

Four-Hour Course in Ethics Required in Mandatory CLE

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Stressing the importance of ethics for New York lawyers, the new Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Program, which went into effect on January 1, requires every experienced lawyer to complete four credit hours in ethics and professionalism during each biennial reporting cycle.

The other twenty required credit hours may be “in any combination of the following categories: ethics and professionalism skills, practice management or areas of professional practice.” (*See, New York State Unified Court System, January 1999, Part 1500, Mandatory Continuing Legal Education Program....*)

Courses must be either individually accredited or courses given by a New York State CLE Board Accredited Provider.

Each lawyer’s biennial reporting cycle is the two-year period between filings of registration statements with the Office of Court Administration. The first certification of compliance with CLE requirements must be filed with registration statements submitted after January 1, 2000. Certification of compliance requires confirmation of the credit hours completed. Compliance is subject to audit. Records of course attendance must be retained for at least four years.