

## **LAWYER-TO-LAWYER MENTORING PROGRAM**

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**1. Does completing the Supreme Court's lawyer-to-lawyer mentoring program meet the diversity & inclusion and mental health & substance abuse CLE requirements?**

**Yes.** Completion of the yearlong Lawyer-to-Lawyer Mentoring Program as a mentor or mentee satisfies completion of the required CLE credits of at least one hour in the area of diversity and inclusion and at least one hour in the area of mental health and substance abuse pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 794(d)(2). Note that the total six (6) hours of professional responsibility CLE credit is earned upon the completion of the program, i.e., at the end of the mentoring year term.

The [Mentoring Plan](#) lists action items grouped by the five areas of the professional responsibility tenets in Illinois Supreme Court Rule 794(d): Professionalism, Legal Ethics, Civility, Diversity & Inclusion, and Wellness, Mental Health & Addiction. Each mentoring pair must complete at least one specific action item in each of the five categories to satisfy the requirements of the mentoring program and receive CLE credit. The actions may be customized within each category to a particular practice setting, individual needs or goals, and the experience of the mentor.

**2. We have our own website page dedicated to mentoring information. Should we have them sign-up directly with us or must we use your online enrollment page at 2Civility?**

Each program is welcome to dedicate its own website page to mentoring and promote the program, e.g., as a member benefit. [Open-enrollment programs](#) may direct participants to the [2Civility website](#) to register as mentors or mentees and properly select your organization in the dropdown menu.

[In-house programs](#) (law firms, corporate law departments, governmental entities) do **not** submit this registration.

**3. May the required five or more years of legal experience for mentors come from another jurisdiction outside Illinois before his/her admission to or practice in Illinois?**

**Yes.** A mentor's years of experience in other U.S. states or jurisdictions (not just Illinois) counts cumulatively toward the five-year requirement. Mentors must still meet the other program requirements, specifically: a) be registered on the IL ARDC Master Roll of Attorneys as active and in good standing; and b) never have been suspended or disbarred from the practice of law in any state or jurisdiction, and have no formal disciplinary complaint pending.

**4. Must a new attorney be sworn in before starting the mentoring program?**

**No.** The earliest mentees may start the mentoring program is after they have sat for the Illinois bar exam, but before receiving their results or even being admitted. Nevertheless, it is advisable to make the paired mentor aware that should the new lawyer-to-be not successfully become an Illinois lawyer, the mentor would not have a qualifying mentoring relationship for CLE purposes.

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Also, should a mentee begin the program and subsequently not pass the bar, yet successfully pass the next available bar exam during the mentoring term (e.g., fail the July bar exam before passing the subsequent February exam), the pair's participation would still qualify.

**5. *I am an attorney licensed in Illinois, but I live and work in another state. May I participate in the mentoring program and receive Illinois CLE credit?***

**Yes.** There is no reason you cannot participate in the mentoring program even though you practice and live in another state. However, both the mentor and the mentee in any given attorney pairing must be Illinois licensed attorneys. For example, a mentor and mentee both living and working in Washington, D.C., who are both licensed Illinois attorneys, may participate for CLE credit from D.C.

**6. *Can an attorney be a mentor to more than one mentee at a time? Likewise, may a mentee have more than one mentor? If so, can double CLE credit be earned?***

**Yes and No.** The Commission has designed the mentoring program to encourage one-on-one interaction and to develop a relationship between the mentor and mentee. While the Commission encourages one-on-one relationships, attorneys may serve as a mentor to more than one mentee, and mentees may have more than one mentor, especially in circumstances where mentoring would not otherwise occur.

Regardless, participants should still meet one-on-one and may only earn CLE credit for one mentoring relationship at a time. Again, you may repeat the program, but you cannot earn double credit or partial credit (e.g., three hours for half a year).

**7. *Do mentors (or mentees) need to repeat the orientation every time they start a new mentoring relationship?***

**Yes.** Mentors and mentees do need to repeat the orientation at the start of each term regardless of previous participation in the program. Among other reasons, repeating the orientation ensures they are up to date on any mentoring rule, policy, or procedure changes. Most importantly, the orientation is designed to properly launch the relationship by facilitating the opportunity to meet, review the [Mentoring Plan](#) together, discuss communication preferences, and set up a few first meetings. Orientation does not have to take place during a formal group setting, as they may complete the orientation by going through the [online orientation](#) together or on their own.

**8. *Must mentoring pairs complete the orientation segment of the program during a formal, group session?***

**No.** While it is encouraged to host a formal group mentoring orientation for your organization and coordinate participation, we recognize that not everyone can attend. Thus, mentoring pairs may complete the required orientation by going through the [online orientation](#) together or on their own.

**9. *May a mentoring pair use virtual mentoring to meet and satisfy their minimum eight required meetings?***

**Yes.** Mentoring pairs may hold any or all of their required in-person meetings over the one-year term through video conference as an alternative to in-person, which remains encouraged when physically possible and safe to do so.

**10. *May an attorney repeat the program for more CLE credit?***

**Yes.** Mentors and mentees may repeat the program, even in the same two-year CLE reporting period, for additional credit. The [carryover rules](#) apply the same as they do for other extra credits earned.