

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Rule 18

How many CLE hours are required for non-lawyer and lawyer judges?

- On an annual basis, non-lawyer judges must complete and report at least 15 hours of CLE-accredited programs and/or activities.
- On an annual basis, lawyer judges (except associate circuit judges, who do not fall within the ambit of the Rule) must complete five hours of CLE-accredited programs and/or activities. Such credit hours completed may be used to fulfill the requirements of Rule 15.
- **Lawyer judges, please note that CLE hours must now be reported directly to The Missouri Bar. You no longer need to report five hours of CLE to the Office of State Courts Administrator.**
- Newly elected or appointed municipal judges and those who retake office after an absence are exempt from reporting CLE hours during the first (current) reporting year only. **It is advised that a completed reporting form (noting the first-year reporting waiver) be sent to the Office of State Courts Administrator to ensure the most current information is captured in the municipal judge database maintained by this office.**
- Certificates of attendance are not required for reporting purposes.

What are the unique CLE requirements for Ethics?

- Two hours of judicial ethics/professionalism must be completed annually.
- Newly elected or appointed municipal judges and those who retake office after an absence are exempt from reporting CLE ethics hours during the first (current) reporting year only. After the first year, the ethics reporting requirement resumes, but the ethic credits shall be prorated for the remainder of the cycle and only one hour of ethics per year is needed for each year that the judge serves during the remainder of the cycle.
- Ethics credit hours may also be used to satisfy the annual CLE requirement each year (five or 15 hours as listed above.)
- Ethics credits must be devoted exclusively to judicial ethics or professionalism.

Is it permissible to “carry over” CLE hours?

- Hours accumulated beyond the required credit hours may be carried over to the next reporting period. All credit hours that are to be carried over to the next reporting period *must* be reported during the reporting year in which they are earned and *must* be designated as CLE hours to be carried forward.
- Non-lawyer judges may carry over up to 15 CLE-approved hours.
- Lawyer judges may carry over up to five CLE-approved hours.

What seminar topics “qualify” as CLE credit for municipal judges?

- Program attendance credit may only be earned if the program sponsor is accredited by the Missouri Bar pursuant to Rule 15, or the Municipal Judge Education Committee, pursuant to Rule 18. Rule 18.01(a) defines “accredited program or activity” and includes the following organizations as those whose programs are all accredited: The Subcommittee on Training and Certification of Municipal Judges, the Missouri Municipal and Associate Circuit Judges’ Association, the National Judicial College and the National Judges’ Association.
- Programs or activities sponsored by The Missouri Bar or other organizations are also accredited *if* the program “...is devoted exclusively to judicial education or directly contributes to the professional competency of judges.”
- The Missouri Bar accredits more than 300 programs. These may or may not qualify for ***municipal judge*** education credits as defined in Rule 18.01(a). When in doubt, contact the Municipal Judge Education Committee, through Office of State Courts Administrator, at (573) 751-4377 prior to program attendance.
- Online courses *can qualify* for CLE credit; however, lawyer judges may not report more than 2 hours of online courses annually, and non-lawyer judges may not report more than 6 hours of online courses annually on their reporting forms.

Who monitors judges’ compliance?

- The Supreme Court of Missouri’s Municipal Judge Education Committee oversees compliance with the Rule. To assist the committee, the Office of State Courts Administrator is responsible for CLE recordkeeping and distributing correspondence under the direction of the Committee.
- The Municipal Judge Education Committee reports non-compliant judges to the state Committee on Retirement, Removal and Discipline.