

Memo

To: MLA COMMITTEE CHAIRS
From: CLE COMMITTEE CHAIR LAWRENCE J. BOWLES
Date: 04/29/03
Re: OBTAINING CLE CREDIT FOR COMMITTEE MEETINGS

I understand there is interest in obtaining CLE credit for certain committee meetings. I outline the requirements for obtaining CLE credits for any CLE program. I hope this information will assist your decision as to whether your committee meeting can be made suitable for CLE credit.

Before I begin, I should explain that the MLA is accredited as a provider of CLE credits only in New York State. Thus, technically, the MLA can offer CLE credits only to New York State attorneys. California and Maine, I understand, offer automatic reciprocity to CLE credits for courses given by accredited CLE providers in New York, including the MLA. Other states may recognize CLE credits for courses given by the MLA in certain circumstances. (See point “j” below.)

In brief, to comply with applicable New York State Continuing Legal Education Rules, each CLE program organizer must arrange to provide the following forms, information and assistance to the attendees and to the MLA CLE Committee:

- (a) A written program with a list of topics, names of presenters and lengths of presentations;
- (b) Written credentials/c.v./biography of each “presenter”;

(c) Written materials distributed by each “presenter.” These written materials must be significantly more than an outline, and, where appropriate, must contain citations to legal and other authorities;

(d) Total minutes of CLE instruction for each course or program offered, not including breaks, meals or introductions. For New York, 50 minutes constitutes an “hour” of CLE instruction. **PLEASE NOTE:** no CLE credits can be offered for time spent on purely administrative/committee matters;

(e) Breakdown of CLE credit minutes in the following categories: ethics and professionalism, skills, practice management, professional practice.

(f) An official attendance list of attendants at the program, each of whom must sign the list which must be sent to the MLA CLE Committee;

(g) Certificate of Attendance. Forms to be provided by the CLE Committee. This Certificate will be provided to each participant who wishes CLE credit. The Committee Chair (or designated “CLE liaison”) must collect the signed forms from the presenters and attendees who wish CLE credit and mail them to the CLE Committee c/o Lawrence J. Bowles at Nourse & Bowles, LLP. Mr. Bowles or Ms. Katharine F. Newman will sign them and return them to each participant;

(h) Pre-stamped blank envelopes for the attendees to self-address so that the attendees’ executed Certificates of Attendance may be mailed back to them;

(i) Evaluation Surveys. Forms to be provided by the CLE Committee and sent to the CLE Committee, as above;

(j) Advise each participant that: strictly speaking, the MLA can only issue credits to New York attorneys. However, several states either (i) grant reciprocity for or (ii) otherwise recognize CLE credits for courses given by accredited providers in other states in certain circumstances. Thus, each non-New York attorney who participates in the program as a presenter or attendee and wishes CLE credits, should be urged to consult with the appropriate authority in his or her state in advance of the program to determine if credits may be given for their attendance at the program; and

(k) Advise each participant that: presenters (speakers) may be entitled to receive additional credits. They should consult with their State Bar CLE Rules to determine the amount, if any, of additional credit. In New York, presenters are entitled to credit for three times the length of his/her presentation.

(l) Assign an individual on your Committee (a “CLE Liaison”) to administer the above and regarding the above, coordinate with Mr. Bowles or Ms. Newman of the CLE Committee respecting the above documentation, especially items (a),(d),(e),(f),(g),(h) and (i). It will be helpful to review the forms and requirements with the CLE Committee before the program. After the program, the CLE Liaison also must provide the CLE Committee with copies of the speakers’ CVs, speakers’ papers, attendance sheet, Certificates of Attendance, mailing envelopes, Evaluation Surveys.

The CLE Committee regrets that all of the above are necessary for the MLA to maintain its status as an accredited provider of CLE credits in the State of New York to New York State attorneys. [The MLA is subject to audit by the New York State CLE Board for compliance with its rules for each CLE program. The MLA also must make yearly reports to the Board and reapply for certification every three years.] In the CLE Committee's experience, these requirements are not as onerous as they may at first seem, particularly if they are administered by one designated person from each committee

Please let me or Katharine Newman know if there are any questions.