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DELAWARE PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Delaware Paralegal Association (“DPA”) hereby establishes a voluntary program for the certification of paralegals. DPA defines a “paralegal” as a person qualified by education or work experience who is authorized to perform tasks requiring substantive legal knowledge that would otherwise by law, rule or ethics be performed exclusively by an attorney.

The program will consist of and incorporate the following standards and procedures:

I. Educational and Experience Criteria

An applicant seeking DPA certification must be a Full member in good standing of the DPA and meet one of the following five criteria:

- A. A Bachelor degree in paralegal studies **OR** a Bachelor degree in any discipline from an accredited institution **AND** a certificate from an ABA-approved paralegal program **AND** one year of substantive paralegal experience;
- B. A Bachelor degree in any discipline from an accredited institution **AND** two years of substantive paralegal experience;
- C. An Associate degree in paralegal studies **OR** a certificate from an ABA-approved paralegal program **AND** three years of substantive paralegal experience;
- D. An Associate degree in any discipline from an accredited institution **OR** a certificate from a non-ABA-approved paralegal program **AND** four years of substantive paralegal experience; or
- E. Five years of substantive paralegal experience.

II. Submission of Application and Transcript

Upon meeting the above criteria, a candidate making application for certification shall submit only the following items to the DPA Certification Committee (the “Committee”):

- A. Completed verified application;
- B. Certified copy of the applicant’s official transcript(s) from the educational institution(s) attended **OR** a letter from the educational institution(s) attended indicating the dates of the applicant’s attendance and the date of the applicant’s graduation **OR** a copy of the diploma received by the applicant from the educational institution(s) attended. Registered Paralegals (RPs) and Certified

Legal Assistants (CLAs) need only submit a copy of their original RP or CLA certificate and a copy of their current letter/certificate of good standing.

Candidates who are making application for certification under Section I.E. above need not provide documentation relating to educational institutions;

- C. Declaration(s) from an attorney(s) with whom the applicant works or has worked attesting to the applicant's substantive legal work experience. The number of years of work experience attested to in the attorney declaration(s) should correspond to the subsection of the Education and Experience Criteria under which the applicant is applying; and
- D. Processing fee of \$20. If the application is rejected, the fee will be returned to the applicant.

III. Issuance of Certification and Credential

Following submission of a verified application, payment of the processing fee and review and approval by the Committee, a certificate will be issued to the applicant indicating certification by the DPA based on the educational and experience criteria set forth in Section I above. Upon such certification, the applicant will be permitted to use the credential *Delaware Certified Paralegal* ("DCP").

IV. Code of Ethics

Every DCP will be bound by DPA's "Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility for Delaware Paralegals" which is attached hereto. Any DCP who violates any provision of the Code of Ethics or who is convicted of a felony or crime of moral turpitude or engages in the unauthorized practice of law as determined by the Committee which is charged with reviewing these types of matters will have his/her credential revoked. A DCP may appeal the Committee's revocation decision upon written request to the DPA Board of Directors (the "Board") within 30 days of receipt of the decision.

V. Certification Committee

The Committee will consist of five Full DPA members appointed on a yearly basis by the Board at the beginning of each fiscal year. The Committee Chair will be appointed by the Board and will report to the Vice President or other designated Director as determined by the Board. The Vice President will advise the Committee as needed and will attend Committee meetings when necessary but will not have voting privileges on the Committee. Generally, Board members cannot be members of the Committee. However, should circumstances dictate, the Board has the discretion to appoint a Board member to the Committee. Committee members shall not receive compensation for their services.

The Committee will examine the qualifications of each applicant for certification and will determine within 30 days whether the applicant meets the requirements as set forth above. If any applicant is denied certification by the Committee, the applicant may file an appeal to the Board within 30 days of receipt of the denial. The Board shall make the final determination on the acceptance or denial of DCP certification.

VI. Maintenance and Renewal of Certification – Continuing Legal Education Requirement

In order to maintain certification, a DCP shall renew his/her certification status every two years from the initial date of approval and complete eight hours of Continuing Legal Education (“CLE”) with one of the eight hours being in ethics. One hour of CLE is equal to one DCP CLE credit. One CLE credit hour shall be computed by the following formula: Sum of the total minutes of actual instruction divided by 60 equals total credit hours (rounded to the nearest 1/10th of a credit hour). Legal education shall be included in computing the total hours of actual instruction. All non-instructional portions of CLE programs (such as breaks and introductory remarks) will NOT be included in the credit hour computation.

Three months prior to the renewal date for each DCP, the Vice President will send a letter to the DCP stating that his/her DCP renewal is due and the date by which the renewal information must be received by the Committee. The “Application for CLE Credit to Maintain Delaware Certified Paralegal Credential,” proof of completion of the requisite CLE hours and the two-year renewal fee in effect at the time of renewal shall be submitted to the Committee. A DCP may submit CLE credits obtained during the six-month period immediately preceding the DCP’s approval or renewal. The documentation must be submitted at least one month prior to the DCP’s renewal date. At the time of renewal, a DCP must be employed as a paralegal and must be a Full member of DPA.

CLE credits on the following subject matter will be accepted:

- A. Substantive law issues;
- B. Specific nature of the paralegal profession such as enhancing computer skills or research techniques, increasing management skills, etc.

CLE credits may be obtained in person, on-line or via audio or video from the following sources:

- A. Courses/seminars offered by the American Bar Association or any state bar association;
- B. Courses/seminars offered by approved national or state law-related organizations (e.g., American Trial Lawyers Association, Delaware Trial Lawyers Association, etc.);
- C. Courses/seminars offered by any national or state paralegal association;
- D. Courses/seminars offered by any accredited education institution or organization (e.g., Widener University, American Association for Paralegal Education, etc.);
- E. Courses/seminars offered by professional education providers (e.g., Institute for Paralegal Education, Mealey’s (via Lexis/Nexis), West LegalEdcenter (via Thomson West), etc.);
- F. Courses/seminars offered by any federal/state regulatory or government authority;
- G. In-house courses/seminars/programs offered by the applicant’s employer;
- H. Self study programs provided by any of the entities listed in subparts (A) through (F) above which are available on audio and/or videotape and have supporting written materials. A maximum of two CLE credits may be obtained in this manner;
- I. Teaching, speaking or guest lecturing at a seminar or course on substantive law or issues relevant to employed paralegals and/or paralegal students. A maximum of

two CLE credits may be obtained in this manner. The number of CLE credits to be awarded in this category will be based upon the length and content of the presentation;

- J. Authoring an article or publication on substantive law relevant to employed paralegals and paralegal students. The article must be the DCP's original work product. A maximum of one CLE credit may be obtained in this manner. The number of CLE credits to be awarded in this category will be based upon the length and content of the article;
- K. Delivering substantive pro bono legal services pursuant to Canon 8 of DPA's Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility for Delaware Paralegals. A maximum of two CLE credits may be obtained in this manner. One hour of CLE credit will be awarded for every three hours of pro bono legal services performed. The pro bono legal services must be certified by an affidavit completed by the supervising attorney, program or agency coordinator or firm stating the number of hours of pro bono legal services performed and that said services were substantive in nature; and
- L. Attending a DPA monthly lecture luncheon which has been designated by the DPA Board of Directors as qualifying for DCP CLE credit. One-half hour of DCP CLE credit will be awarded for each designated luncheon attended. Attendees will be required to sign an attendance sheet at each designated luncheon. Attendees will receive a certificate attesting to their attendance at each designated luncheon.

VII. Revocation of DCP Credential

A DCP's credential may be revoked for the following reasons:

- A. The DCP fails to maintain Full membership in DPA.
- B. The DCP violates DPA's Code of Ethics, is convicted of a felony or a crime of moral turpitude or engages in the unauthorized practice of law as referenced in Section IV. above.
- C. The DCP fails to complete the required eight hours of CLE credits as referenced in Section VI. above.

A DCP may appeal the Committee's revocation decision upon written request to the Board within 30 days of receipt of the decision.

Any DCP who has had his/her DCP credential revoked may not reapply for reinstatement for a period of two years from the date of the revocation.