



**The North Carolina State Bar
Board of Legal Specialization**

PO Box 25908
Raleigh, NC 27611
(919) 828-4620
www.nclawspecialists.gov

2016 Application for Certification as a Specialist

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Lanice V. Heidbrink, Executive Assistant

INSTRUCTIONS

North Carolina State Bar Application for Certification as a Specialist

1. **Standards** - Read the North Carolina Plan of Specialization and the standards for certification in your specialty area. These materials are found at 27 N.C.A.C. 1D, Sect. 1700 *et seq.* and are published in the North Carolina State Bar *Lawyer's Handbook* and on our website, www.ncbar.gov.
2. **Fees** - A filing fee of \$250 must accompany this application. All checks should be payable to North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization. Rejection or withdrawal of an application will not entitle an applicant to a refund of the fee or any part of the fee. **Applications postmarked by June 15, 2016, will qualify for a \$50 discount on the application fee.** An additional exam fee of \$150 will be due and payable upon notification that an applicant is eligible to take a specialty examination.
3. **Filing Timeliness** - The completed application shall be considered timely filed if the application is delivered to the offices of the North Carolina State Bar before 5:00 p.m. on July 1, 2016, or is postmarked no later than July 1, 2016.

4. **INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING APPLICATION**

A. **PLEASE ANSWER EACH QUESTION.** If additional space is needed to answer a question, please attach pages to the application.

B. **WAIVER of STRICT COMPLIANCE** – If an applicant cannot meet the strict requirements for substantial involvement or CLE for a specialty, the applicant may request a waiver of strict compliance. To do so, you must complete the waiver of strict compliance form, available on the website, <http://www.nclawspecialists.gov/forms.asp>, and submit the form with your application.

C. **REFERENCES** - Each applicant for certification is asked to submit the names and addresses of 10 references in support of his or her application. It is preferred that references have experience in the applicable specialty. The extent of a reference's involvement in the applicable specialty and relationship to the applicant will be considered in the evaluation process. All references will be contacted by the Board Legal Specialization, or its representatives, and asked to complete written peer reference statements. A minimum of 5 peer reference statements must be returned to the Board in order for an application to advance. Reference forms will be sent to the address you provide; please confirm with your reference that the address is correct. The Board, or its representatives, may contact, in person or by telephone, any reference listed by an applicant or any other lawyer or judge qualified to evaluate the applicant's competence and qualification in the specialty area. You are encouraged to advise your peer references (judges and lawyers) that you have listed them on this application and to confirm that they are willing to respond to a peer reference request.

D. **SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION FORMS** - Please note the specialties marked with an asterisk (*) on the following page require a supplemental application form, available on the website, <http://www.nclawspecialists.gov/forms.asp>, with your application in those specialty areas.

5. **Confidentiality** - All information contained in the application, supporting documents, peer reference information and statements, and examination results shall be confidential unless otherwise subject to the North Carolina Public Records Act. Such information, however, shall be available for use by the Board, the appropriate specialty committee, or any appropriate body or tribunal in the event of an appeal.
6. **Processing of Completed Applications** - Only completed applications will be reviewed by the Board of Legal Specialization. Each applicant will be notified by mail of acceptance or rejection of his or her application. An application is incomplete if it does not include complete answers to every question of the application and copies of all documents requested on the application.
7. **Filing Application** - Applications should be delivered to the State Bar or postmarked on or by July 1, 2016, addressed to:

**North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization
Attn: Executive Director
PO Box 25908
Raleigh, NC 27611**

Or hand delivered to: 217 E. Edenton Street, Raleigh

8. **Examination** – Upon the Board's determination that applicant is qualified to sit for a specialty exam, a confirmation notice with the time and location of an examination will be sent to the applicant. The exam schedule is online at: www.nclawspecialists.gov/becoming. Examination results are provided by mail. Additional exam fees apply for joint certification with national certifying agencies in bankruptcy and elder law.
9. **Special Testing Accommodations for Disabled Applicants** - A written request for special accommodations, supported by documentation of disability, must be submitted to the executive director at least two weeks prior to the exam.



The North Carolina State Bar
Board of Legal Specialization
APPLICATION FOR BOARD CERTIFICATION

Please check the specialty (or subspecialties) to which you are applying:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Appellate Practice* | ☐ Family Law |
| ☐ Business Bankruptcy Law | ☐ Immigration Law |
| ☐ Consumer Bankruptcy Law | ☐ Commercial Real Property Law |
| ☐ Criminal Law - State* | ☐ Residential Real Property Law |
| ☐ Criminal Law - Federal/State* | ☐ Social Security Disability Law* |
| ☐ Criminal Law - Juvenile Delinquency* | ☐ Trademark Law |
| ☐ Elder Law * | ☐ Utilities Law (pending Supreme Ct. approval) |
| ☐ Estate Planning and Probate Law* | ☐ Workers' Compensation Law* |

Please list any specialty in which you are already certified: _____

* Application Supplement Required

Bar Membership Name	Date Admitted to the North Carolina State Bar
Preferred Name for Specialist Directory	North Carolina State Bar Number

I. Information to Appear in the Specialization Directory*

A.

Address				
City	State	Zip Code	Telephone	
Fax	Email Address			
Current Firm or Employer Name and Address				
City	State	Zip Code	Telephone	# of Lawyers at Firm or Employer

*** IMPORTANT: If you are certified, your official address and contact information on record with the membership department of the State Bar will be used in the Specialist Directory and on our website unless you notify us otherwise. Any updates reported to State Bar membership will not automatically update in the specialization database. Changes must be reported directly to specialization staff.**

☐ The information above is not the same as the information on record with North Carolina State Bar Membership.

☐ The information above is the same as the information on record with North Carolina State Bar Membership.

- B. If you have been certified as a specialist by any organizations **other than** the North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization, list the name and date of each certification and identify the certifying organization:

Name of Certification	Date of Certification	Certifying Organization

- C. How did you hear about the North Carolina State Bar certification program? _____

II. **States of Licensure**

List all states (other than North Carolina) in which you are licensed to practice law:

State	Date of Admission	Membership Number	Member in Good Standing? ☐ Yes ☐ No
State	Date of Admission	Membership Number	Member in Good Standing? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do not list North Carolina or provide a letter of good standing for North Carolina. Apply for a letter of good standing from each state listed above. Direct that the letter be mailed directly to the Board of Legal Specialization.

III. **Professional Conduct ***

- A. Since your admission to the North Carolina State Bar, have you been disbarred, suspended from practice, reprimanded, censured, sanctioned or otherwise disciplined or disqualified (including the revocation of a pro hac vice admission, or a disability or administrative suspension) by a licensing agency, court, or professional organization for conduct as a lawyer or as a member of any profession or organization, or as a holder of any office, public or private? Include court orders and letters of warning and caution in your response.

☐ Yes ☐ No

- B. Are there any such actions pending (unresolved) against you?

☐ Yes ☐ No

- C. For each such action (pending or resolved), state the following:

(1) The disciplinary agency, court, or professional organization: _____

(2) Date of notice to you if unresolved or date of discipline, sanction, disqualification, or other such action, if resolved: _____

(3) If discipline, sanction, or disqualification was issued, attach copy of order or record of such action.

(4) Attach written explanation.

- D. List all malpractice actions filed against you since initial licensure regardless of whether the action is currently pending or resolved. With regard to each action, state or provide the following (attach additional sheets if necessary):

(1) Name of action:

(2) Date of filing and venue of action:

(3) Explanation of status or resolution:

* Documentation of grievance history does not have to be attached to the this application if you send a letter to the relevant disciplinary agency requesting that the documentation be sent directly to the Board of Legal Specialization. However, a copy of the letter making such request must be attached to the application. You must request or submit documentation of grievance history with the NC State Bar.

IV. Substantial Involvement*

Instructions: Please review the substantial involvement requirements for your specialty. The requirements can be found at www.nclawspecialists.gov/becoming.asp. To qualify for certification, the applicant's practice in the area of law for which certification is sought must equal to or exceed the substantial involvement requirements set forth in the standards for the applicable specialty. Please indicate hours of substantial involvement per year (do not use percentages) and describe your practice during the calendar years listed below. If you do not meet the requirements, in order for your application to be processed, you must complete a request for waiver of strict compliance form which can be found on the website, <http://www.nclawspecialists.gov/forms.asp>. The waiver is subject to specialty committee and board approval.

Number of total years you have practiced in this specialty area _____

2011

Approximate number of hours devoted to the specialty practice area: _____

Brief description of substantive legal work or practice equivalent: _____

2012

Approximate number of hours devoted to the specialty practice area: _____

Brief description of substantive legal work or practice equivalent: _____

2013

Approximate number of hours devoted to the specialty practice area: _____

Brief description of substantive legal work or practice equivalent: _____

2014

Approximate number of hours devoted to the specialty practice area: _____

Brief description of substantive legal work or practice equivalent: _____

2015

Approximate number of hours devoted to the specialty practice area: _____

Brief description of substantive legal work or practice equivalent: _____

2016 to date

Approximate number of hours devoted to the specialty practice area: _____

Brief description of substantive legal work or practice equivalent: _____

* Attach additional pages if necessary.

V. Continuing Legal Education

CLE activities must be completed between January 1, 2013 and the date that you sit for the exam. Your CLE record will be obtained from the North Carolina State Bar CLE Department. Please attach a page listing any courses that you plan to take after filing this application, as well as any of the following that you would like to be considered for specialization credit which are not included in your North Carolina State Bar CLE record.

- **Lectures** prepared and presented at an accredited CLE course;
- **Teaching** in the specialty field at an academic institution;
- **Publication** of a scholarly article in the specialty field;
- **Self-study** review of audio or video tapes, or manuscripts of lectures from qualified CLE course (no more than two hours per year shall qualify)
- **Advanced academic coursework** (attendance at courses of instruction at a law school which can be credited toward an advanced degree in the specialty field).

VI. Peer References

Identify as references 10 lawyers or judges who are familiar with your competence and qualifications in the specialty. Insofar as possible, select persons who are board certified specialists in the specialty or substantially involved in the area as that term is defined in the certification standards. All references must be licensed and in good standing to practice law in North Carolina (with the exception of the social security disability specialty). You may not use as a reference persons who are your partners or associates or your relatives by blood or marriage, or who are involved with you in a continuing commercial relationship. Applicants for certification in bankruptcy law may not use a bankruptcy judge as a reference. Applicants for certification in immigration law must list at least two peer references who are lawyers or judges with substantial experience in immigration law. Applicants for social security disability law may list references licensed and in good standing to practice law in any jurisdiction in the United States. **Members of the Board of Legal Specialization and members of the applicable specialty committee may not serve as references.** A complete list of committee members is included at the end of the application. You are encouraged to advise your peer references (lawyers and judges) that you have listed them on this application and to confirm that they are willing to respond to a peer reference request. **Use full names (not nicknames) when listing references.** Peer reference forms will be sent to the address you provide; please confirm with your reference that the address you list is correct.

1.

Name	Firm/Employer	Mailing Address	
City	State/Zip	Phone	Email

2.

Name	Firm/Employer	Mailing Address	
City	State/Zip	Phone	Email

3.

Name	Firm/Employer	Mailing Address	
City	State/Zip	Phone	Email

4.

Name	Firm/Employer	Mailing Address	
City	State/Zip	Phone	Email

5.

Name	Firm/Employer	Mailing Address	
City	State/Zip	Phone	Email

6.

Name	Firm/Employer	Mailing Address	
City	State/Zip	Phone	Email

7.

Name	Firm/Employer	Mailing Address	
City	State/Zip	Phone	Email

8.

Name	Firm/Employer	Mailing Address	
City	State/Zip	Phone	Email

9.

Name	Firm/Employer	Mailing Address	
City	State/Zip	Phone	Email

10.

Name	Firm/Employer	Mailing Address	
City	State/Zip	Phone	Email

PLEASE DO NOT LIST CURRENT BOARD OR COMMITTEE MEMBERS AS REFERENCES
(Prohibition applies only to specialty for which you are applying.)

Specialization Board Members (who are lawyers and judges) as of May 2, 2016

Laura D. Burton-Chair
Robert (Bob) A. Mason-Vice-Chair
Kimberly (Kim) R. Coward
Robert A. Ponton
Larry H. Rocamora
Judge Teresa H. Vincent

North Carolina State Bar Specialty Committee Members as of May 2, 2016

Appellate Law Committee

Justice Robert H. Edmunds
Christopher G. Browning Jr.
Lisa S. Costner
Tobias S. Hampson
John J. Korzen
Preston O. Odum
Matthew W. Sawchak
Elizabeth B. Scherer

Bankruptcy Law Committee

A. Cotten Wright
John C. Bircher
Richard M. Hutson II
Don R. Kight Jr.
Jennifer Adams Ledford
Travis Sasser
Robyn R.C. Whitman

Criminal Law Committee

Robert C. Kemp
Mark A. Jones
J. Matthew Martin
Lizmar Bosques Rosado
Barrett O. Poppler
Joel N. Oakley
Anand P. Ramaswamy

**Criminal Law-Juvenile
Delinquency**

Eric J. Zogry
John W. Cox Jr.
Julie C. Boyer
Mary D. Stansell

Elder Law Committee

Mark E. Edwards
Letha S. McDowell
Andrew W. Olsen
Lisa Salines-Mondello

Anthony Nicholson
Brent W. Stephens
Dennis J. Toman

**Estate Planning and Probate
Law Committee**

Jill L. Peters
H. Chalk Broughton Jr.
Tonya N. Oesterreich
Timothy W. Jones
Jennifer L. J. Koenig
Gregory T. Peacock
Adam L. Shealy

Family Law Committee

Charles "Whit" Clanton
Mary Craven Adams
Robert S. Blair
Eugene M. Carr III
Elizabeth G. Hodges
Evan B. Horwitz
J. Randal Hunter

Immigration Law Committee

Penni P. Bradshaw
P. Mercer Cauley
Thomas E. Fulghum
Hannah F. Little
Gerard M. Chapman
Helen L. Parsonage
Jeffrey B. Widdison

Real Property Law Committee

Joseph (J.C) Hearne, II
Robert W. Allen
Alison R. Cayton
Frank W. Erwin
Nancy S. Ferguson
Joseph "J.C." Hearne
John W. King, Jr.

Philip E. Searcy

**Social Security Disability Law
Committee**

Christa A. McGill
Andrea Farmer
Frederick (Rick) W. Fleming
Vance Edward Jennings
George C. Piemonte
Michelle C. Pritchard
Kevin D. Rodgers

Trademark Law Committee

Matthew J. Ladenheim
Arthur J. DeBaugh
Angela P. Dougherty
David W. Sar
Maury M. Tepper III
Ed Timberlake
Neal B. Wolgin

Utilities Law Committee

Henry C. Campen, Jr.
Charles Alexander Castle
Daniel C. Higgins
James H. Jeffries, IV
Gisele L. Rankin
Jo Anne Sanford
Michael D. Youth

**Workers' Compensation Law
Committee**

Vernon R. Sumwalt
Michael W. Bertics
Gina E. Cammarano
Jack S. Holmes
H. George Kurani
Joel K. Turner

ACKNOWLEDGMENT/RELEASE

I have read the rules of the North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization (the Board) and the standards for the specialty. I agree to comply with the rules and the standards for the specialty.

I understand that I cannot be certified as a specialist in more than two fields of law.

I agree to pay all fees required by the Board when due.

I understand that the period of certification is 5 years. If I become a certified specialist and desire to continue my certification, I must comply with the standards regarding continued certification as a specialist.

By this application, I release from any and all liability and extend absolute immunity to The North Carolina State Bar, and all individuals, committees, and institutions in any way involved in this certification process including references and informants.

I specifically authorize the Board or any specialty committee acting on its behalf to consult with any persons who may have information relating to my professional qualifications, credentials or character, mental or emotional stability, ethics, behavior, or any other matter reasonably bearing on the criteria for initial and continued certification. This authorization includes inspecting and obtaining any writing that may be material to my certification. I hereby authorize release of any information and writing, whether privileged or not, requested by the specialty committee and/or the Board. I understand that all information received and made part of my file shall be treated confidentially.

- **Applicant's Initials:** _____

I hereby consent to the disclosure of any information relating to any grievance filed against me with the Grievance Committee of the North Carolina State Bar and authorize the release of any information relating thereto to the Board for the purpose of evaluating this application for certification. I will update the Bar regarding the status of the grievance until resolved.

- **Applicant's Initials:** _____

By executing this release, I acknowledge that I am specifically authorizing the North Carolina State Bar and the disciplinary authorities of any other jurisdiction in which I am/or was licensed to provide to the Board any and all information concerning disciplinary complaints filed against me, even if confidential.

- **Applicants Initials:** _____

I understand that board certification is a voluntary program and has no effect on my eligibility to practice law in any area of practice even if I am denied certification.

- **Applicant's Initials:** _____

I understand that the peer review process cannot serve its purpose unless the individuals from whom information is requested are guaranteed complete confidentiality. By applying for certification, I expressly agree to waive any right to request any information obtained through peer review at any stage of the certification process.

- **Applicant's initials:** _____

I understand that board certification, if obtained, may be automatically revoked pursuant to the rules regulating the specialization program of the North Carolina State Bar. I agree to surrender any certificate of specialty granted if revoked.

- **Applicant's initials:** _____

I understand that the specialization exams* will be administered using ExamSoft /SoftTest software. I understand that I will need to download the software onto my computer about two weeks prior to taking the computerized exams. Additional information about computer specifications and registration information will be available in August.

*All specialty practice areas except bankruptcy.

Submission of this application and its attachments constitutes the applicant's verification of the truth of all statements and representations contained herein.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

(For applicant use only- do not send in this checklist with your application)

- ☐ I have read and initialed all applicable items on the Acknowledgement/Release
- ☐ I have signed and dated the Acknowledgement/Release
- ☐ I have enclosed a check for the \$250 application fee made payable to the North Carolina State Bar Board of Legal Specialization and understand that this fee is nonrefundable regardless of the disposition of my application. I agree to pay an additional fee of \$150 upon notice that I am eligible to take a specialty examination. Additional exam fees apply for joint certification with national certifying agencies in bankruptcy and elder law. **Applications received by June 15, 2016, will qualify for a \$50 discount on the application fee.**
- ☐ I have included an application supplement (if applicable) for my application in:
 - ☐ Appellate Practice
 - ☐ Criminal Law
 - ☐ Elder Law
 - ☐ Estate Planning and Probate Law
 - ☐ Social Security Disability Law
 - ☐ Workers' Compensation Law
- ☐ I have included a request for a waiver of strict compliance (if applicable).
- ☐ If applicable, I have requested that a letter of good standing be sent to the Board of Legal Specialization from any state (other than North Carolina) in which I am licensed to practice law.
- ☐ I have provided a copy of the letter(s) sent to a disciplinary agency, court or professional organization (including the N.C. State Bar Grievance Department) requesting documentation of grievance history and /or any applicable information requested in section III.
- ☐ I have made a copy of this application and any attachments for my records.