

Pennsylvania

Continuing

Legal

Education

Board

2000 Membership

Alan C. Kessler, Esq., *Chairman*
Ruth E. Ganister, Esq., *Vice Chairwoman*
Carmen P. Belefonte, Esq.
Robert S. Grigsby, Esq.
Rosa Copeland Miller, Esq.
John F. Mizner, Esq.
Arthur L. Piccone, Esq.
Paul Michael Pohl, Esq.
Richard A. Sprague, Esq.
Sandor Yelen, Esq.

Staff:

Daniel Levering, *Administrator*

Legal Authorization:

Title 204 - Judicial System General Provisions Part V. Professional
Ethics and Conduct [204 PA Code C. 82]
Pennsylvania Rules for Continuing Legal Education; No. 99 Supreme
Court Rules Doc. No. 1

5035 Ritter Road
Suite 500
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
(717) 795-2139
(800) 497-2253
e-mail pacleb@pacle.org
www.pacle.org

History/Background

With the promulgation by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court of the Pennsylvania Rules for Continuing Legal Education on January 7, 1992, Pennsylvania became the thirty-eighth state in the union to require attorneys to participate in formal continuing legal education (CLE).

It is the responsibility of the Continuing Legal Education Board (PACLE) to administer the rules pertaining to such education for attorneys. This responsibility began with establishing the entire continuing legal education requirements system and continues to include updating the requirements and rules as necessary, monitoring each attorney's compliance with the requirements, notifying attorneys of CLE status, and accrediting and monitoring CLE providers and courses.

The board established the following goals early in its existence:

- create and maintain a credible and respected CLE program in Pennsylvania
- be lawyer friendly
- make compliance easy for lawyers
- minimize paperwork for lawyers
- utilize the most modern, efficient and effective methods of communication
- automate as much as possible through computerization.

The board is comprised of ten active Pennsylvania attorneys appointed by the Supreme Court. Member terms are three years in length, and no member may serve more than two consecutive terms.

Compliance Requirements and Deadlines

Annual CLE credit-hour requirements are met by completion of accredited courses in the areas of substantive law, practice and procedure, ethics, professionalism or substance abuse.

Lawyers in each compliance year group must complete twelve hours of CLE, including a minimum of one hour of ethics, professionalism or substance abuse before the compliance year deadline.

Compliance deadlines and CLE requirements are based on one of three annual compliance periods to which lawyers have been assigned by random selection of lawyer identification numbers. The annual deadline dates are April 30, August 31 or December 31.

Board Organization

To best accomplish the requirements set forth by the Pennsylvania Rules for Continuing Legal Education, the Continuing Legal Education Board is organized into four committees, each covering a major area of operations: Accreditation, Administration, Audit and Compliance. A description of each committee follows.

Accreditation Committee

The Accreditation Committee has four members: Carmen P. Belefonte, Esq., chair; Arthur L. Piccone, Esq.; Ruth E. Ganister, Esq.; and Sandor Yelen, Esq. Its duties include certification of providers and courses, CLE program standards, adequacy of course availability, and course and provider accreditation standards.

Administration Committee

The Administration Committee includes Alan C. Kesler, Esq., chair; Ruth E. Ganister, Esq.; and Paul Michael Pohl, Esq. It handles matters involving staff, employee relations, benefits, office equipment, office operations, fees and banking, and those enhancements to program administration necessary to ensure quality and efficiency.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee has three members: Paul Michael Pohl, Esq., chair; Alan C. Kessler, Esq.; and Ruth E. Ganister, Esq. It oversees the budget, annual independent audit and audit of board operations. It continues to monitor the board's financial software, operating procedures and reporting. It is also the liaison between the board and the board's accountants, Boyer & Ritter.

Compliance Committee

John F. Mizner, Esq., chair; Rosa Copeland Miller, Esq.; and Robert S. Grigsby, Esq. comprise the Compliance Committee. This committee oversees attorney compliance; reviews requests for waivers, extensions and deferrals from lawyers; reviews determination of lawyer noncompliance; and makes recommendations to the board for action regarding these issues.

2000 Board Actions and Operations Highlights

The board held four meetings and the annual conference for CLE providers in 2000. The provider conference focused on technology and its best future use for CLE in Pennsylvania. PACLE presented the newly developed ASAPNEXUS Web site to those in attendance.

Utilizing Internet technology, the ASAPNEXUS site was designed to provide streamlined administrative functions for accredited providers and the PACLE office. The site performs many administrative functions for the providers, including the creation of registration lists, certificates of attendance and course evaluation forms. Providers can create and send upcoming course information and attendance rosters to PACLE via the Internet. Information submitted by the providers is immediately available to PACLE to update lawyer records and the informational Web site used by lawyers.

Over 75,000 inquires are received on the popular www.pacle.org Web site each month. Lawyers can find upcoming courses and check on the most recent courses added to the CLE records. By using ASAPNEXUS, providers help achieve the board's goal of the use of automation to provide high levels of service to lawyers.

Conference attendees and PACLE staff were also given the opportunity to meet several experts in the field of distance learning. The group was invited to explore the various technologies available to provide CLE via the Internet.

Other accomplishments of the CLE Board in 2000 include the successful implementation of all Y2K system enhancements and changes, the rule change which abolished geographic restriction on courses accredited by for-profit organizations, distribution of course evaluation summary reports to over 190 accredited providers, and publication of the annual CLE newsletter to providers. A new service was introduced which provides customized compliance information to help law firms manage scheduling of CLE activities within the firm.

Attorney Compliance

Lawyer compliance with requirements of Pennsylvania CLE Rules remains very high. Chart 3.6.1 on page 58 displays the compliance rate and number of lawyers in each group whose names were submitted to the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court for failure to meet CLE requirements.

Looking Ahead to 2001

The board plans to recommend to the Supreme Court a distance learning pilot project and to continue to enhance the utilization of technology to provide the highest quality of service to the legal community.

Contact Person

Questions about CLE or the Pennsylvania Continuing Legal Education Board may be directed to Daniel Levering, Administrator, at

(800) 497-2253 or (717) 795-2139. Or you may write to the board at 5035 Ritter Road, Suite 500; Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 or e-mail at pacleb@pacle.org. The board's Web site is located at www.pacle.org.



Attorney Compliance				
Compliance Year Ending	# Lawyers Subject to Requirements	# Lawyers Complying	# Lawyers Involuntarily Inactivated	Compliance Rates
Group 1				
92-93 - April 93	17,100	16,959	141	99.2%
93-94 - April 94	17,300	17,179	121	99.3%
94-95 - April 95	17,619	17,552	67	99.6%
95-96 - April 96	17,873	17,768	105	99.4%
96-97 - April 97	17,804	17,639	165	99.1%
97-98 - April 98	17,665	17,523	142	99.2%
98-99 - April 99	17,864	17,751	113	99.4%
99-00 - April 00	18,132	18,018	114	99.4%
Group 2				
92-93 - August 93	17,124	16,868	256	98.5%
93-94 - August 94	17,289	17,134	155	99.1%
94-95 - August 95	17,649	17,540	109	99.4%
95-96 - August 96	17,595	17,507	87	99.5%
96-97 - August 97	17,410	17,294	116	99.3%
97-98 - August 98	17,613	17,511	102	99.5%
98-99 - August 99	17,756	17,666	90	99.5%
99-00 - August 00	18,087	17,974	113	99.4%
Group 3				
92-93 - December 93	17,269	16,936	333	98.1%
93-94 - December 94	17,474	17,414	60	99.7%
94-95 - December 95	17,679	17,574	105	99.4%
95-96 - December 96	17,542	17,430	112	99.4%
96-97 - December 97	17,582	17,456	126	99.3%
97-98 - December 98	17,781	17,647	134	99.2%
98-99 - December 99	17,968	17,865	103	99.4%
99-00 - December 00	18,220	*	*	*
*Information for this compliance period will be available after August 20, 2001.				

Table 3.6.1