

REPORTS OF SPECIAL BOARDS

MANDATORY CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

Leonard C. Heath, Jr., chair

David R. Denton, vice-chair

The Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) Board administers the mandatory legal education program established by the Virginia Supreme Court, by Rule of Court, in 1985. The Rule was amended in 1990 requiring all active members of the Virginia State Bar to complete a minimum of 12.0 hours of approved CLE courses each fiscal year, including 2.0 hours of ethics or professionalism.

The MCLE Board consists of twelve members appointed by the Virginia Supreme Court. The MCLE Department administers the MCLE requirement for the board. The board meets six times a year at the offices of the Virginia State Bar and an additional ten times per year by consent agenda to consider applications only.

Over the last reporting cycle, the MCLE staff and board have worked on the following:

Course Applications	3,728
Accredited Sponsor Courses	12,644
Waiver Requests	24
Extension Requests	17
Telephone Inquiries	15,000
Letters sent out	23,000
Certifications of Attendance	87,000
Interim MCLE Reports—April, 1999	21,600
Form 1 Reports—July, 1999	21,600

The MCLE Board's Opinion #16 approving standards for CLE courses delivered through Internet technology went into effect July 1, 1998. The obvious advantage of on-line programs is that CLE will be available on a 24-hour basis. To date, one Accredited Sponsor has met the standard set by Opinion #16. The board is confident that further on-line CLE opportunities will become available to members as course sponsors develop the technology required to meet the standard set by Opinion #16. The board is committed to making distance learning available to members through the Internet and may review Opinion #16 in the future to assess information gleaned from experience and technology.

The board completed a study this year that better defined ethics and professionalism requirements and incorporated the newly drafted definitions into the MCLE Regulations in October, 1998. A committee appointed by the board also studied the feasibility of accepting facsimile or electronic filing of certifications of attendance or teaching. The board determined a facsimile signature was acceptable and authorized the purchase of a designated facsimile machine for the MCLE Office. The board will continue to study electronic filing and the technology needed for the MCLE Department and make appropriate recommendations.

The Virginia State Bar added access to member's MCLE records to its Web-site in June, 1999. Members can now check their MCLE record on-line and download MCLE Regulations, Opinions, forms, or course listings from the Internet.

The board had one retiring member this year. Our chair, Leonard C. Heath, Jr., served the board for six years, including two years as vice-chairman and one year as chairman. As vice-chairman, I can speak for the board and say that we will miss his reasoned direction and good humor.

Finally, the board greatly appreciates the dedication and hard work of MCLE Director Barbara Sayers Lanier and her professional staff. Without their Herculean efforts the board's work would not be possible. ❀