

Guidance for Current and Prospective Mentors

Thank you for being, or considering being, a mentor to a first-year attorney! This document is designed to provide you with a sense of your responsibilities in that role.

What is the purpose of the mentorship?

The primary purpose of the mentorship is to help new lawyers become acclimated to the practice of law in Vermont and the Vermont legal community and to provide guidance to them as they begin their practice. This is accomplished by requiring the new lawyer to perform certain legal tasks or attend certain legal functions to gain exposure to proceedings, institutions, and organizations, as well as to observe experienced attorneys performing tasks that may be relevant to the new attorney's practice. An additional purpose of the mentorship is to foster a personal connection between the mentor and the new lawyer that will continue beyond the formal program requirements.

What are the formal requirements of the mentorship?

The mentorship must last at least six months and be completed within the first year of admission. During that period, the new attorney must engage in at least 40 hours of activities from the Mentorship Checklist (compiled by the Board of Bar Examiners). In addition, the new attorney must meet regularly with the mentor (no less than 10 times) to discuss the mentorship, the new attorney's practice, and issues relevant to Vermont practice and procedure. These meetings may occur in-person or via remote means. At the conclusion of the mentorship, the new attorney and mentor must certify completion of the mentorship requirements.

What are the responsibilities of the mentor?

The main responsibility of the mentor is to meet regularly with the new attorney, as discussed above. During these meetings, the mentor should:

- Help the new attorney develop an individualized program to complete the 40 hours (based on the activities on the Mentorship Checklist) that assures broad and relevant exposure to Vermont law, legal practice, and legal culture.
- Assist the new attorney in completing the mentorship activities, by either providing access to such activities within the mentor's (or mentor's firm's) law practice or helping to find, and facilitating access to, such activities with other attorneys/firms/organizations.
- Discuss the activities the new attorney has completed since the last meeting and answer questions or respond to observations the new attorney has made about those activities.
- Serve as a general resource for the new attorney on issues related to the practice of law, both generally and specifically in Vermont.

The mentor is also encouraged to emphasize with the new attorney the high level of civility and professionalism that is expected of attorneys practicing law in Vermont.

Can I get CLE credit for being a mentor?

Yes. An attorney may earn up to five credit hours per reporting period (no credit for preparation) for service as a mentor for a newly-admitted attorney.

Any further questions? Contact Licensing Counsel Andrew Strauss at andrew.strauss@vtcourts.gov.