

# We made it.

We have completed the 2008 MCLE Compliance year in pretty good shape. We had fewer attorneys than ever before who were in non-compliant status going into the new year. We had fewer deficiency plans than ever before and more of those than ever have been successfully completed.

But we had a few glitches along the way. Some attorneys who are exempt, and therefore received the **BLUE** form, called to advise us that they were, in fact, exempt. Some attorneys who received the **GREEN** form, indicating that they were compliant for 2008, didn't know where to sign the form before returning it to us. We reminded them, tactfully, I hope, that we have not required the return of green forms for a couple of years. And then there was the attorney who didn't understand why we sent him a **YELLOW** form. (We hadn't; it had been sent to him by Tennessee.)

So I am proclaiming 2008 to be a successful MCLE year. Unfortunately, we also had a record number of waiver requests from attorneys who are having financial difficulties in these chaotic economic times. That issue prompts me to deliver this message of more changes that are on the way in 2009, which should make life easier, greener and more cost-effective for all of us.

Next year, only non-compliant attorneys will receive the **PINK** form. Attorneys who are exempt or compliant will not receive a form at all. Instead, they will be required to go online, certify the accuracy of their transcript and affix an electronic signature. They may also download a copy of their transcript, if they desire a paper copy. The layout of the online transcript will be the same as the paper transcript this year, but we will no longer be incurring printing and mailing costs to send paper copies of transcripts to more than 16,000 attorneys. Such an exercise is wasteful and not cost-effective. Besides, we are running out of room to store all that paper.

So make sure that your correct contact information is on file with Membership Services. That way, you will be sure not to miss any e-mail notices about your preliminary or final MCLE Compliance reports in 2009.

Another change will deal with those attorneys who have repeatedly requested deficiency plans. A deficiency plan is a device to help attorneys who are genuinely having personal or business difficulties; however, it has come to be abused by some attorneys who just don't pay enough attention to their MCLE responsibilities. That is why, going forward, repeated requests for deficiency plans will be denied without a showing of good cause. So start forming good MCLE habits now, and don't wait until the afternoon of December 31, 2009 to start looking for online MCLE courses, because if you have requested a deficiency plan during the past three years, a request for another one will be subject to very high scrutiny and likely be denied.

As always, we appreciate hearing your comments and suggestions about how to make the MCLE Department work better for you. We hope to see you at the Annual Meeting in July; you get MCLE credit for that, you know. ▲▼▲