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Continuing Legal Education Requirement for 2012 Newly Admitted New Jersey Lawyers

Every active lawyer is required to complete 24 credit hours of continuing legal education (CLE) every 2 years. Of those 24 credits, at least 4 credits must be in ethics and/or professionalism. A “newly admitted lawyer” is defined by the Board on Continuing Legal Education (Board) as a lawyer who becomes an active member of the New Jersey bar for the first time.

Within the general 24 credit CLE requirement, a newly admitted lawyer with a plenary license in New Jersey must obtain 15 credit hours in any 5 of the following 9 subject areas during the newly admitted lawyer’s first full two-year compliance period: New Jersey basic estate administration; New Jersey basic estate planning; New Jersey civil or criminal trial preparation; New Jersey family law practice; New Jersey real estate closing procedures; New Jersey trust and business accounting; New Jersey landlord/tenant practice; New Jersey municipal court practice; and New Jersey law office management. Newly admitted attorneys with a limited license do not have to take the 15-credit new admit coursework.

New Jersey attorneys are permitted to take up to 1/2 of their required CLE credit hours in a compliance period through approved courses offered in alternative verifiable learning (AVL) formats. AVL format courses include videotape, audiotape, on-line internet computer presentations, satellite simulcasts, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, internet computer self-study, or other type of remote learning format authorized by the Board. At least 12 credits must be taken live with an instructor in the room. If an attorney neither works nor lives in a mandatory CLE jurisdiction, he or she may take all ALV format courses. If an attorney is living and working out of state and cannot obtain the live courses related to the new admit subject areas, he or she may apply for a waiver of the live requirement. In addition, a newly admitted lawyer may obtain credit for CLE courses taken after his or her graduation from law school but before admission to the New Jersey bar towards their first compliance reporting period, so long as those courses were taken no more than 12 months prior to the lawyer’s date of admission to the New Jersey bar.

The first compliance reporting period for newly admitted lawyers begins January 1 of the year immediately following admission to the New Jersey bar. Newly admitted lawyers are automatically assigned to a compliance group based on their respective birthdays. For lawyers who were admitted to the New Jersey bar in 2012, your CLE requirement will begin on January 1, 2013.

Compliance Group 1: If your birthday occurs during the period from January 1 through June 30, you are in Compliance Reporting Group 1 and will have a one year transitional reporting period. Therefore, you must obtain 12 credit hours by December 31, 2013 and will certify compliance in the 2014 annual attorney registration and billing process either on-line or on the paper form. That certification must be submitted no later than the date the annual attorney registration first billing is due. Of the 12 required credits, at least 2 credits must be in ethics and/or professionalism, and at least 6 must be obtained from your attendance at courses where the instructors are in the same room as the participants. In your next compliance period that will begin on January 1, 2014 and end on December 31, 2015, you will be required to obtain 24 credits and meet the specific new admit requirement. At least 4 of the 24 credits must be in ethics and/or professionalism,

at least 15 credits must be in any 5 of the 9 New Jersey specific subject areas for newly admitted lawyers, and the balance of credits in any legal, judicial, or other educational activity approved for CLE.

Compliance Group 2: If your birthday occurs during the period from July 1 through December 31, you are in Compliance Reporting Group 2. Newly admitted lawyers in Compliance Group 2 must obtain 24 credit hours by December 31, 2014 and will certify compliance in the 2015 annual attorney registration and billing process either on-line or on the paper form. At least 4 of the 24 credits must be in ethics and/or professionalism, at least 15 credits must be in any 5 of the 9 New Jersey specific subject areas for newly admitted lawyers, and the balance of credits may be in any legal, judicial, or other educational activity approved for CLE.

The chart below may assist you in determining your CLE requirement for your first two compliance reporting periods based on your date of plenary admission to the New Jersey bar and your compliance group. Newly admitted lawyers with a limited license may use this chart but are not required to meet the 15 credit new admit coursework.

Compliance Group 1 (birthdays from January 1 through June 30)			
Year Admitted	Requirement Begins	First Compliance Reporting Period	Second Compliance Reporting Period
2010	January 1, 2011	12 credits by 12/31/11 Transitional reporting period	24 credits by 12/31/13 Must complete new admit requirement
2011	January 1, 2012	24 credits by 12/31/13 Must complete new admit requirement	24 credits by 12/31/15
2012	January 1, 2013	12 credits by 12/31/13 Transitional reporting period	24 credits by 12/31/15 Must complete new admit requirement
2013	January 1, 2014	24 credits by 12/31/15 Must complete new admit requirement	24 credits by 12/31/17
2014	January 1, 2015	12 credits by 12/31/15 Transitional reporting period	24 credits by 12/31/17 Must complete new admit requirement

Compliance Group 2 (birthdays from July 1 through December 31)			
Year Admitted	Requirement Begins	First Compliance Reporting Period	Second Compliance Reporting Period
2010	January 1, 2011	24 credits by 12/31/12 Must complete new admit requirement	24 credits by 12/31/14
2011	January 1, 2012	12 credits by 12/31/12 Transitional reporting period	24 credits by 12/31/14 Must complete new admit requirement
2012	January 1, 2013	24 credits by 12/31/14 Must complete new admit requirement	24 credits by 12/31/16
2013	January 1, 2014	12 credits by 12/31/14 Transitional reporting period	24 credits by 12/31/16 Must complete new admit requirement
2014	January 1, 2015	24 credits by 12/31/16 Must complete new admit requirement	24 credits by 12/31/18

“Transitional reporting period” means that you have a one-year period to obtain 12 credits. At least 2 of the credits must be in ethics and/or professionalism and the balance of credits in any legal, judicial, or other educational activity accredited by the Board or another mandatory CLE jurisdiction. No more than 6 of the 12 credits can be earned from AVL format courses.

“Must complete new admit requirement” means that during this 2-year reporting period you must obtain 24 credits. Of those 24 credits, at least 4 credits in must be in ethics and/or professionalism, 15 credits in any 5 of the 9 New Jersey subject areas, and the balance of credits in any legal, judicial, or other educational activity accredited by the Board. No more than 12 of the 24 credits can be earned from AVL format courses.