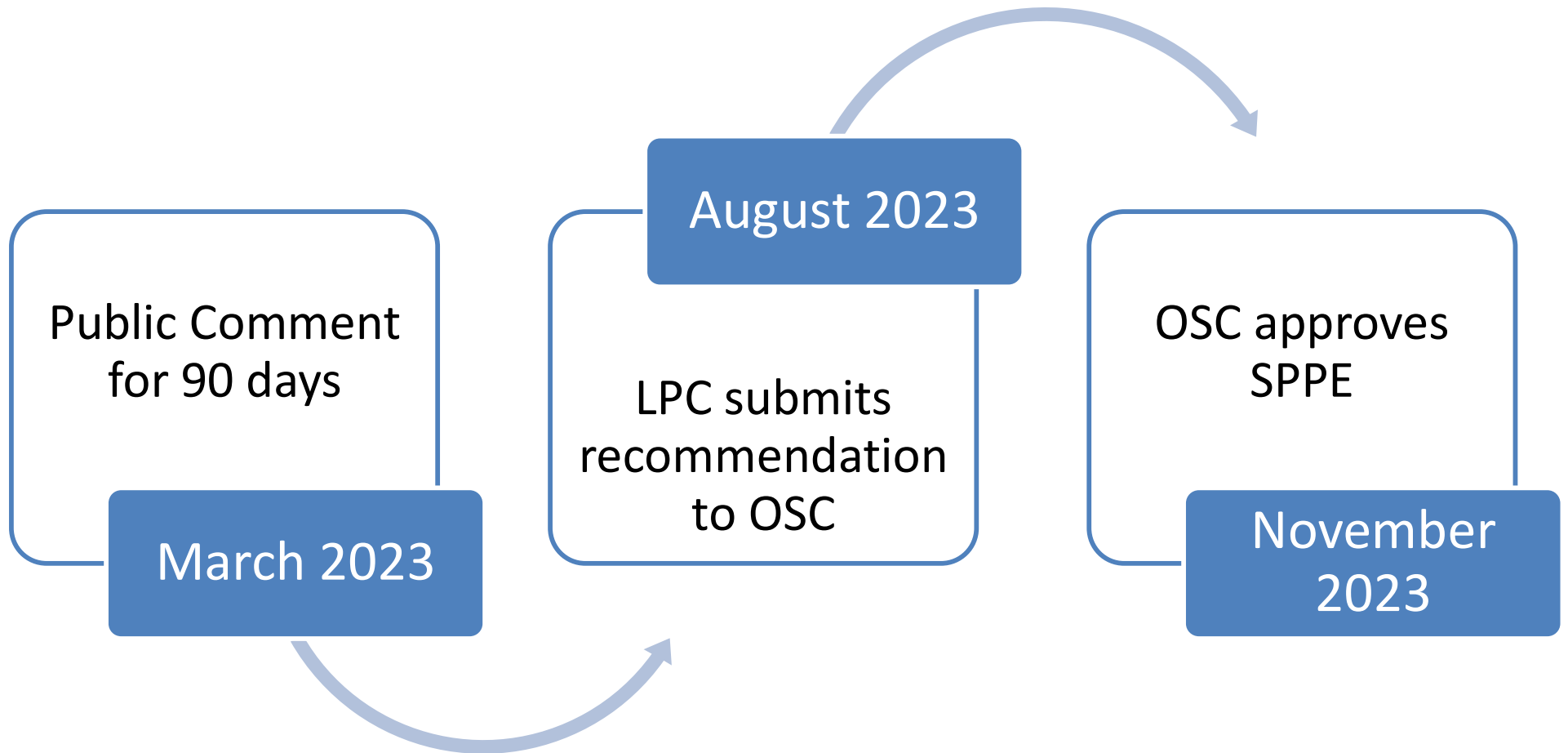
## Unlimited Advisory Group Members

- IAALS, NCBE, Affinity & Specialty Bars, Disability Rights Oregon, and Other Interested Groups

Met twice monthly between May 2022 and March 2023



# LPDC Process





# Implementation

## Admin Timeline

Employer/Supervisor  
Application Approved

Certificate of Eligibility  
Issued

Provisional License  
Issued

Work product graded

Full License Issued

## Admin Funding

- Application Fee \$1,000
- Provisional License Fee \$500
- Tech fee (paid to third party ILG)





# Step 1

## Get a Job With a Qualifying Employer and Supervising Attorney





# Employers

- Regularly practice law in Oregon
- Employ applicant for at least 20 hours of legal work per week, with a salary and benefits commensurate to other recent law school graduates
- Provide required professional liability coverage
- Provide the appropriate workspace, tools and technology to accomplish assigned tasks
- Arrange the applicant's schedule and workload to allow sufficient time to complete portions of the program that do not benefit the employer directly
- Provide reasonable accommodations for applicants with disabilities



# Supervising Attorneys

- Be an active member of the OSB for at least two years preceding the application and have been an active member of a bar for at least three of the five years preceding the application
- Have no record of public discipline in any jurisdiction, or obtain a waiver of this requirement
- Be employed by the same employer as the Provisional Licensee
- Not be an immediate family member of the Provisional Licensee they will supervise
- Complete 4-hour training requirement



## Step 2: Meet Eligibility Requirements

- Same as other applicants
  - ✓ 18 years old
  - ✓ JD, LLB or equivalent
  - ✓ Character & fitness review

### ***PLUS***

- Applicant secures commitment of employment from a qualified employer and supervising attorney
- Law School Courses:

Business Association	Contract Law
Civil Procedure	Evidence
Constitutional Law	Torts
Criminal Law or Procedure	Real Property



## Step 3

Pass Character & Fitness Exam



# Step 4

## Provisional License Issued



May engage in the practice of law in Oregon on behalf of their employer or their employer's clients under the supervision of their supervising attorney (same as a certified law student)



Active as long as employed and supervised by qualified law firm/lawyer



May be active for up to three years



# Step 5

## Meet Program Requirements

Eight written work products

Two client interactions sessions

Two negotiations

A passing MPRE score  
OR the professional responsibility journaling alternative

Four hours of SPPE training videos

15 hours of MCLE practice overviews

10 hours of activities related to DEI & A2J

675 hours of work, recorded in monthly timesheets

A learning plan



# Statistics

12 Oregon lawyers licensed through SPPE

98 Active Provisional Licensees in the pipeline

- 44 outside Portland metro area
- 17 in rural communities
- 9 in District Attorney offices
- 7 in public defender offices
- 13 in non-profit law firms

January grading session

- 225 work product submissions
- 39 items deferred or rejected due to redaction errors, insufficient conflict check info, etc.
- Of the 186 portfolio submissions graded:
  - 77% found to achieve minimum competency
  - 15% working towards minimum competency
  - 8% rejected for lack of sufficient analysis





# Lessons Learned

- The Devil is in the Details
  - For applicants
  - For the OSB/BBX/Court
- Implementation Pains
- There is High Demand
  - Twice what we expected
  - Insufficient employers to meet demand
- It's Still Stressful for Applicants