FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. What does "Board Certified mean?  
   Board Certification is a voluntary designation program for attorneys. Initial certification is  
   valid for a period of five years. To remain certified, an attorney must apply for recertification  
   every five years and meet substantial involvement, peer review and continuing legal education  
   requirements for the specialty area.

To become Board Certified in a specialty area, an attorney must have:

   Been licensed to practice law for at least five years.
   Devoted a required percentage of practice to a specialty area for at least three years.
   Handled a wide variety of matters in the area to demonstrate experience and involvement.
   Attended continuing education seminars regularly to keep legal training up to date.
   Been evaluated by fellow lawyers and judges.
2. What areas are directly certified by the New Mexico Board of Legal Specialization?

1. Appellate Law
2. Bankruptcy Law-Business
3. Bankruptcy Law-Consumer
4. Employment and Labor Law
5. Environmental Law
6. Estate Planning, Trust and Probate Law
7. Family Law
8. Federal Indian Law
9. Municipal-County Government Law
10. Natural Resources Law
11. Real Estate Law
12. Trail Specialist-Civil Law
13. Trial Specialist-Criminal Law
14. Workers’ Compensation Law

3. Why does the New Mexico Board of Legal Specialization certify lawyers as specialists?
Specialty certification helps consumers to identify lawyers who have experience and skill in a certain area of practice. Certification also helps lawyers by encouraging them to improve their expertise in particular areas of practice and providing them with a legitimate way of informing the public and other lawyers of this expertise. The New Mexico Board of Legal Specialization has been certifying attorneys as specialists since 1994.

4. How much does it cost to apply for certification?
The application fee is three hundred fifty dollars $350.

5. Where does a lawyer get an application for certification?
Go to www.nmlegalspecialization.org for the application and to select your desired specialty(s) or call (907) 306-0992.

6. Do specialists have to renew their certification and, if so, what are the requirements for recertification?
Certification is effective for five years. At the end of five years, a specialist must apply for recertification. There is a $350 fee for recertification. The standards for recertification are similar to the standards for initial certification.

7. Do specialists have to pay annual dues or a fee if so why?
Yes, there is a $200 annual fee. The annual fee help promote specialists, programs and the majority goes to marketing.
8. Why should I become a Specialist?
Certified specialist benefit from a competitive advantage when advertising, an increase in peer referrals, free listing in the Bench and Bar directory, identified as a certified specialist on the NM Bar site, greater promotion potential and many other opportunities.

9. Where can I find a list of specialists and their rules for Legal Specialization?
A full listing of our specialist and the specialization rules can be found at www.nmlegalspecialization.org and under the Court Regulated Programs tab in the Bench and Bar Directory.

10. Whom do I contact at New Mexico Legal Specialization if I have any questions about specialty certification?
Contact us at mdespain@nmlegalspecialization.org or call Michael DeSpain, Assistant Director of Legal Specialization (907) 306-0992