

# PARALEGAL DIVISION

## State Bar of Texas



### Standing Rules [Excerpt]

#### **I. MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL; DELINQUENCY**

*Amended April 1986, April 1993, February 2000, February 2004, October 2004, June 2005, November 2006, March 2007, February 2008, June 2008, November 2008, February 2010, October 2011, February 2013, February 2016, June 2017, October 2017, February 2018; June 2018, June 2020*

4. Renewing **Active and Associate** members must complete six (6) hours of substantive continuing legal education, at least one (1) hour of which must be legal ethics, by May 31 of the membership year. For purposes of this section only, the terms “Active” and “Associate” shall include any person who has been a member within the past twelve (12) months. Substantive continuing legal education completed during any membership year, in which a person was an Active or Associate Member, in excess of the minimum six (6) hour requirement for such period may be applied to the following membership year’s requirement. The carryover provision applies to one (1) year only. Members are allowed no more than two (2) hours of self-study or pro bono service whether carried over from the previous year or completed during each membership year, in order to satisfy the minimum six (6) hour requirement. The one (1) hour legal ethics CLE requirement cannot be counted as a self-study hour and must meet the criteria below for accepted CLE. Members must report their CLE through the member’s online CLE records repository through the Paralegal Division’s website. The Division will use the following criteria for approval of continuing education courses for credit towards mandatory CLE requirements for membership:

a. The Division will accept substantive law CLE presented or approved by the MCLE Department of the State Bar of Texas, the Texas Board of Legal Specialization, the National Association of Legal Assistants, the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, and/or presented by the Paralegal Division, local bar associations, paralegal associations, or law firms for credit towards the Paralegal Division mandatory membership renewal CLE requirement.

b. If the CLE course is not accredited by any of the above-referenced groups, the Division will accept a seminar, if it is a substantive law course offered by a qualified presenter that would qualify for approval if submitted to one of the above organizations. “Substantive Law Course” means an organized program of legal education dealing with:

- i. substantive or procedural subjects of law;
- ii. legal skills and techniques;

- iii. legal ethics and/or legal professional responsibility; or
- iv. alternative dispute resolution.

Additionally, law office management programs accredited by the State Bar of Texas will be accepted.

If the requested CLE hours are in connection with auditing or attending a substantive law class, the CLE hours allowed shall be limited to the number of semester hours (usually a three-hour course) rather than the number of clock hours attended.

A “Qualified Presenter” means an attorney, judge, or paralegal who is familiar with the topic presented, or an expert in the particular subject matter comprising the course.

c. Speaking and writing credit will be considered for approval under the same criteria as (a) and (b) above.

5. Members with extenuating circumstances who are not able to meet all the requirements for renewal of their membership may apply for a waiver of the requirements. Such extenuating circumstances may include a pro-longed medical disability, military deployment to a remote location, or some other serious hardship which would make it impossible to meet the requirements. A request for waiver of the renewal requirements should be directed to the President, the President-Elect, the PD Coordinator, and the Membership Committee Chair, and include a detailed explanation of the member’s circumstances with appropriate evidence to support the request by May 31st. For example, evidence for members with medical circumstances may include a letter from a doctor, and military members should include a copy of their deployment orders. Each request will be reviewed by the Board of Directors and decided on its own merit. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final.

6. It is each member’s sole responsibility to enter and update their CLE hours in the online PD member directory as well as maintaining their own CLE records, including keeping copies of all CLE proof of attendance certificates in order to comply efficiently should the member be audited. During a CLE audit, the member would be required to submit their CLE certificates upon request.