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99 CLE Days Left

I am a nerd—ask anyone who knows me. I am a bonafide, undeniable worry wart. Let's face it: How many normal people would lie awake at night pondering life's probing questions such as whether "*half the instruction*" (as referenced in MCLE regulation 4.1.14) was meant to require more than 50 percent of speakers to be from outside a sponsoring firm or merely 50 percent of the substantive lecture to be presented from outsiders? Given to eternal optimism, I prefer to label myself as a "conscientious-minded" servant of the bar. Whatever you call me, I begin to get sweaty palms, waves of nausea and trouble taking deep breaths as September 24th approaches. Why September 24th? Because that is the official day that the countdown for CLE compliance begins with only 99 CLE days left for you to get your credit before December 31st, 2006.

While those of you who are less nerdy (aka "conscientious") and didn't buy all your Christmas presents in July are counting shopping days 'til Christmas, my staff is spinning their wheels thinking of the 504th new, creative way to say that ethics is "*already calculated in the overal lgen eral*

CLE credit hours and NOT TO BE ADDED BACK AS ADDITIONAL HOURS."

In the spirit of trying to calm my panic attacks and urge early compliance (have you noticed a theme in these columns?), our Webadminister, Amy Shell, has added a "CLE Countdown" to our section of the Web site, www.alabar.org/cle, to allow you to see exactly how much time you have (down to the very second) to complete your CLE credit before year-end.

As that day of fright approaches, it might help to address some specific issues that have arisen since the last article was printed.

Question: Where can I view my carry-over credit online?

We have had many inquiries about online transcripts since the July column. Thank you for this immediate feedback. The most frequently asked question has been, "Where do I locate carry-over credit on my online transcript?" Carry-over credit is listed on your online transcript directly above the field labeled "Credits."

Date last Annual Report of Compliance received was 12/05/2005 for CLE compliance year 2005

2002 Carryover Credits: 1.0 Ethics Carryover: 0.00

| | | | Credits | | |
|---------------------|------------|-------------|---------|----------|--------|
| Sponsor | Start Date | Description | CLE | Teaching | Ethics |
| No courses recorded | | | | | |

[Previous Year](#)

Printer-Friendly

[Next Year](#)

If this carry-over does not appear to be correct, please let us know as soon as you discover any error so that we can correct it immediately.

Question: In 2006, will I get earlier notice of my non-compliance?

Last year, we received requests for early reminders of non-compliance. In response to those requests, this year some of you (hopefully, not many of you) will receive a letter from our office in late October or early November indicating that our records do not reflect that you have completed the required courses for 2006. You should not receive that letter if you have taken your credits early. While we would like to send golden watches to

all compliant individuals in October, the budget just does not allow it; so we opted to send early notices just to the folks who might need a gentle reminder this year.

This letter is being generated this year simply as a courtesy to our members because of requests last year for earlier notification of non-compliance. That letter will not include a reporting form or transcript. We hope it will serve as a reminder that you have until December 31st to complete your required CLE courses.

Question: Will I get a written form again this year? If so, when?

The colored-forms system seemed to work well in 2005 and we intend to implement a similar reporting system for 2006.

It is our goal to send the reminders to non-compliant attorneys in October or November, but to delay sending transcripts until late December. There are many reasons for waiting until late December.

We estimate that at least 4,000 attorneys come into compliance in the month of December. Sponsors have up to 30 days after a program to report attendance. So it stands to reason that transcripts mailed prior to the end of December are certain to omit attendance records for at least 4,000 people.

It is simply more efficient to send out forms when as many courses are posted on the transcripts as possible. It reduces the number of non-compliant (pink) forms that must be mailed and returned to our office and it increases the accuracy of all colored forms.

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While no change can occur without some transition, I hope that our members will come to appreciate the added benefit of being able to view “live” transcripts online and will learn to check their transcript periodically and report any errors to our office rather than waiting for the snapshot of their transcript that we will mail in late December.

Question: What if I get a pink form this year?

We plan on mailing all forms by December 31st, 2006. If you are among the group of attorneys (hopefully an ever-shrinking number) who receives a non-compliant (pink) form, please view and print your *online transcript* and compare it to the one mailed to you.

Chances are the online transcript will have already been updated (especially if you completed a course in late December). If so, you can staple that online transcript to the pink form to reflect your timely compliance. Use of the online transcripts is the best step we can all take toward efficient processing of CLE reports.

Courses taken in January (yes, even online courses completed at 2 a.m. on

January 1st) are not accepted for 2006 courses. Note that **you will owe a fee of \$100 for late compliance if you do not get all your CLE completed by December 31st, 2006, even if you write them on your pink form.**

Question: What if I can't log in or if my contact information is incorrect?

If you can't log in to check your transcript, first check your ASB number. It should be four numbers followed by a letter of the alphabet, two numbers and a letter of the alphabet. We get many calls when a zero has been entered for an “o” or a one for an “l.”

If you still can't log in or if you haven't provided the state bar with your e-mail address, you should send an e-mail to membership services at ms@alabar.org.

If you find that any “contact information” is incorrect on your online transcript or your form mailed to you, you should also e-mail that correct information to ms@alabar.org.

I make light of the September 24th

deadline approaching, but not getting your CLE is not something you can take lightly. Despite our best efforts, we certify attorneys every year for non-compliance. We are here to serve you and are trying to encourage you to get compliant now (or else talk to you about CLE until you are so sick of it that you get your hours just to get us to leave you alone.) In December, the volume of calls that we receive is enormous and I am “conscientious” enough to feel guilt-ridden that I can't answer your questions as quickly as you would like at the end of the year. So, keep sending us your questions now and we will do our best to address them.

By the way, the MCLE Commission has determined that it is over 50 percent of the lecture time—not just number of faculty members, and in case you were planning for 2007, Christmas wrap can usually be found for half-price the day after December 25th!

So, relax, get your CLE credits now—and enjoy whatever holiday you celebrate this winter without the stress of last-minute CLE compliance. If you need a little encouragement from a nerd like me, just check the countdown at www.alabar.org/cle. ■

