

Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program

The Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program was established to encourage professional development and educational growth. It is sponsored by the Texas Court Clerks Association (TCCA) in cooperation with the Texas Municipal Courts Association (TMCA), the Texas Municipal Court Education Center (TMCEC), and Texas State University-San Marcos.

The program is comprised of three levels: Level I, Level II, and Level III. Participants will achieve certification upon successful completion of each of the three levels, earning the titles of Certified Court Clerk Level I, Certified Court Clerk Level II, and Certified Municipal Court Clerk.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All participants must be employed by a municipal court in order to participate in the program.

Education

The applicant must provide proof that within three years preceding application, the applicant has:

- 1) Attended two annual conferences of the TCCA, or two annual conferences of the TMCA, or two annual conferences: one of TCCA and one of TMCA; or
- 2) Attended one annual conference of the TCCA or TMCA and successfully completed 16 hours of training sponsored by the TCCA, the TMCA, or the TMCEC, or a combination thereof; or
- 3) Successfully completed 40 hours of training sponsored by the TCCA, TMCA, or TMCEC or a combination thereof.

CERTIFICATION EXAMS

Participants in the program must pass a certification test to advance at each of the three levels. The tests are offered throughout the year. The 2007-2008 test schedule and test application can be on the TMCEC website: www.tmcec.com. An individual may retake an exam until a passing grade is obtained. Level I and Level II exams have study guides which can be purchased from TMCEC or printed from the TMCEC website: www.tmcec.com. The Level III exam is taken from 16 management books. For Level III, there are study questions available, visit www.tmcec.com for more information.

WHAT'S NEW?

Level II Exam Changes

Effective October 1, 2004, Level II re-tests may be taken in parts. If a participant does not pass the Level II exam the first time, they may then take the individual parts they did not pass. This is retroactive, meaning it does include those who have not previously passed the exam. The cost per part is \$25.00.

Level III Book List

Books can be purchased at various bookstores and online or can be borrowed from TMCEC or through local libraries. See www.tmcec.com for required reading. Changes to the book list are anticipated for September 1, 2008. Books may be borrowed from TMCEC for a \$100 deposit.

Continuing Education Requirement

Don't forget to submit your 2007-2008 Renewal Application to TMCEC before September 1, 2008. A Renewal Application can be found on the TMCEC website: www.tmcec.com.

Level I & II Exams

Minor changes to the Level I and Level II exams to reflect recent legislative changes will be implemented by April 1, 2008.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I become certified?

In order to become certified at a particular level, a clerk must:

1. Pass the test for the level desired,
2. Fulfill the educational requirements, and
3. Mail a completed application with the required documentation to TMCEC.

When do I need to provide proof of my educational attendance?

Only after passing the test does completion of educational requirements become an issue. At that time, the clerk will put together the application packet to be certified:

1. A completed application for certification,
2. Proof of passing the exam within three years preceding the application for certification; and
3. Proof of completion of educational requirements within the **three years** prior to applying (which may include any or all of the following: certificates of completion from TMCEC court support personnel training seminars; certificates of completion of TMCA or TCCA training seminars; and/or proof of attendance at annual conferences of the TCCA or TMCA).

When are the tests?

TCCA administers exams usually from 1:00 pm – 5:00 p.m. after the close of each TMCEC 12-hour regional seminar and at the annual TCCA conference.

How much will it cost to get Level I certification? My city wants to know so they can include it in the budget.

Optional Costs:

* *TCCA Annual Membership* - \$40 (www.texasclerk.org)

* *Study Guides:*

Level I - \$25 + \$3 Shipping

Level II - \$25 + \$3 Shipping

* *Pre-conference Preparation Courses:*

Level I - \$15 per session (includes study guide)

Level II - \$15 per session (includes study guide)

* *Level III Reading List:*

Approximately \$500

(contact TMCEC for more information)

Mandatory Costs:

* *Test Registration Fees:*

Level I - \$50 for TCCA or TMCA members
\$90 for non-members

Level II - \$50 for TCCA or TMCA members
\$90 for non-members
\$25 per part for re-tests

Level III - \$50 for TCCA or TMCA members
\$90 for non-members
or \$25 per part for TCCA or TMCA members
or \$65 per part for non-members

* *Assessment Center:*

\$100 registration fee (required for Level III certification)

Note about the optional costs: Most people feel that in order to pass the test, they will need to use the study guides. Study guides may be downloaded at no charge from the TMCEC web site: www.tmcec.com.

These are estimates only and subject to change based on costs of materials and grant restrictions for any given year.

What are the continuing education requirements?

Each academic year (September-August), Level I and Level II certified court clerks **must** attend 12 hours of continuing education. CMCC, Level III certified court clerks, **must** attend 20 hours of continuing education.

Which agencies are approved providers for continuing education?

TCCA, TMCA, TMCEC, Institute for Court Management, National Center for State Courts, and National Association of Court Managers are all approved providers.

What happens if I do not meet my continuing education requirements?

If the continuing education requirements are not met for one academic year, including submitting the renewal application and documentation to TMCEC, those persons will not be viewed as being certified for that year. In order to maintain certification, Level I and Level II certified clerks will be required to attend 24 hours of education the following year and *Certified Municipal Court Clerks* will be required to attend 40 hours of education the following year.

If the continuing education requirements are not met for two or more academic years, including submitting the renewal application and documentation to TMCEC, those persons will be required to re-take and pass the exam and re-apply for certification at Level I, regardless of prior certification.

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