



BOARD OF LEGAL SPECIALIZATION
NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR

2018 Annual Report

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Purpose and Our Program Goals

The Board of Legal Specialization was established to create a method by which qualified North Carolina lawyers might become certified as specialists in designated areas of the law. Our goals are to first, assist in the delivery of legal services to the public by identifying those lawyers who have demonstrated special knowledge, skill, and proficiency in a specific field. Second, the legal specialization program seeks to improve the competency of members of the Bar by establishing an additional incentive for lawyers to participate in continuing legal education and to meet other requirements of specialization.

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Message from the Executive Director

The North Carolina State Bar exists to protect the public. As part of carrying out that mission, the State Bar Council created the Plan of Legal Specialization in 1983 “to assist in the delivery of legal services to the public by identifying to the public those lawyers who have demonstrated special knowledge, skill, and proficiency in a specific field, so that the public can more closely match its needs with available services; and to improve the competency of the bar[.]” 27 N.C. Admin. Code 1D.1701. These are lofty ideals, but I am proud to say that these goals are sincerely pursued and emphatically achieved by everyone involved with the specialization program. Our specialty committees take great care in objectively reviewing the qualifications of applicants; our committee members pore over the specialty exams, analyzing every word in a question to ensure the question is fair and accurate; and our Board engages in spirited debate about topics ranging from streamlining the application process to the appropriate use of program funds to increase the visibility of the specialization program to both lawyers and the public. In a survey this past fall, recent applicants indicated that their top reasons for applying for certification as a North Carolina specialist were the enhanced professionalism that is attributed to certification and the personal challenge that accompanies certification. I could not agree more, and I am inspired that those joining our program are doing so to contribute to a greater sense of professionalism in the legal community while overcoming the impressive challenge of achieving certification. I feel strongly that our lawyers can be proud of their designations as board certified specialists because certification truly does mean something – it objectively reflects the substantial proficiency acquired and demonstrated by the lawyer, and it instills confidence in the profession by the public.

The individuals guiding this program and the members who have achieved the significant task of certification genuinely value and intently pursue the very purpose of the program: to protect the public by assisting in the delivery of legal services to the public and by improving the competency of the bar. The specialization program will continue to provide a great service to the people of North Carolina, and I look forward to our collective efforts in maintaining the heightened standards of practice for the benefit of the public.

Sincerely,

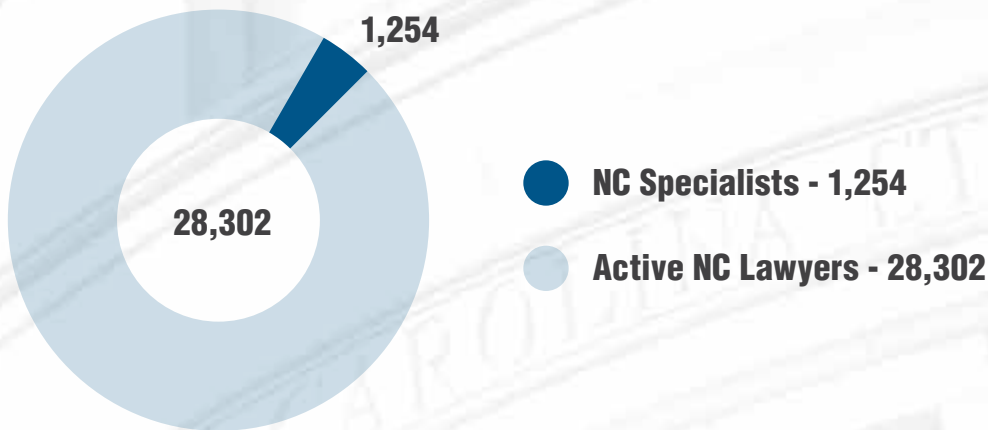


Brian Oten
Executive Director

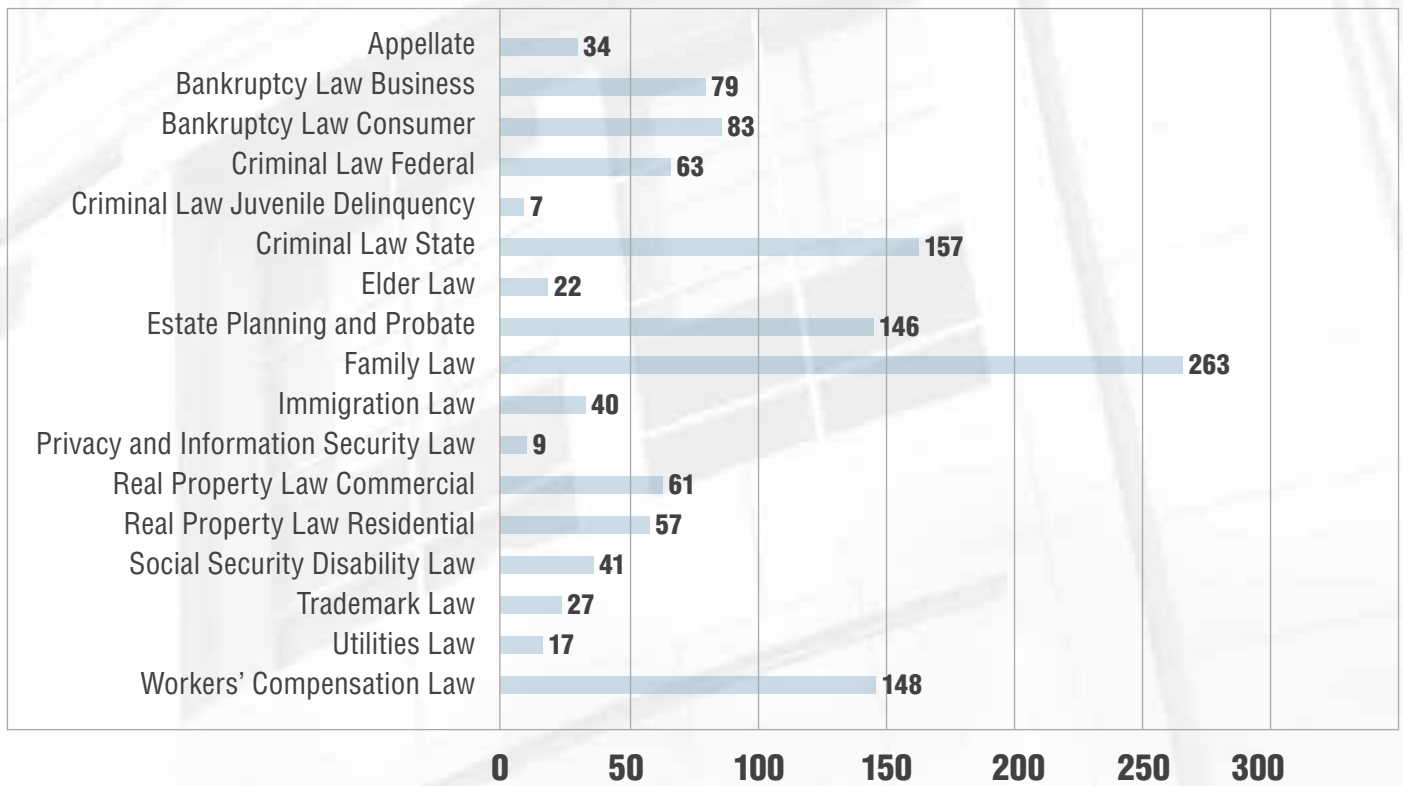
Annual Program Statistics

North Carolina is one of only 19 states that certify lawyers as specialists.

Who are our specialists?



How many in each specialty practice area?



Where are they located throughout the state?

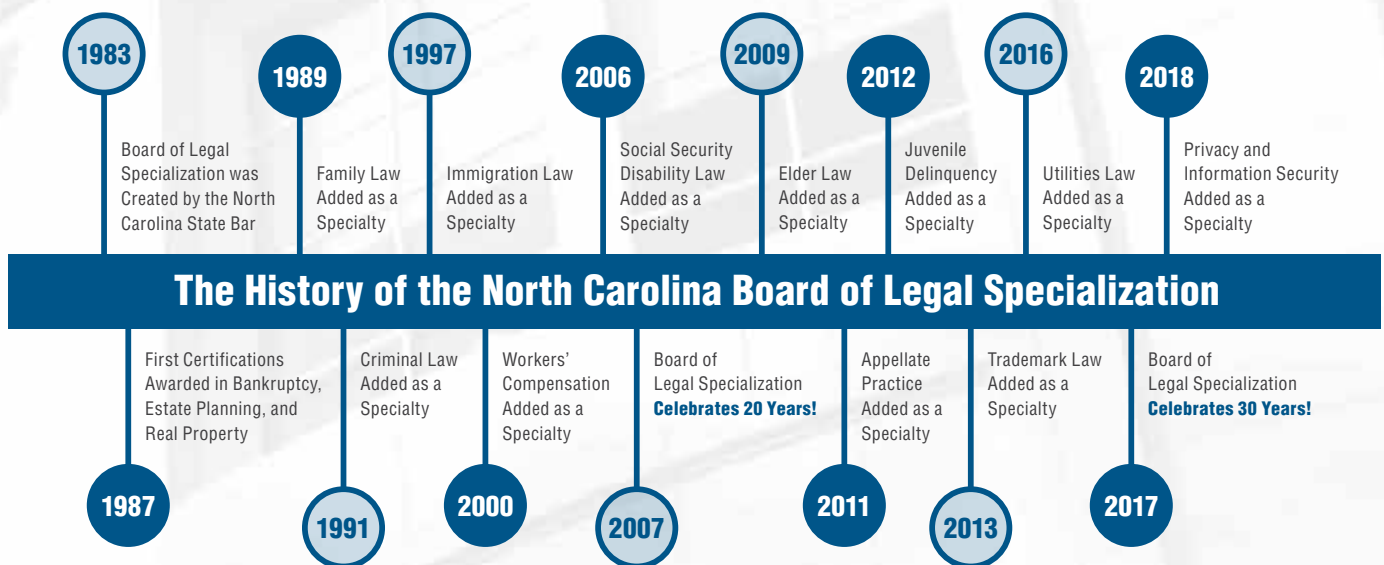


Practice Areas

The board certifies lawyers in 13 areas of law.

- Appellate Practice • Bankruptcy Law • Criminal Law (including juvenile delinquency) • Elder Law
- Estate Planning and Probate Law • Family Law • Immigration Law • Privacy and Information Security
- Real Property Law • Social Security Disability Law • Trademark Law • Utilities Law
- Workers' Compensation Law

History of the program



About Our Team

Staff

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Board Members

- Robert (Bob) Mason, Chair, Asheboro
- Larry H. Rocamora, Vice Chair, Durham
- Kimberly R. Coward, Cashiers
- Patricia Head, Raleigh
- Laura V. Hudson, Raleigh
- Everett (Vic) Knight, Raleigh
- Robert A. Ponton, Raleigh
- Jan E. Pritchett, Greensboro
- Nancy S. Ray, Greenville

Specialty Committees

Appellate Practice
John J. Korzen, Chair
Kernersville

Juvenile Delinquency
Mary D. Stansell, Chair
Raleigh

Bankruptcy Law
A. Cotten Wright, Chair
Charlotte

Privacy & Information Security Law
Matthew A. Cordell, Chair
Greensboro

Criminal Law
Robert C. Kemp, Chair
Greenville

Real Property Law Specialty Committee
Frank W. Erwin, Chair
Jacksonville

Elder Law
Letha S. McDowell, Chair
Kitty Hawk

Social Security Disability Law
Andrea G. Farmer, Chair
Rutherfordton

Estate Planning and Probate Law
Jennifer L. J. Koenig, Chair
Greensboro

Trademark Law
David W. Sar, Chair
Greensboro

Family Law
Eugene M. Carr, III, Co-Chair
Hendersonville
G. Elizabeth Hodges, Co-Chair
Charlotte

Utilities Law
Henry C. Campen Jr., Chair
Raleigh

Immigration Law
Thomas E. Fulghum, Chair
Durham

Workers' Compensation
Michael W. Bertics, Chair
Raleigh

Service Awards

Each year we are proud to present the specialization awards based on nominations that we receive from board-certified specialists. We bestow the awards during an annual luncheon each spring.

The Sara H. Davis Excellence Award

The award is presented to a certified specialist who exemplifies excellence in his/her daily work as an attorney and serves as a model for other lawyers. Special consideration is given for a long and consistent record of handling challenging matters successfully, for sharing knowledge and experience with other lawyers, for earning the respect and admiration of all others with whom the lawyer comes into contact in his/her daily work, and for high ethical standards.

2018 Winner: Rose Stout, Raleigh, Family Law

The James E. Cross Jr. Leadership Award

Nominations for this award are accepted from members of the North Carolina State Bar who have worked closely with the nominee. The award is presented to a certified specialist who has taken an active leadership role in his/her practice area through presentations at CLE seminars, scholarly writings, participation in groundbreaking cases, or service to an established professional organization.

2018 Winner: Leonard “Lennie” Jernigan, Raleigh, Workers’ Compensation

The Howard L. Gum Service Award

This award is given to a specialty committee member who consistently excels in completing committee tasks. The recipient is highly dedicated to legal specialization, donates his/her time to committee responsibilities, and responds to the needs of the staff and the board, in exemplary fashion. Nominations can only be accepted from committee members.

2018 Winner: Robert “Bert” Kemp, Greenville, Criminal Law

Directory of Specialists

All specialists are listed in the specialization directory, which is printed and mailed to libraries and clerks of court and posted on the website.

You can find the full directory at this URL
nclawspecialists.gov/for-the-public/find-a-board-certified-specialist

You can request a printed copy by writing to:
Denise Mullen
dmullen@ncbar.gov