

9.10E NFPA CLE RECOGNITION PROGRAM GUIDELINES *(revised 1/15/2019)*

Approval of CLE Seminars can be made by NFPA's CLE Coordinator(s) and NFPA's Vice President and Director of Profession Development (VPPD). If CLE approval is not granted by a CLE Coordinator, the VPPD must review and make a final determination.

PLEASE NOTE: Any paralegal submitting an application for NFPA CLE credit shall submit the application and necessary documentation no later than six (6) months after attending/completing the seminar, webinar, Pro Bono work, article or instruction.

PART I: Definition of CLE

Continuing Legal Education (CLE) shall include seminars on substantive legal topics, or topics applicable to substantive law issues, or must be oriented to the specific nature of the paralegal profession, such as enhancing computer skills, research techniques, increasing paralegal management skills, issues related to, or affecting, the paralegal profession.

CLE also includes authorship of articles and/or paralegal certification exam writing by an individual paralegal, including research time, and/or speaking to paralegals regarding substantive law issues or topics oriented to the specific nature of the paralegal profession, including preparation time for such presentation and attendance and successful completion of law-related classes at community colleges, colleges and universities.

Law-related classes cannot be classes and/or coursework specifically limited to licensed attorneys or licensed practitioners such as the LLLT or licensed paralegal practitioners. The classes and/or coursework must be related to paralegals.

No CLEs will be accepted for NFPA CLE credit that are only limited to licensed attorneys or licensed practitioners such as the LLLT or licensed paralegal practitioners and exclude paralegals.

Substantive shall mean work requiring recognition, evaluation, organization, analysis, and communication of relevant facts and legal concepts.

Where any reference to Continuing Legal Education and/or CLE is made in these Guidelines or related applications, this definition shall apply.

PART II: CLE Credit for Attendance at CLE Seminars

NFPA awards NFPA CLE credits to attendees at CLE seminars if all of the following criteria are met. Organizations providing or sponsoring continuing legal education seminars (hereafter, Provider) may apply for NFPA CLE credit. Seminars may be conducted in-person, by telephone, webinar, or other electronic means.

1. **Seminar Sponsorship:** Seminars eligible for consideration to receive NFPA CLE credit may be sponsored by NFPA or any NFPA member association(s); any professional seminar provider, e.g., NBI, Lorman; any bar association(s) e.g. ATLA, ABA, other law-related

organization(s), accredited institution of higher education, or offered in-house at a law firm or corporation.

2. Seminar Length:

- a. Commercial Seminars: Any seminar presented by a commercial provider shall be not less than one hour. The seminar or combination of seminars shall occur on one or more consecutive days. A "contact hour" shall be equal to sixty (60) minutes of classroom instruction, subject to paragraph 5 below.
- b. NFPA Member Associations: NFPA Member Association seminars may be approved for CLE credit on an hour for hour basis, subject to Paragraphs 4 and 5 below. NFPA automatically accepts CLE credit issued by its member associations as part of the renewal for PACE Registered Paralegals and CORE Registered Paralegals. If the association wishes to market their CLE as "NFPA Approved" they need to submit it for our approval because our trademarked name is involved. Regardless of whether the association seeks approval or not, they are welcome to add all their events to NFPA's events calendar.

3. Other CLE Credit: NFPA will recognize CLE credits for all programs or activities approved for CLE by a member organization, bar association or state regulatory authority. A Provider must make application to NFPA for CLE Credit if the Provider wishes to advertise or market its seminars as "approved for NFPA CLE Credits." A CLE Certificate of Attendance is available from the VPPD.

4. Applying for CLE Credit: Applications for CLE credit shall be submitted by seminar providers at least 60 days prior to the event, if possible. Information will include:

- a. a completed online [application for NFPA CLE credit](#);
- b. an outline of the seminar topics including a brief summary of each topic being presented and, if available, a copy of the seminar brochure;
- c. a copy of each speaker's bio and/or curriculum vitae including his or her relevant qualifications;
- d. a detailed time line of each segment of the seminar being offered including lunch and breaks; and
- e. if an application is being submitted for an award of credit for a seminar that has received CLE credit, as stated above in Paragraph 1, the application shall also include a copy of the notice approving an award of credit, i.e. Certificate of Attendance. The Certificate of Attendance must state on the certificate that the CLE is pre-approved by a particular state or local bar association (include the name of the state or local bar association on the certificate) and the certificate cannot restrict the CLE from paralegals.
- f. Active Military NFPA Members are permitted to submit a letter from their respective Commanding Officer specifying the CLE information including

a description of the seminar topic, details of the speaker, and the timeline of each segment of any seminar being offered in lieu of a Certificate of Attendance as noted above in Subsection 4(e).

5. **Number of Credits:** One contact hour of a seminar qualifying for NFPA CLE credit will equal one NFPA CLE credit.

6. **Ethics Credit:** In order to obtain CLE credit for ethics, specific information must be submitted regarding the topic and the number of hours/minutes spent on ethics, i.e., NFPA's Model Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility and Guidelines for Enforcement.

7. **Subject Matter of Seminars:** All seminars awarded NFPA CLE credit must meet NFPA's criteria for continuing paralegal education in that the subject matter of such seminars must be on substantive law issues or must be oriented to the specific nature of the paralegal profession, such as advanced computer skills or research techniques, increasing paralegal management skills, issues related to, or affecting, the paralegal profession, and providing specific legal issues are addressed.

8. **Instructors:** Presentation must be made by an individual(s) demonstrating sufficient expertise and knowledge to address the subject matter being presented.

9. **Approval of Seminar:** Within 60 days after receipt of an application, the Provider shall be notified of the approval or denial of the application and, if approved, the number of NFPA CLE credits awarded.

10. **CLE Certificates:** It is the responsibility of each Provider to issue a certificate of attendance or a CLE certificate to each participant of the seminar, should the Provider desire to do so. NFPA will not issue CLE Certificates to individual participants. Upon approval of the seminar by NFPA, the Provider is authorized to designate the amount of NFPA CLE credit on their certificates. A CLE Certificate of Attendance is available from the VPPD. Also, see (II)(4)(e) above.

11. **Registration List:** During the day(s) of the seminar, the Provider shall provide a sign-up sheet requesting name, email address, telephone number and membership in NFPA for those participants who wish to inform NFPA of their attendance at the seminar. The provider shall maintain said sign-in sheets for a period of two (2) years following presentation of the seminar, and make them available to NFPA upon request. This list shall be deemed confidential and not shared without the consent of participants.

12. **Cost:** The Provider will submit an application fee. If a Provider has not applied for NFPA CLE credit, a person applying for individual credit must submit the application fee. The application fee is waived as a member benefit for paralegal associations who are members in good standing of NFPA. The cost to RPs and CRPs is \$10 for all CLE requests submitted at one time.

13. **Advertising NFPA CLE Credit:** Upon approval and award of NFPA CLE credit, the Provider will be permitted, and is encouraged, to advertise the awarding of NFPA CLE credit. A provider shall not advertise NFPA approval until same is obtained and confirmed.

14. **Free Advertising** on the NFPA website on the NFPA CLE Calendar is given to any seminar with NFPA CLE credit.

15. **NFPA recognizes** CLE offered by the following groups to be approved without further review by NFPA or a designated Coordinator: bar associations, National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., Inns of Court, JAG Legal Center & School CLE, and Courts of all jurisdictions within the United States. Also, see (II)(4)(e) above regarding state or local bar association approval notation on Certificate of Attendance.

PART III: CLE Credit for Instructing, Speaking, or Guest Lecturing

NFPA CLE credit will be granted to paralegal instructors, speakers, or guest lecturers if the following criteria are met:

1. Teaching, speaking, or guest lecturing at a seminar or course if the subject matter of such seminars are on substantive law issues or are oriented to the specific nature of the paralegal profession, such as advanced computer skills, research techniques, increasing paralegal management skills, issues related to, or affecting, the paralegal profession, and providing specific legal issues are addressed.

2. Course or Seminar Length:

- a. A course must occur in a time period of not more than four (4) months, and must be offered by an accredited institution of higher education, an NFPA approved provider, bar association or other entity as described in Paragraph 1, above.
- b. A seminar may be considered for less than one hour credit at the discretion of the VPPD.

3. **Applying for CLE Credit:** Upon completion of a course or seminar, the speaker will submit the online application for credit for speaking, together with the application fee. Information pertaining to the course or seminar for which CLE credit is sought will be reviewed and considered for CLE credit by the CLE Coordinator. Information must include:

- a. a complete online application for CLE credit;
- b. a copy of the course advertisement or seminar brochure; a description of the seminar topic, including areas of substantive law or professional issues to be presented; or a copy of the seminar outline;
- c. a description of the speaker's relevant qualifications; or a copy of the speaker's bio and/or curriculum vitae; and
- d. the application fee.

This information should be provided no less than 30 days prior to the date on which the course or seminar is to be conducted.

4. **Number of Credits:** One contact hour of a course or seminar qualifying for NFPA CLE credit will equal one (1) NFPA CLE credit for presentation plus one (1) hour for research and preparation. If CLE is awarded based on a panel presentation the CLE credits are given at one (1) credit per contact hour. A maximum of 12 CLE credits will be awarded for a

course or seminar presentation. CLE credit is provided only one time for any seminar/course presentation.

5. **Ethics Credit:** In order to obtain CLE credit for ethics specific information must be submitted regarding the topic and the number of hours/minutes spent on Ethics.

6. **Approval of Course or Seminar:** Upon approval NFPA will notify the speaker.

7. **Cost to Obtain CLE Credit:** The application fee is \$10 for NFPA individual members, RPs and CRPs; \$40 for non-NFPA individual members.

PART IV: CLE Credit for Publishing Articles:

Publishing an article on substantive law issues must be oriented to the specific nature of the paralegal profession, such as advanced computer skills or research techniques, increasing paralegal management skills, issues related to, or affecting, the paralegal profession, and providing the legal issues are addressed will qualify for CLE credit. Articles submitted for consideration to receive CLE credit must be the author's original work product.

1. **Applying for CLE Credit:** An online Application for CLE credit must be submitted, together with a copy of the article for which CLE credit is sought, proof the article was published and the application fee.

2. **Number of Credits:** The VPPD will determine the number of CLE credits to be awarded for each article qualifying for CLE credit based upon the length and content of the article. The maximum available credit will be 5 CLE credits.

3. **Ethics Credit:** In order to obtain CLE credit for ethics specific information must be submitted regarding the topic including the specific rule(s) from the NFPA Model Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility and Guidelines for Enforcement.

4. **Approval of CLE Credit:** Approval will be provided to applicant within 60 days after receipt of the completed online application for CLE credit.

5. **Cost to Obtain CLE Credit:** The application fee is \$10 for NFPA individual members, RPs and CRPs; \$40 for non-NFPA individual members.

PART V: CLE for *Pro Bono* Service:

An individual or member association may apply for CLE credits for the delivery of *pro bono* legal services pursuant to NFPA's Model Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility and Guidelines for Enforcement. The *pro bono* services must be of a substantive nature and must be certified by an affidavit completed by the supervising attorney, program or agency coordinator, or firm. No credit shall be granted for *pro bono* administrative hours (e.g. Recruiting volunteers for an event).

1. **Applying for CLE Credit.** An Affidavit of *Pro Bono* Service must be completed by the individual or member association and submitted to the CLE Coordinator.

2. **Number of Credits.** One (1) hour of non-ethics CLE credits will be given for each three (3) hours of substantive *pro bono* services contributed by an individual or member association. A maximum of four (4) CLE **non-ethics** credits can be requested annually.

3. **Approval of *Pro Bono* Service.** Upon approval of the *pro bono* services performed for CLE credit, NFPA will notify the individual or member association.

4. **Proofs and Cost to Obtain CLE Certificate.** Upon completion of the *pro bono* services, an individual or member association of NFPA requesting CLE credit will submit to the CLE Coordinator for approval, an Affidavit of *Pro Bono* Service, affirming the number of hours or *pro bono* services performed and that said services were substantive in nature. The appropriate CLE Coordinator will notify the applicant of the credits awarded. There is no cost for an individual member or member association of NFPA for said approval process.

PART VI: Requirements for Self-Study CLE credits.

1. **Subject Matter and Method of Delivery:** The subject matter of Self-Study programs must be on substantive law issues or must be oriented to the specific nature of the paralegal profession, such as advanced computer skills or research techniques, increasing management skills, providing the legal issues are addressed. The acceptable delivery modes are:

- a. audio tapes and any accompanying written materials;
- b. video tapes and any accompanying written materials;
- c. CD and DVD and any accompanying written materials;
- d. written materials and manuals prepared from seminars;
- e. books;
- f. webinars;
- g. podcasts.

2. **Accreditation Period:** NFPA CLE accreditation is for a period of one year from the date of approval.

3. **Instructions** for the self-study participants CLE:

- a. Review course content and objectives;
- b. Listen/view the tape/video/CD (fill in appropriate delivery mode) and review written materials/manual.

4. **Number of Credits:** One hour of a self-study program will equal one (1) CLE credit. A maximum of twelve (12) CLE credits will be awarded for any self-study program. The determination of the number of hours is based as follows:

- a. audio and video tapes will be based on the amount of time it takes to view and/or listen to the tapes;
- b. CD, DVD, podcasts and Internet presentations will be based on the amount of time it takes to view;
- c. written materials including books and seminar manuals will be based on 50 pages per hour.

5. **Ethics Credit:** In order to obtain CLE credit for ethics specific information must be submitted regarding the topic and the number of hours/minutes spent on ethics including the specific rule(s) from the NFPA Model Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility and Guidelines for Enforcement.

PART VII: CLE for Conventions and Co-Sponsored Events

1. CLE for seminars at NFPA Sponsored Events, including region meetings: NFPA CLE Credit will be automatically granted to all seminars scheduled in conjunction with NFPA meetings, or to any seminar attached to an NFPA event, such as a region meeting, provided the seminars are on substantive law issues or must be oriented to the specific nature of the paralegal profession such as advanced computer skills or research techniques, increasing paralegal management skills, issue related to or affecting the paralegal profession provided specific legal issues are addressed. The VPPD will be available to assist with planning such events and to review speakers and topics. Online submission of the paperwork for such seminars is required.

2. CLE for Seminars co-sponsored by NFPA member associations in conjunction with non-member associations.

No approval fees will be required for any seminar co-sponsored by an NFPA member association and a non-member association. For example, if a member association wanted to co-sponsor a day of seminars with a state alliance of which the association is a member. No fee will be charged to the state alliance for approval of the seminar(s) if an NFPA member association is sharing in the planning and revenue earned from the event.

3. No CLE will be awarded for leadership or pro bono conferences and workshops unless they are of a substantive nature as defined in Part I of these procedures.

The appropriate online application and the procedures outlined in Part II of the guideline must be followed by the NFPA member association(s) co-sponsoring the event not less than 60 days prior to the event.

PART VIII: CLE Credit for Luncheon Events

NFPA will award NFPA CLE credits to a member association for a luncheon event. The following criteria must be met:

1. **Subject Matter:** The topic of the luncheon must be on substantive law issues or must be oriented to the specific nature of the paralegal profession, such as advanced computer skills or research techniques, increasing paralegal management skills, issues related to or affecting the paralegal profession provided the specific legal issues are addressed.

2. **Instructors:** The topic must be presented by an individual(s) demonstrating sufficient expertise and knowledge to address the subject matter being presented.

3. **Number of Credits:** A luncheon event will be awarded a minimum of one credit hour provided that the luncheon event is at least 60 minutes in length.

4. **Ethics Credit:** In order to obtain CLE credit for ethics specific information must be submitted regarding the topic and the number of hours/minutes spent on ethics including the NFPA's Model Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility and Guidelines for Enforcement.

5. **Applying for CLE Credit:** Information pertaining to the luncheon event for which CLE credit is sought will be reviewed and considered for awarding CLE credit by the CLE Coordinator. The application should be submitted at least sixty (60) days prior to the event. Information should include:

- a. A completed online Application for CLE credits for Member Associations;
- b. a copy of the course advertisement or brochure; or a description of the topic; including areas of substantive law or professional issues presented; or a copy of the outline; and
- c. a description of the speaker's relevant qualifications; or a copy of the speaker's bio and/or curriculum vitae

6. **CLE Certificates:** It is the responsibility of the association to issue certificates or receipts of attendance to the participants of the event. NFPA will not issue CLE certificates to individual participants. Upon approval of the event by NFPA, the association is authorized to issue certificates to all attendees noting the number of NFPA CLE credits awarded. A Certificate of Attendance template is available from the VPPD. Also, see (II)(4)(e) above.

7. **Approval Fee:** The fee for approval of a luncheon event is waived for all NFPA member associations in good standing.

PART IX: CLE Internal Guidelines

1. Courses or seminars taught or articles published will address substantive law or professional issue(s) relevant to paralegals.

2. The following subject matters will be considered ineligible for CLE credit: branding, personal marketing, job-hunting, non-paralegal career paths, resume writing, and job interviewing techniques. Additionally, anniversary events or other social functions at which the speaker happens to be a legal professional but is not addressing substantive law or professional issue(s) relevant to paralegals will be considered ineligible for CLE credit.

3. Courses or seminars will be presented by an individual demonstrating sufficient expertise and knowledge to address the subject matter being presented. Articles will be written by an individual demonstrating sufficient expertise and knowledge to address the subject matter of the article.

4. Subject matters will be consistent with NFPA mission statement, policies on education, ethics, regulation, and core curriculum.

5. Seminars approved for CLE credit by practicing attorneys as outlined in Paragraph 1 of these procedures, shall not need additional approval.

6. Prior to denying an award of NFPA CLE credit, the CLE Coordinator will submit to the VPPD the information pertaining to the seminar, course, and/or article for the VPPD's consideration and final determination.

7. CLE approval is good for one year from receipt. Should the CLE content and/or speaker change, re-approval of the CLE is required.

PART X: NFPA Webinar CLE Guidelines

1. General Guidelines.

- a. In an effort to assist NFPA's members, RPs and CRPs attain a minimal level of CLE credits, the following guidelines have been adopted to ensure the accuracy and integrity of NFPA webinars.
- b. Each webinar will be based on a topic relevant to the practicing paralegal professional. No cash refunds will be given for any course.

2. NFPA Webinar Content.

- a. The webinar must meet all guidelines currently espoused by NFPA, including the NFPACLE RECOGNITION PROGRAM GUIDELINES.
- b. The webinar must be on a topic that has national application, and a "shelf life" of more than one year. Any topics submitted are subject to approval by NFPA. It is highly recommended, that the author submit an outline of the proposed webinar to the CLE Coordinator or VPPD for comment and approval. Authors will be required to provide any updates as necessary that are precipitated by new legislation or case law.
- c. If the author of the webinar is a paralegal or non-attorney, the Unauthorized Practice of Law must be avoided at all costs. In the event that the webinar's content makes any statement that requires the exercise of independent legal judgment, the non-lawyer author must secure the consent or approval of an attorney on that particular portion of the webinar. Additionally, the attorney's biographical information must be included.
- d. In the event that any graphic, logo, or design is used in the webinar the author must provide NFPA with reasonable assurances that the intellectual property may be used by NFPA without recourse by any third party.
- e. The author or authors of the webinar agree(s) to provide an unlimited license to NFPA for the use of the webinar and any derivative work thereof.
- f. Webinar Instructor Permission Form must be completed by all webinar presenters in advance of the webinar and submitted to the VPPD.

3. Granting of NFPA CLE Credit.

- a. **Certificate.** Each webinar participant will be sent a certificate stating the number of CLE granted by NFPA based upon review by the CLE Coordinator or VPPD.

- b. **Use of CLE Credit.** It is the responsibility of the participant to maintain the documentation regarding CLE credit awarded for any webinar taken through the NFPA web site.
- c. **Cost of NFPA Webinars.** The VPPD will make a recommendation to the NFPA Board at the Sunday board meeting following convention each year. The board will set fees for webinars at that time.

4. Granting of CLE Credit as Incentive to Authors. NFPA will award CLE to an author of a webinar, structured as follows:

- a. **Number of Credits.** One contact hour of a webinar qualifying for CLE credit will equal one (1) CLE credit. Six (6) credits max will be awarded for preparation and research and an additional six (6) credits max will be awarded for presentation. CLE credit is provided only once for any webinar.
- b. **Applying for CLE Credit.** Upon completion of a webinar, the speaker will submit the Application for CLE Credit. Information pertaining to the webinar for which CLE credit is sought will be reviewed and considered for CLE credit by the CLE Coordinator. Information must include:
 - (i) a complete application for CLE Credit;
 - (ii) a description of the seminar topic, including areas of substantive law or professional issues to be presented; **or** a copy of the seminar outline;
 - (iii) a description of the speaker's relevant qualifications; **or** a copy of the speaker's bio and/or curriculum vitae; and
 - (iv) the application fee will be waived for NFPA members.

This information should be provided no less than 60 days prior to the date on which the course or seminar is to be conducted.

All forms and the online application for NFPA CLE credit approval are available on line at: www.paralegals.org.

5. Group Viewing/Registration of Webinars (approved May 2016). From time to time law firms, corporations and other employers of paralegals may wish to arrange for a "group" viewing of an NFPA webinar. For the convenience of member associations, NFPA has adopted the following procedures:

- a. **Discount.** At the discretion of NFPA, a discounted rate ("Discounted Rate") may be offered for groups with at least five (5) attendees. The Board shall set the rate and the number of attendees required by resolution. The Discounted Rate shall be a reduction in the aggregate amount owed for all attendees at that particular viewing of the webinar. This may include attendees who are non-members of NFPA-affiliated associations.
- b. **Enrollment/Signup.** The group requesting a viewing shall contact the VPDPD or her or his designee. The group must select a Designated Person to serve as the contact to NFPA. The Designated Person will be provided with a form that requests the name of the attendee, whether the attendee is a member or non-member, if CLE is requested (and if so what type, e.g. CA, TX, etc.).

- (1) This enrollment sheet shall also serve as the sign-in sheet for each individual attending the webinar. A certification shall be required of the Designated Person that the attendees were present for the times indicated on the sign-in sheet. Less than 100 percent attendance for any one hour webinar shall void the granting of CLE credit for that attendee. For those webinars over one hour, the VPDPD shall advise the Designated Person of the required time to attend.
 - (2) Once HQ/VPDPD receives the enrollment sheet, the total amount due and owing, after the discount, shall be calculated. Payment for the webinar must be received prior to the webinar. The enrollment sheet must be received at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the webinar.
 - (3) The Designated Person shall enroll in the NFPA webinar through the established process. The log in information for the webinar shall be sent to this person.
 - (4) The enrollment sheet must be received by the VPDPD or HQ within five (5) days of the webinar viewing. Any enrollment sheet not received within that time period will render any CLE credit null and void for all attendees.
 - (5) As soon as practicable, HQ shall confirm payment of each attendee and issue the appropriate CLE Attendance Certificate. These certificates will be sent directly to the Designated Person.
 - (6) At the discretion of the VPDPD and to comply with jurisdictional CLE requirements, attendees may be required to complete a survey. These surveys must also be received within five (5) days.
- c. **Awarding of CLE Credit.** Each attendee shall be entitled to receive the NFPA CLE accredited hours for that particular webinar, as if she/he had attended individually.
- d. **Retention of Attendance.** Pursuant to NFPA's CLE Guidelines, the attendance records of all associations, groups, and organizations receiving NFPA credit are subject to audit for a period of five (5) years. It shall be the responsibility of the Designated Person and/or requesting organization to maintain complete and accurate records for this time.
- e. **Reservation of Right to Amend.** The VPDPD and the NFPA Board of Directors reserves the right to amend this policy without notice, due to changes in MCLE and other regulatory authorities.