

**CALIFORNIA BOARD OF LEGAL SPECIALIZATION
OF THE STATE BAR OF CALIFORNIA**



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**Information Letter for
Legal Specialist Education Compliance Group 2 (H-M)**

Reporting Deadline: February 1, 2018

Please file your Legal Specialist Education Compliance Card(s) using the attached form by February 1, 2018.

Under rules adopted effective January 1, 2014, you, and all certified specialists in MCLE Compliance Group 2, will now report your legal specialist education compliance at the same time that you report your MCLE compliance, which will be by February 1, 2018 for this reporting cycle.

While you report MCLE Compliance online, in contrast, you will report Legal Specialist Education Compliance using a paper form.

There is no charge to file your Legal Specialist Education and copies of the form are available at www.californiaspecialist.org under the Forms tab.

You are required to complete at least thirty-six (36) hours of legal specialist approved education or an equivalent and report this compliance on the attached paper form by your MCLE Compliance Group 2 deadline of February 1, 2018.

The following information summarizes equivalents that may assist you in fulfilling your legal specialist education requirement.

1. Include MCLE-approved education in your specialty area.

MCLE-approved education may be counted toward your legal specialist education requirement if the subject of the course is specifically the specialty area of law. Note that the California Board of Legal Specialization (CBLS) retains the final discretion to determine whether a course qualifies as an equivalent. As in the past, please be sure to keep documentation for at least a year after the compliance reporting deadline to demonstrate that the course is substantively relevant to your certified specialty if asked to provide further information by the CBLS.

2. Claim up to 18 hours of credit for using self-study alternatives.

As in previous years, time spent on scholarly writing in the specialty area can be used to satisfy up to 18 hours or half of your total requirement. In addition, for first-time presentations at an approved and qualified MCLE and/or legal specialist activity, you may claim four hours credit for every hour of actual presentation time.

3. Note that subfield requirements for applicable specialties have been waived.

For this reporting cycle only, the subfield requirement for certified specialists in Appellate Law, Estate Planning, Trust & Probate Law, Family Law, and Immigration & Nationality Law will be waived. All certified specialists are still encouraged to take a broad range of educational courses to maintain a broad base of expertise in the specialty.

Note that these subfields are different from the subfields required for your MCLE reporting; when you report your MCLE compliance on your My State Bar Profile, you will still need to comply with those subfield requirements for Legal Ethics (4 hours minimum), Competence Issues (1 hour minimum), and Recognition and Elimination of Bias (1 hour minimum).

4. Certified Specialists who were initially certified after February 1, 2015 have a reduced and proportional requirement.

For first-time certified specialists who were certified after February 1, 2015, the educational requirement is pro-rated. For example, a certified specialist who was certified for the first-time for half of the 36-month compliance period would need to report half of the 36-hour educational requirement, or 18 hours, of legal specialist education. Conveniently, since there are 36 months in a compliance period, and the educational reporting requirement for the period is 36 hours, the pro-rated total will be equal to one hour for each month that you have been a certified specialist.

If you have been a certified specialist since February 1, 2015 or earlier, do not pro-rate your education, regardless of your recertification date.

Frequently asked questions for special situations.

Dual specialists will need to submit two compliance forms.

Certified specialists who hold more than one certificate of specialization must submit one compliance form per specialty area by the same reporting deadline.

Certified specialists will still recertify on a five-year schedule.

All certified specialists will still need to recertify every five years, and your recertification date will not change. You will not report legal specialist educational compliance on the recertification forms. The Department of Legal Specialization will continue to send you reminders as your recertification date approaches.

Please continue to report MCLE Compliance separately through your My State Bar Profile.

Please note that you will also need to report your MCLE compliance by February 1, 2018 by logging on to your My State Bar Profile, if you have not already done so.

The Department of Legal Specialization is happy to answer any questions you may have. Please contact the Department via e-mail for fastest response at legalspec@calbar.ca.gov, or view a list of frequently asked questions online at www.californiaspecialist.org.