



Board Certification: A Guide

Board certification recognizes attorneys' special knowledge, skills and proficiency in various areas of law and professionalism and ethics in practice. Established in 1982 by the Florida Supreme Court, board certification helps consumers identify specialists in various areas of law. Board Certification falls under the purview of the Legal Specialization and Education (LSE) Department of The Florida Bar.

This quick and easy guide will go through the basics of what to consider when deciding if Board Certification is right for you.

1. Choose one of the following 27 Areas of Law:

- Admiralty and Maritime
- Adoption
- Antitrust and Trade
- Appellate
- Aviation
- Business Litigation
- City, County and Local Government
- Civil Trial
- Condominium and Planned Development
- Construction
- Criminal Appellate
- Criminal Trial
- Education
- Elder
- Health
- Immigration and Nationality
- Intellectual Property
- International
- International Litigation and Arbitration
- Juvenile
- Labor and Employment
- Marital and Family
- Real Estate
- State, Federal, Government, and Administrative Practice
- Tax
- Wills, Trusts, and Estates
- Workers' Compensation

2. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Have I been practicing for at least five years?
 - All of the certification areas require that you have been actively practicing for at least five years.
2. Has the majority of my work been in my chosen area of law?

- The requirement varies on the area, but you should be able to prove substantial involvement in your area.
- 3. Do I have peers that know me well enough to discuss my character, my knowledge, and my skills?
 - You will need to identify peers and/or judges that will be willing and able to vouch for your knowledge, skills, and character.
- 4. Have I met the CLE requirement?
 - Each area has a different requirement, but you'll need to ensure that you have met the CLE requirement. This is different than your general CLE cycle: these credits need to be in your given area.
- 5. Do I have the ability to take the time necessary to study for the exam?
 - While not as comprehensive as The Florida Bar exam, the certification exam will require that you be able to dedicate an adequate amount of your time to studying.

3. Figure Out When the Application is Due: Is your chosen practice area in Cycle One or Cycle Two?

All applications become available around April 1st.

- Cycle One: Applications are due by August 31st. The exam will take place the following March.
- Cycle Two: Applications are due by October 31st. The exam will take place the following May.

4. What Are the Costs?

- Initial Application Fee: \$250.00 due when you submit your application
- In-Person Exam: \$150.00 to take the exam in Orlando
- Remote Exam: \$255.00 to take the exam from your home/office

5. Who Should I contact if I have Questions?

- Each area has a [Certification Specialist](#) who can happily answer any questions you may have.

6. Where Can I Find More Information?

- [Florida Bar Board Certification](#)
- [Rules Regulating The Florida Bar: Chapter 6](#)
- [Board of Legal Specialization and Education Rules & Policies](#)
- [LegalFuel Podcast: Board Certification: Elevating Your Firm \(And You!\)](#)