

Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Rules Summary

Every attorney licensed as "active" in Vermont must complete a minimum of 20 hours of Vermont-accredited CLE during each 2-year compliance period. **It is the attorney's responsibility to keep track of and report his/her CLE at the end of each reporting period.** A minimum of 2 hours must be specifically addressed to legal ethics. One hour of credit consists of 60 minutes of attendance or teaching at an approved CLE activity and credit hours are rounded to the nearest quarter hour. For reporting purposes, credits are broken down into "live" and "self-study".

At least 10 of the required hours must be from participation in "live" events. In addition to traditional classroom instruction, teleconferences and live webcasts are considered eligible for "live" credit. A rule of thumb for determining whether credit is considered "live" or "self-study" is that there must be an opportunity for interaction between the presenter and audience at the time of the presentation to be considered "live"

Because the Board believes that there is significant benefit to attorneys of interaction among their colleagues, the Board has limited "self-study" credit to 10 hours each compliance period. "Self-study" is considered presentations on videotape, audiotape, podcasts, computer programs and on-line where there is no opportunity for discussion or questions of the presenter at the time of the presentation. This also includes the viewing of videotaped presentations with other attorneys.

The primary objective of any continuing legal education course, in order for it to be approved, must be to increase the professional competence of attorneys. The course must have significant intellectual or practical content and be an organized program of learning, relating directly to the practice of law or to the professional responsibility and ethical obligations of a lawyer. Written materials which are thorough, of high quality, and carefully prepared should be distributed at or before the CLE activity.

Each faculty member must be qualified to teach the subject. A teacher will receive credit only for teaching to attorneys at a course approved under the MCLE regulations. No credit will be given for teaching for which the attorney received compensation other than for expenses or is part of the attorney's regular occupational activity, such as a law school professor. Credit is allowed for preparation time, equivalent to each hour of actual instruction; i.e., if the presentation is 1 hour long, up to 1 hour is allowed for actual preparation time. There is a limit of 5 hours of preparation time allowed per reporting period.

Credit is also allowed for pre-approved, unpaid, scholarly writing and publication (up to 5 hours); service as an acting judge (up to 3 hours); reviewing small claims cases in superior court (up to 3 hours); service as a judge at law school moot court (up to 2 hours); and pre-approved volunteer committee work (up to 2 hours). The MCLE Board has the discretion to approve any alternative plan for CLE or to increase the limit on self-study credit, upon a showing by the affected attorney of unusual hardship or extenuating circumstances.

The complete set of [rules and regulations](#) regarding mandatory continuing legal education in Vermont is available at www.vermontjudiciary.org under the [Continuing Legal Education link](#). Forms for reporting CLE credit at the end of each reporting period and to [apply for CLE credit](#) are also there.