

New Lawyer Mentoring Program FAQs

- ***Who is required to participate in the NLMP?***

All lawyers admitted to practice in Oregon after January 1, 2011 who have not practiced in another jurisdiction for at least 24 months are required to participate in the NLMP.

- ***What is the main objective of the NLMP?***

The program is designed to assist you in developing the practical skills and judgment to practice in a highly competent manner and to instill the ethical and professional values that characterize excellent lawyers.

- ***How will each new lawyer's "curriculum" be structured?***

New lawyers work with their mentors to develop a tailored program incorporating both required and elective components. The program introduces you to the legal community, affirms ethical and professional standards, offers an overview of litigation and transactional practice, and provides guidance on law office management and successful client and professional relationships. Elective activities focus on substantive areas of law practice, and include some practical skills activities, ideally in the area you are considering as your primary career focus. Each new lawyer is expected to complete the necessary components within about one year.

- ***What are some examples of elected and required activities?***

Some examples include a review and discussion of the Rules of Professional Conduct and common ethical issues that arise in practice; joint attendance at a local bar meeting or other specialty bar event; introduction to law office management issues; participation in a client interview; drafting of a fee agreement; discussion of effective client interaction/communications; attendance or participation in trial preparation or deposition; a tour of the courthouse and introductions with members of the judiciary; or a visit or meeting with local legal aid providers.

- ***How are new lawyers and mentors matched?***

The OSB will attempt to match you to a mentor in your geographic region, and will make every attempt to match according to practice area. Where requested, the OSB will attempt, though cannot guarantee, to consider other factors such as age, gender or ethnicity.

- ***May I choose my own mentor?***

Yes! Some of the best matches are those made by the new lawyers themselves. You may recruit someone from your firm, your geographic location, your practice area, or from a specialty bar or other organization in which you are involved.

- ***How soon will I be matched, if I don't find my own mentor?***

Some new lawyers are matched within two months of their signing up to the Program. Some matches take more time. While approximately 10% of eligible Oregon lawyers have volunteered to be mentors, certain geographic areas and practice areas do not have as robust a volunteer base as others. As long as you have signed up for the Program, you are in compliance with the regulation.

- ***Is the New Lawyer Mentoring Program different from the 1st-year MCLE requirement?***

Yes. The NLMP does not replace the Minimum Continuing Legal Education requirements for new admittees. (Rules of Licensure 8.2 (2)). However, upon successful completion of the NLMP, new lawyers are awarded six MCLE credits that can be carried forward into their first three-year reporting period.

- ***What if a participant fails to complete the program?***

New lawyers may file for an extension if there are extenuating circumstances. If an extension is not granted, the participant would lose their license to practice until the program is completed.

- ***What is the expected time commitment for both parties?***

The time commitment will vary between different mentor partnerships. The general guideline is that we expect mentors and new lawyers to meet monthly for roughly 90 minutes. The time commitment for the new lawyers may be slightly higher, as they will have primary responsibility to complete some specific tasks in the curriculum. Many of those tasks, however, will be those the new lawyer would encounter naturally in a new law practice.

- ***Will there be any cost associated with participation?***

The cost will be \$100, due from the new lawyer upon completion of the program. Lawyers who make \$75,000 per year or less, and whose firms do not pay for the Program, are exempt from payment.

- ***Will participants receive MCLE credit?***

Yes! Mentors may claim eight MCLE credits upon completion of the plan year. If another lawyer assists with the mentoring, the credits may be apportioned between them. New lawyers who complete the Program receive six MCLE credits that can be carried forward into their first three-year reporting period.

If you have other questions, please direct them to program coordinator Cathy Petrecca at mentoring@osbar.org, or 503-431-6355.