

Continuing Legal Education Requirement for Newly Admitted New Jersey Lawyers

Every active lawyer is required to complete twenty-four credit hours of continuing legal education every two years. Of those twenty-four credits, at least four credits must be in ethics and/or professionalism. In addition to that general requirement, a newly admitted lawyer must obtain fifteen credit hours in any five of the following nine 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.

New Jersey attorneys are permitted to take up to one-half of their continuing legal education credit hours in a compliance period through courses offered in alternative verifiable learning formats. Alternative verifiable learning format courses shall mean any videotape, audiotape, remote place viewing or on-line internet computer presentations, satellite simulcast, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, internet computer self-study, or other type of remote learning format authorized by the Board.

A "newly admitted lawyer" is defined by the Board on Continuing Legal Education as a lawyer who becomes an active member of the New Jersey bar for the first time, and holds a plenary license in New Jersey. Commencement of the compliance reporting period for newly admitted lawyers is deferred until 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 2010, your continuing legal education requirement began on January 1, 2011.

Compliance Group 1: If your birthday occurs during the period from January 1 though June 30, you are in Compliance Reporting Group 1 and will have a transitional reporting period of one year. Therefore, you must obtain 12 credit hours by December 31, 2011 and will certify your compliance on the 2012 Annual Attorney Registration Statement. That certification must be postmarked by the date the attorney registration first billing is due. At least two credits must be in ethics and/or professionalism. At least six of the twelve credits must be obtained from your attendance at courses where the instructors are in the same room as the participants. In your second compliance period that will begin on January 1, 2012 and end on December 31, 2013, you will be required to obtain 24 credits. At least four of those credits must be in ethics and/or professionalism, at least fifteen of those credits must be in any five of the nine NJ subject areas for newly admitted lawyers, and the balance of credits in any legal, judicial, or other educational activity accredited by the Board. At least twelve of the 24 credits must be obtained from your attendance at courses where the instructors are in the same room as the participants.

Compliance Group 2: If your birthday occurs during the period from July 1 through December 31, you are in Compliance Reporting Group 2. Lawyers in Compliance Group 2 must obtain 24 credit hours by December 31, 2012 and will certify compliance on the 2013 Annual Attorney Registration Statement. At least four of those credits must be in ethics and/or professionalism, at least fifteen of those credits must be in any five of the nine NJ subject areas for newly admitted lawyers, and the balance of credits in any legal, judicial, or other educational activity accredited by the Board. At least twelve of the 24 credits must be obtained from your attendance at courses where the instructors are in the same room as the participants.

A newly admitted lawyer may obtain credit for continuing legal education courses taken after his or her graduation from law school but before admission to the NJ bar towards their first compliance reporting period, so long as those courses were not taken more than 12 months prior to the lawyer's date of admission to the New Jersey bar.

The chart below may assist you in determining your continuing legal education requirement for your first two compliance reporting periods based on your date of admission to the NJ bar and your compliance group.

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 two 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. No more than 6 of the 12 credits can be earned from alternative verifiable learning 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 four credits in must be in ethics and/or professionalism, 15 credits in any five of the nine 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 alternative verifiable learning format courses.