August 4, 2020

Roster Attorneys
Macomb County Bar Association

RE: Continuing Legal Education

REF: Reminder To Get Hours For the Year

Dear Roster Attorneys:

This letter is a reminder to get your Continuing Legal Education, (CLE) credits done by December 31, 2020.

As part of Continuing Legal Education Requirements, attorneys taking criminal appointments, must complete 12 hours of Continuing Legal Education each year. New attorneys need to initially complete 16 CLE credit hours. Due to COVID-19, attorneys may wrongfully assume that time periods to complete CLE credits will be extended. Please be advised that the 12-31-2020 deadline will NOT be extended.

When considering what CLE you will attend, you need to keep in mind that it must be recognized by MIDC as authorized. In general, seminars which are offered by CDAM or SADO or MCBA will list how many credit hours a seminar will count toward. These are generally seminars that will count toward your annual CLE requirement. Most seminars offered in other Counties through their Bar Associations will count toward CLE requirements.

The advantage of attending a CDAM/SADO/MCBA seminar for CLE credit is that you do not have to pay up front for the seminar cost. When signing up, you will be asked about taking criminal appointments and about what funding unit is responsible for payment. Passwords can be obtained from the MCBA.

Currently, should you exceed the 12 CLE credits, you may have to pay for the cost of additional CLE seminars. There is a proposal that in the next year that the total number of CLE credits that can be taken and paid for by MIDC is unlimited in Macomb County. This is not yet approved, and when approved, a notice will be sent.

It is your responsibility to make sure that you get credit for CLE seminars you attend. In general, most of the seminars will provide proof of attendance. In many cases, this proof of attendance is
sent to the MCBA. You can check on credit you received for attendance of CLE seminars by contacting the MCBA.

Macomb County Bar Association, Attn: Rick Troy
40 North Main Street, Suite 435
Mount Clemens, MI 48043
(586) 469-2940

Members can use their user name and password to check on the MCBA website. CLE credits are recorded there. http://macombbar.org. (It may take a few weeks following completion of a seminar to see the credit listed in the website.)

Most CLE seminars are being conducted on-line. In general, watching prior recorded CLE seminars may or may not count toward your current CLE requirement. When you plan on attending a seminar for CLE credit, if you have any question about its being qualified to count toward annual CLE requirements, you may contact this office prior to attending. Verification of attendance will be required.

A word of caution about the approaching end of the year CLE credit totals. You may be counting on attending certain CLE seminars in the future. (For example, CAP seminars, or CDAM Fall Seminar). Due to COVID-19, these and certain other CLE seminars may be delayed or not be offered at all before the end of the year. It will not be sufficient to claim that the failure to accumulate 12 CLE credits by 12-31-2020 is excused because of the cancellation of anticipated CLE seminars.

In the event that you do not meet the requirement of 12 credit hours by 12-31-2020, you will be ineligible to get appointed cases representing indigent defendants until the deficiency is corrected and a new application approved. The MIDC requires these CLE credits as a minimum standard to keep up the quality of legal representation. Should you be removed from the list due to not meeting your CLE requirements, you will need to complete the required number of CLE credits and apply before being considered for reinstatement. Any CLE hours will not be counted twice. (Ex: If after 12-31-20 you fall short by 3 CLE hours, then completion of 3 CLE hours in January will count only toward the 2020 deficiency, and not toward CLE requirements in 2021).

I trust that this information is a helpful reminder. And … as always – stay safe.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Tomko
Public Defender Administrator
Macomb County Office of Public Defender