

1998 Membership

James C. Schwartzman, Esq., *Chairman*
Vincent J. Grogan, Esq., *Vice Chairman*
Carmen P. Belefonte, Esq.
John A. Carpenter, Esq.
Thomas L. Cooper, Esq.
Phoebe A. Haddon, Esq.*
Ruth E. Ganister, Esq.
Marvin S. Lieber, Esq.
Arthur L. Piccone, Esq.
Sandor Yelen, Esq.**

* Term expired 9-1-98

** Appointed 12-31-98

Staff:

Karen K. Spicer, *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

Pennsylvania

Continuing

Legal

Education

Board

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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. As of September 1, 1995, 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 the annual compliance period to which lawyers have been assigned by random selection of lawyer identification numbers. CLE requirements and group deadlines can be found in Table 3.6.1 below.

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.

Compliance Deadlines/Requirements	
<u>Compliance Period Ending</u>	<u>Education Requirements</u>
Group One	
4-30-97	12 hours total, minimum 1 hour ethics
4-30-98	12 hours total, minimum 1 hour ethics
4-30-99	12 hours total, minimum 1 hour ethics
Group Two	
8-31-97	12 hours total, minimum 1 hour ethics
8-31-98	12 hours total, minimum 1 hour ethics
8-31-99	12 hours total, minimum 1 hour ethics
Group Three	
12-31-97	12 hours total, minimum 1 hour ethics
12-31-98	12 hours total, minimum 1 hour ethics
12-31-99	12 hours total, minimum 1 hour ethics

Table 3.6.1

Accreditation Committee

The Accreditation Committee has three members: Thomas L. Cooper, Esq., chairman; Phoebe Haddon, Esq.; and Arthur L. Piccone, 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 Thomas L. Cooper, Esq., chairman; Vincent J. Grogan, Esq.; and Marvin S. Lieber, 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: Marvin S. Lieber, Esq., chairman; Thomas L. Cooper, Esq.; and James C. Schwartzman, 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, KPMG Peat Marwick.

Compliance Committee

James C. Schwartzman, Esq., chairman; John A. Carpenter, Esq.; and Phoebe A. Haddon, 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.

1998 Board Actions and Operations Highlights

The board met three times in 1998.

With the Court's approval, the board obtained a copyright for the software which manages the immense database of information required to accurately and efficiently process lawyer compliance. The software was licensed in August of 1998 to the Supreme Court of Ohio Commission on Continuing Legal Education. A copyright was also obtained for the software called Automated System for Accredited Providers (ASAP), which is licensed to accredited providers and allows for automated course registration, and electronic submission of upcoming courses and course attendance rosters to the PACLE office.

The PACLE Internet site, www.pacle.org, was upgraded once again with additional services to lawyers. In addition to information about the board, the rules and regulations, Frequently Asked Questions and upcoming courses approved for Pennsylvania CLE credits, the highly utilized Course Record Check (CRC) was added to the site. With CRC lawyers can learn the last three courses posted to their records and the number of credits earned for their current compliance year.

In May of 1998, the board held its annual Provider Conference. Over 100 providers attended the sessions, which focused on attaining excellence in CLE. A major emphasis of the board with the 170 accredited providers of CLE in Pennsylvania is the importance of interesting, high quality CLE programs.

In 1997 the board initiated a Y2K analysis and plan for necessary remediation to avert any disruption to services in the year 2000. The main operating system hardware, the operating software, the telephone systems, the accounting system, the automated telephone information system known as Conversant, and

all peripheral hardware were either upgraded, replaced, or scheduled for Y2K correction processes by the end of 1999.

As another project, the board completed the technical documentation of all software and system administration.

Attorney Compliance


Attorney compliance with CLE requirements remains exceptionally high, averaging over 99%. Table 3.6.2 on page 57 displays the compliance rate and the number of lawyers whose names were reported to the Disciplinary Board of the Supreme Court for failure to meet CLE requirements.

Looking Ahead to 1999

The board will complete the Y2K and systems initiatives in 1999 as well as continue to improve Internet services to lawyers. Quality

initiatives include a comprehensive survey of accredited providers to determine best practices in providing courses. The Internet site will be enhanced to encourage lawyers to critique recently attended courses via the Internet.

Contact Person

Questions about CLE or the Pennsylvania Continuing Legal Education Board may be directed to Karen K. Spicer, 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%
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%
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	*	*	*
*Information for this compliance period will be available after August 20, 1999.				

Table 3.6.2