

M.R. 3140

**IN THE
SUPREME COURT
OF
THE STATE OF ILLINOIS**

Order entered October 4, 2007.

(New material is underscored.)

Effective immediately, Supreme Court Rule 795 is amended as follows:

Amended Rule 795

Rule 795. Accreditation Standards and Hours

(a) Standards

Eligible CLE courses and activities shall satisfy the following standards:

(1) The course or activity must have significant intellectual, educational or practical content, and its primary objective must be to increase each participant's professional competence as an attorney.

(2) The course or activity must deal primarily with matters related to the practice of law.

(3) The course or activity must be offered by a provider having substantial, recent experience in offering CLE or demonstrated ability to organize and effectively present CLE. Demonstrated ability arises partly from the extent to which individuals with legal training or educational experience are involved in the planning, instruction and supervision of the activity.

(4) The course or activity itself must be conducted by an individual or group qualified by practical or academic experience. The course or activity, including the named advertised participants, must be conducted substantially as planned, subject to emergency withdrawals and

alterations.

(5) Thorough, high quality, readable and carefully prepared written materials should be made available to all participants at or before the time the course is presented, unless the absence of such materials is recognized as reasonable and approved by the Board.

(6) Traditional CLE courses or activities shall be conducted in a physical setting conducive to learning. The course or activity may be presented by remote or satellite television transmission, telephone or videophone conference call, videotape, film, audio tape or over a computer network, so long as the Board approves the content and the provider, and finds that the method in question has interactivity as a key component. Such interactivity may be shown, for example, by the opportunity for the viewers or listeners to ask questions of the course faculty, in person, via telephone, or on-line; or through the availability of a qualified commentator to answer questions directly, electronically, or in writing; or through computer links to relevant cases, statutes, law review articles, or other sources.

(7) The course or activity must consist of not less than one-half hour of actual instruction, unless the Board determines that a specific program of less than one-half hour warrants accreditation.

(8) A list of the names of all participants for each course or activity shall be maintained by the provider for a period of at least three years. The provider shall issue a certificate, in written or electronic form, to each participant evincing his or her attendance. Such lists and certificates shall state the number of CLE hours, including professionalism, diversity issues, mental illness and addiction issues, civility, or legal ethics CLE hours, earned at that course or activity.

(b) Accredited CLE Provider

The Board may extend presumptive approval to a provider for all of the CLE courses or activities presented by that provider each year that conform to paragraph (a)'s Standards (1) through (8), upon written application to be an "Accredited Continuing Legal Education Provider." Such accreditation shall constitute prior approval of all CLE courses offered by such providers. However, the Board may withhold accreditation or limit hours for any course found not to meet the standards, and may revoke accreditation for any organization which is found not to comply with standards. The Board shall assess an annual fee, over and above the fees assessed to the provider

for each course, for the privilege of being an “Accredited Continuing Legal Education Provider.”

(c) Accreditation of Individual Courses or Activities

(1) Any provider not included in paragraph (b) desiring advance accreditation of an individual course or other activity shall apply to the Board by submitting a required application form, the course advance accreditation fee set by the Board, and supporting documentation no less than 45 days prior to the date for which the course or activity is scheduled. Documentation shall include a statement of the provider’s intention to comply with the accreditation standards of this Rule, the written materials distributed to participants at the two most recently produced courses or activities, if available, or an outline of the proposed courses or activities and list of instructors, and such further information as the Board shall request. The Board staff will advise the applicant in writing by mail within 30 days of the receipt of the completed application of its approval or disapproval.

(2) Providers denied prior approval of a course or activity or individual attorneys who have attended such course or activity may request reconsideration of the Board’s initial decision by filing a form approved by the Board. The Board shall consider the request within 30 days of its receipt, and promptly notify the provider and/or the individual attorney.

(3) Providers who do not seek prior approval of their course or activity may apply for approval for the course or activity after its presentation by submitting an application provided by MCLE staff, the supporting documentation described above, and the accreditation fee set by the Board.

(4) A list of the names of participants shall be maintained by the provider for a period of three years. The provider shall issue a certificate, in written or electronic form, to each participant evincing his or her attendance. Such lists and certificates shall state the number of CLE hours, including professionalism, diversity issues, mental illness and addiction issues, civility, or legal ethics CLE hours, earned at that course or activity.

(5) An attorney may apply to the Illinois MCLE Board for accreditation of an individual out-of-state CLE course if the following provisions are satisfied: (i) the attorney participated in the course in

person or via audio or video conference; (ii) the out-of-state course is accredited by that state's CLE program, as is confirmed by the Illinois MCLE Board; and (iii) the course provider has chosen not to seek accreditation of the course for Illinois MCLE credit.

(d) Nontraditional Courses or Activities

In addition to traditional CLE courses, the following courses or activities will receive CLE credit:

(1) "In-House" Programs. Attendance at "in-house" seminars, courses, lectures or other CLE activity presented by law firms, corporate legal departments, governmental agencies or similar entities, either individually or in cooperation with other such entities, subject to the following conditions:

(i) The CLE course or activity must meet the rules and regulations for any other CLE provider, as applicable.

(ii) Specifically, the course or activity must have significant intellectual, educational or practical content, its primary objective must be to increase the participant's professional competence as an attorney, and it must deal primarily with matter related to the practice of law, professionalism, diversity issues, mental illness and addiction issues, civility or ethical obligations of attorneys. No credit will be afforded for discussions relating to the handling of specific cases, or issues relating to the management of a specific law firm, corporate law department, governmental agency or similar entity.

(iii) The course or activity shall be submitted for approval on an individual course or activity basis rather than on a Presumptively Accredited Continuing Legal Education Provider basis.

(iv) The application, including all written materials or an abstract thereof, should be filed with the Board at least 30 days prior to the date on which the course or activity is to be held in order for a prior determination of acceptability to be made. However, prior approval by the Board shall not be required.

(v) Only courses or activities that have at least five attorney participants shall qualify for CLE credit. The attorneys need not be associated with the same firm, corporation or governmental agency.

(vi) Experienced attorneys must contribute to the teaching, and

efforts should be made to achieve a balance of in-house and outside instructors.

(vii) The activity must be open to observation, without charge, by members of the Board or their designates.

(viii) The activity must be scheduled at a time and location so as to be free of interruptions from telephone calls and other office matters.

(ix) A list of the names of participants shall be maintained by the provider for a period of three years. The provider shall issue a certificate, in written or electronic form, to each participant evincing his or her attendance. Such lists and certificates shall state the number of CLE hours, including professionalism, diversity issues, mental illness and addiction issues, civility, or legal ethics CLE hours, earned at that activity.

(x) The Board may impose a fee, similar to the fees assessed on traditional CLE providers, on the provider of an in-house program for programs involving payments to the provider.

(2) Law School Courses. Attendance at J.D. or graduate level law courses offered by American Bar Association (“ABA”) accredited law schools, subject to the following conditions:

(i) Credit ordinarily is given only for courses taken after admission to practice in Illinois, but the Board may approve giving credit for courses taken prior to admission to practice in Illinois if giving credit will advance CLE objectives.

(ii) Credit towards MCLE requirements shall be for the actual number of class hours attended, but the maximum number of credits that may be earned during any two-year reporting period by attending courses offered by ABA accredited law schools shall be the maximum CLE hours required by Rule 794(a) and (d).

(iii) The attorney must comply with registration procedures of the law school, including the payment of tuition.

(iv) The course need not be taken for law school credit towards a degree; auditing a course is permitted. However, the attorney must comply with all law school rules for attendance, participation and examination, if any, to receive CLE credit.

(v) The law school shall give each attorney a written certification

evinced that the attorney has complied with requirements for the course and attended sufficient classes to justify the awarding of course credit if the attorney were taking the course for credit.

(3) Bar Association Meetings. Attendance at bar association or professional association meetings at which substantive law, matters of practice, professionalism, diversity issues, mental illness and addiction issues, civility, or legal ethics are discussed, subject to the requirements for CLE credit defined in paragraphs (a)(1) through (a)(2) above. The bar or professional association shall maintain a list of the names of all attendees at each meeting for a period of three years and shall issue a certificate, in written or electronic form, to each participant evincing his or her attendance. Such lists and certificates shall state the number of CLE hours, including professionalism, diversity issues, mental illness and addiction issues, civility, or legal ethics CLE hours, earned at that meeting.

(4) Cross-Disciplinary Programs. Attendance at courses or activities that cross academic lines, such as accounting-tax seminars or medical-legal seminars, may be considered by the Board for full or partial credit. Purely nonlegal subjects, such as personal financial planning, shall not be counted towards CLE credit. Any mixed-audience courses or activities may receive credit only for sessions deemed appropriate for CLE purposes.

(5) Teaching Continuing Legal Education Courses. Teaching at CLE courses or activities during the two-year reporting term, subject to the following:

(i) Credit may be earned for teaching in an approved CLE course or activity. Presentations shall be counted at the full hour or fraction thereof for the initial presentation; a repeat presentation of the same material shall be counted at one-half; no further hours may be earned for additional presentations of the same material.

(ii) Time spent in preparation for a presentation at an approved CLE activity shall be counted at six times the actual presentation time.

(iii) Authorship or coauthorship of written materials for approved CLE activities shall qualify for CLE credit on the basis of actual preparation time, but subject to receiving no more than 10 hours of credit in any two-year reporting period.

(6) Part-Time Teaching of Law Courses. Teaching at an ABA-accredited law school, or teaching a law course at a university, college, or community college, subject to the following:

(i) Teaching credit may be earned for teaching law courses offered for credit toward a degree at a law school accredited by the ABA, but only by lawyers who are not employed full-time by a law school. Full-time law teachers who choose to maintain their licenses to practice law are fully subject to the MCLE requirements established herein, and may not earn any credits by their ordinary teaching assignments. Presentations shall be counted at the full hour or fraction thereof for the initial presentation; a repeat presentation of the same material shall be counted at one-half; no further hours may be earned for additional presentations of the same material. Teaching credit may be earned by appearing as a guest instructor, moderator, or participant in a law school class for a presentation which meets the overall guidelines for CLE courses or activities, as well as for serving as a judge at a law school moot court argument. Time spent in preparation for an eligible law school activity shall be counted at three times the actual presentation time. Appearing as a guest speaker before a law school assembly or group shall not count toward CLE credit.

(ii) Teaching credit may be earned for teaching law courses at a university, college, or community college by lawyers who are not full-time teachers if the teaching involves significant intellectual, educational or practical content, such as a civil procedure course taught to paralegal students or a commercial law course taught to business students. Presentations shall be counted at the full hour or fraction thereof for the initial presentation; a repeat presentation of the same material shall be counted at one-half; no further hours may be earned for additional presentations of the same material.

(7) Legal Scholarship. Writing law books and law review articles, subject to the following:

(i) An attorney may earn credit for legal textbooks, casebooks, treatises and other scholarly legal books written by the attorney that are published during the two-year reporting period.

(ii) An attorney may earn credit for writing law-related articles in responsible legal journals or other legal sources, published during

the two-year reporting period, that deal primarily with matters related to the practice of law, professionalism, diversity issues, mental illness and addiction issues, civility, or ethical obligations of attorneys. Republication of any article shall receive no additional CLE credits unless the author made substantial revisions or additions.

(iii) An attorney may earn credit towards MCLE requirements for the actual number of hours spent researching and writing, but the maximum number of credits that may be earned during any two-year reporting period on a single publication shall be half the maximum CLE hours required by Rule 794(a) and (d). Credit is accrued when the eligible book or article is published, regardless whether the work in question was performed in the then-current two-year reporting period. To receive CLE credit, the attorney shall maintain contemporaneous records evincing the number of hours spent on a publication.

(8) Pro Bono Training. Attendance at courses or activities designed to train lawyers who have agreed to provide pro bono services shall earn CLE credit to the same extent as other courses and seminars.

(9) Capital Litigation Trial Bar Training. Attendance at courses or activities pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 714(b) designed to train attorneys for certification for membership in the Capital Litigation Trial Bar shall earn CLE credit to the same extent as other courses and seminars.

(10) Bar Review Courses. Attendance at bar review courses before admission to the Illinois Bar shall not be used for CLE credit.

(11) Reading Legal Materials. No credit shall be earned by reading advance sheets, newspapers, law reviews, books, cases, statutes, newsletters or other such sources.

(e) Credit Hour Guidelines

Hours of CLE credit will be determined under the following guidelines:

(1) Sixty minutes shall equal one hour of credit. Partial credit shall be earned for qualified activities of less than 60 minutes duration.

(2) The following are not counted for credit: (i) coffee breaks; (ii) introductory and closing remarks; (iii) keynote speeches; (iv) lunches and dinners; (v) other breaks; and (vi) business meetings.

(3) Question and answer periods are counted toward credit.

(4) Lectures or panel discussions occurring during breakfast, luncheon, or dinner sessions of bar association committees may be awarded credit.

(5) Credits are determined by the following formula: Total minutes of approved activity *minus* minutes for breaks (as described in paragraph (e)(2)) *divided by* 60 *equals* maximum CLE credit allowed.

(6) Credits merely reflect the maximum that may be earned. Only actual attendance or participation earns credit.

(f) Financial Hardship Policy

The provider shall have available a financial hardship policy for attorneys who wish to attend its courses, but for whom the cost of such courses would be a financial hardship. Such policy may be in the form of scholarships, waivers of course fees, reduced course fees, or discounts. Upon request by the Board, the provider must produce the detailed financial hardship policy. The Board may require, on good cause shown, a provider to set aside without cost, or at reduced cost, a reasonable number of places in the course for those attorneys determined by the Board to have good cause to attend the course for reduced or no cost.

Adopted September 29, 2005, effective immediately; amended October 4, 2007, effective immediately.