

**TEXAS CITY ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION  
CERTIFICATION IN MUNICIPAL LAW  
Revised June 13, 2008**

The Texas City Attorneys Association Board of Directors (Board) prescribes the following standards and requirements for merit certification in municipal law. The Board is the final arbiter with regard to the interpretation and/or application of any of the standards and requirements. The Board also reserves the right to add, delete, and/or modify any of the requirements at any time.

**I. GENERAL**

- A. All applicants for certification or recertification in municipal law shall be active members in good standing of the State Bar of Texas and the Texas City Attorneys Association, and shall meet the requirements for certification or recertification prescribed by the Board.
- B. The Board shall prescribe the forms involved in the certification process, as well as the fees required of an application for certification or recertification in municipal law.
- C. Certification shall be valid for a period of five years, at the end of which time recertification shall be permitted as provided in Section IV.

**II. INDIVIDUAL CERTIFICATION**

- A. **REQUIRED PERIOD OF LAW PRACTICE:** An applicant must show that during each of the two years immediately preceding the application, he or she has been employed on a full-time basis by an office engaged in the practice of municipal law. Practice of municipal law is defined as:
  - 1. service as a city attorney;
  - 2. service as a full-time assistant city attorney; or
  - 3. service as a full-time municipal court prosecutor.
- B. **SPONSORSHIP:** In order to apply for certification, the following sponsorship must be made:
  - 1. a city attorney must be sponsored by another Texas city attorney who is a current TCAA member.
  - 2. an assistant city attorney or a municipal court prosecutor must be sponsored by his or her city attorney, who must be a current TCAA member.
- B. **TYPES OF CERTIFICATION:** An applicant shall be eligible to apply for

certification in one or more of the following areas:

1. municipal court prosecutor certification.
2. municipal law civil certification.

**C. PROOF OF SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT:** An applicant must show substantial involvement in municipal law by certifying that the following minimum requirements are met for each certification designation:

1. For municipal court prosecutor certification, an applicant must have tried a minimum of sixty trials, ten of which must have been before a jury, as lead counsel in the preceding two years;
2. For municipal civil law certification, an applicant must meet one or more of the following in the preceding two years:
  - a. served a minimum of one year as a legal advisor to a final decision making board (e.g., city council, board of adjustment, building standards commission, etc);
  - b. represented the city in an administrative hearing before an independent agency or arbitrator;
  - c. civil trial experience with actual case assignment as first chair;
  - d. regulatory ordinance drafting; and/or
  - e. significant research on issues of municipal concern.

**D. EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE:** An applicant must demonstrate participation in a minimum of ten hours of continuing legal education in municipal law within the two years immediately preceding the application by either:

1. completion of programs of study in municipal law (Examples include attendance at any TCAA conference or another organization's conference that relates to municipal law, such as eminent domain, land use law, personnel, federal and/or state litigation practice seminars, environmental law, or similar conferences); or
2. such other educational experience as the Board shall approve.

**E. PAYMENT OF FEES:** No certification or recertification shall be issued until the applicant has paid the fees as established by the Board.

**F. FAILURE TO FURNISH INFORMATION/MISREPRESENTATION:** Certification or recertification may be denied because of an applicant's failure to furnish the required information or misrepresentation of any material fact requested by the Board.

### **III. LEGAL OFFICE CERTIFICATION**

**A. REQUIRED PERIOD OF LAW PRACTICE:** One of the following must be met

for a legal office to apply for certification:

1. The average tenure of attorneys in the practice of municipal law for the office shall be at least two years (calculated by dividing the total years of experience in the office by the number of attorneys);  
or
2. at least seventy-five percent of the attorneys in the office must be eligible for individual municipal certification as demonstrated by a statement of the city attorney.

**B. TEXAS CITY ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP:** All attorneys employed on a full-time basis by the office must be members of the Texas City Attorneys Association.

**C. EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS:** Each attorney employed on a full-time basis by the office shall have participated in a minimum of ten hours of continuing legal education in municipal law within the three years immediately preceding application (Examples of municipal law education are the same as those listed in II.D., above).

#### **IV. RECERTIFICATION**

**A. EXPIRATION OF INITIAL CERTIFICATION:** Certification expires five years after the date the original certification was issued.

**B. STANDARDS FOR RECERTIFICATION:** An applicant shall meet the same requirements for recertification as for initial certification.

**V. NO EVIDENCE OF LEGAL SPECIALIZATION:** Certification of an individual or legal office is recognition by the Board of substantial involvement in the practice of municipal law. Certification of an individual or legal office shall not be construed nor represented to be Board recognition of special competence to practice municipal law, nor is the certification of an individual by the Board to be construed as a representation by the Board that the individual has any special training or expertise in the field of municipal law or any other field of law. No person or office holding a certificate may represent that they are “board certified” as that term is used by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.