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For immediate release: Dec. 18, 2009

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Supreme Court Adopts New Court Rule Requires Lawyers to Continue Legal Education Throughout Their Careers

The New Jersey Supreme Court has adopted [Court Rule 1:42](#), which sets forth requirements for mandatory continuing legal education (MCLE) for New Jersey attorneys, today announced Mark Neary, clerk of the Supreme Court. The new requirements are effective immediately.

In conjunction with the new court rule, the Court has amended its [Administrative Determination](#) regarding the continuing legal education requirement. Both the court rule and the administrative determination are the result of recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Committee on Continuing Legal Education. Retired Associate Justice Peter G. Verniero served as chair of the committee, and retired Assignment Judge Arthur N. D'Italia served as vice chair.

Under the new rule, all New Jersey attorneys are required to take 24 hours of continuing legal education every two years, including at least four hours on topics related to ethics or professionalism. MCLE is required for all New Jersey attorneys, including judges, law clerks and in-house counsel. Attorneys will be responsible for verifying that they have met the requirements and a random audit system will help ensure compliance. This is a change from the prior system, where only new attorneys and those seeking designation as certified attorneys in specific areas of practice were required to take coursework beyond law school.

The new court rule also calls for the Supreme Court to create a board on continuing legal education to administer the legal education program in accordance with the new rule. An [Order](#) signed by Chief Justice Stuart Rabner names Supreme Court Associate Justice Roberto Rivera-Soto as board chair and retired Superior Court Judge Arthur N. D'Italia as board vice-chair. In accordance with the Rule, the Order also names Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director, or his designee as a non-voting board member.

Under the new Rule 1:42, the board has the authority to determine the courses and activities that qualify for continuing legal education credit under the program; to designate approved continuing legal education providers and approved courses and programs that shall qualify for continuing legal education credit; to monitor compliance with the program by continuing legal education providers and by attorneys; and to carry out other administrative duties.

The Court Rule and the Administrative Determinations can be found at njcourts.com

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