

**MANDATORY CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION**

*Laurie L. Dolson, Chair*

The Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) board administers the mandatory legal education program that was established by the Virginia Supreme Court in 1985. The rules governing the MCLE program were amended in 1990, requiring all active members of the Virginia State Bar to complete a minimum of 12 hours of approved CLE courses each fiscal year, including 2 hours of ethics or professionalism. In 2001, the Virginia Supreme Court amended its rules to change the completion deadline for mandatory continuing legal education from June 30 to October 31. The date to certify the completion was changed by the Supreme Court from July 31 to December 15. These changes took effect in 2002, and the transition was accomplished without significant difficulties.

The MCLE board consists of 12 members appointed by the Virginia Supreme Court. The 2002–2003 MCLE board was comprised of: Charles M. Allen (Glen Allen); George J. Dancigers (Norfolk); former chair, Karen Ann Gould (Richmond); Paul W. Hammack (Fairfax); Oliver Norrell (Arlington); Nancy G. Parr (Chesapeake); Kurt J. Pomrenke (Bristol); and Wilson F. Villines (Staunton). Eric M. Page of Glen Allen was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Professor John Levy of the College of William & Mary Law School, who retired from the board. The MCLE board chair for 2002–2003 was Fairfax attorney Laurie L. Dolson. Edward Walinsky, from Fairfax, served as vice-chair for 2002–2003. He will serve as chair for 2003–2004. Calvin S. Spencer, from Kenbridge, will serve as vice-chair for 2003–2004.

The MCLE department administers the MCLE requirements for the board. The board meets six times a year at the office of the Virginia State Bar and meets an average of ten times per year by consent agenda to consider applications. Over the last reporting cycle, the MCLE staff and board have worked on the following: 6,050 course applications; 16,150 accredited sponsor courses; 24 waiver requests; 33 extension requests; 15,000 telephone inquiries; 25,000 letters sent out; and 97,000 certificates of attendance.

During 2002–2003, the board examined issues arising from the ever-increasing use of distance-learning programs to satisfy MCLE requirements. A subcommittee was formed to research and study possible changes to the MCLE regulations and opinions in response to the board's experiences with the unique nature of Internet and other distance-learning courses. The members of this subcommittee were Thomas A. Edmonds, Charles M. Allen and Edward Walinsky, chair. Edward Walinsky issued a preliminary report in which he recommended possible changes to Regulation 102(b) and Opinion 16. The subcommittee will continue its work during 2003–2004, to address the impact of technological advances on the delivery of CLE and how changes in technology might require a re-evaluation of existing regulations.

The Virginia State Bar continued to provide access to members' CLE records on the VSB Web site. Members can check their MCLE record online and download MCLE regulations, opinions, forms or course listings from the Internet.

The MCLE staff, headed by Gale Cartwright, director of MCLE, works diligently to perform their many responsibilities. On behalf of the MCLE board, I wish to thank the board and staff for their hard work and dedication to the MCLE department.

