

**POLICY STATEMENT OF THE
GEORGIA MUNICIPAL COURTS TRAINING COUNCIL
(Revised June 2010)**

JUDGES WHO MUST COMPLETE TRAINING:

Anyone appointed or elected to serve as a municipal court judge, whether full-time or part-time, pro hac vice, or pro tem must be certified according to O.C.G.A. §36-32-21. Judges called upon to substitute for a municipal court judge, who are otherwise qualified to sit under O.C.G.A §15-1-9.1, shall be exempt from such certification requirement.

NOTICE OF TRAINING:

A written notice of training to be offered each year will be mailed to each judge who has notified the Secretary of the Georgia Municipal Courts Training Council of his or her election or appointment and each judge listed on the Council's mailing list. Additionally, the Georgia Municipal Courts Training Council, hereinafter "the Council," will publish from time to time notices of training in the newsletter of the Georgia Municipal Association.

INITIAL CERTIFICATION:

Each municipal court judge upon initial appointment or election shall attend the 20-hour Basic Certification Course offered by the Council within 12 months of the judge's date of appointment or election as a municipal judge. If a judge has a break in service of more than 12 months, then the judge must attend the Basic Certification Course.

RECERTIFICATION:

Each judge, after initial certification, shall annually attend twelve hours of training approved or sponsored by the Council to retain the judge's certification. If a judge has a break in service of less than 12 months, then the judge is eligible for recertification. The Council will offer such training at least twice during each calendar year for recertification.

Summer traffic recertification training will usually be timed to be a little earlier in the summer to accommodate the judges with fall schedules and school-age children.

CERTIFICATES:

A certificate of training shall be issued to a municipal court judge by the Council upon verification of the appropriate hours of attendance of training sponsored or approved by the Council. This certificate shall be mailed to the judge. The judge shall be responsible for maintaining this certificate for verification of the training.

CREDITABLE TRAINING:

Every other year the Council will extend up to twelve hours of credit to a judge for any training sponsored by the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education. Any judge relying on this must attend municipal training the following year.

The Council will not extend credit to Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) programs, but will consider for recertification purposes crediting hours of judicial educational training conducted by judicial education entities such as the National Judicial College, the Institute of Court Management, the National Center for State Courts, and the American Bar Association, if the judge has attended a prior year's twelve hour recertification course sponsored by the Council. The primary focus of all creditable training should be judicial office responsibilities, duties and

ethics.

Except as noted in the first paragraph of this section, training sponsored by other trial court councils and such other judicial education entities shall be partially or fully creditable only with the Training Council's approval. Any such application for credit should be furnished to the Secretary of the Training Council and should include the following: the name of the sponsor of the program; the title of the program; the dates of attendance; the number of hours of training requested to be credited; and a summary of the program content with an explanation of its relevance to the duties of a municipal court judge.

CREDIT FOR PARTICIPATING AS INSTRUCTOR:

The Council will extend recertification credit of three hours for each hour of instruction performed by a municipal court judge participating in a Training Council sponsored initial certification or recertification course. The instructor is expected to participate in preparing instructional materials for the training session.

The Council will extend recertification credit for two hours for each hour a municipal court judge participates in a panel session on the program of a Training Council sponsored initial certification or recertification course.

In no event will more than six hours of credit for any one year be given for participation as an instructor.

FAILURE TO ATTEND TRAINING:

A judge who does not attend a sufficient number of hours of training or who does not attend approved training should not perform the duties of a municipal court judge. In accordance with the statute requiring this training, the Georgia Municipal Courts Training Council will report to the Judicial Qualifications Commission the name of any judge whose record with the Council at the end of a calendar year shows that judge has not completed the requisite training.

However, this provision shall not apply in the event that the Council, on a case-by-case basis for hardship reasons only, extends the time for compliance. Hardship requests must be timely made in writing addressed to the Secretary of the Training Council and must be approved by the full Training Council membership. Judges who have completed at least ten of the twelve recertification course hours required in a year may, on a hardship basis only, ask to view videotapes to complete their hours.

ADDRESSING HARDSHIP AND REPEATED DELINQUENCY

Ordinary deficiencies in attaining the annual MCJE requirement must be reported to the JQC. It has been the JQC's custom to permit these MCJE deficiencies to be made up by the delinquent party during the subsequent year.

In accord with extraordinary MCJE deficiencies, those that have been occasioned by hardship due to personal or family member medical illness or infirmity and which are supported by a treating physician's affidavit, henceforth, it shall be the policy of the Municipal Courts Training Council to withhold reporting such deficiencies to the JQC, provided that the delinquent party pledges to make-up the deficiency in the year subsequent to it, along with fulfilling the annual MCJE requirement for that ensuing year.

In the case of multiple year deficiencies in fulfilling the MCJE requirement regardless of the causing circumstance, it shall be the policy of the Municipal Courts Training Council to report to the JQC after three instances of annual deficiency, whether or not involving successive years, as well as to recommend that such a delinquent be removed from office for demonstrable and repeated failure to comply with the MCJE law.