



Board Certification for Lawyers: What Does It Mean?

For More Information Call 850/561-5842
Or visit www.FloridaBar.org/certification

Are you looking for a lawyer, but confused by Yellow Pages and billboards? Ask about board certification. **Board certified lawyers are specialists who meet Florida's high legal standards.** Testing and peer review verify their qualifications. The Florida Bar's directory of board certified lawyers is online at FloridaBar.org/certification. There are qualified lawyers who are not board certified, but certification is a good place to start.

Board certification recognizes attorneys' special knowledge, skills and proficiency in various areas of law and professionalism and ethics in practice.

Certified attorneys are the only lawyers allowed to identify or advertise themselves as "Florida Bar Board Certified," as "specialists" or as "experts."

Established in 1982 by the Florida Supreme Court, Board Certification provides consumers with assurance in the selection of legal counsel.

Certification is the highest level of recognition by The Florida Bar of the competency and experience of attorneys in the areas of law approved for certification by the Supreme Court of Florida.

Approximately 4,000 of Florida's 76,000 lawyers are board certified.

A lawyer who is a member in good standing of The Florida Bar and who meets the standards prescribed by the state's Supreme Court may become board certified in one or more of the 20 certification fields. Minimum requirements for certification are listed below; each area of certification may contain higher or additional standards.

- A minimum of five years in law practice
- A satisfactory showing of substantial involvement in the field of law for which certification is sought
- A passing grade on the examination required of all applicants
- Satisfactory peer review assessment of competence in the specialty field as well as character, ethics and professionalism in the practice of law
- Satisfaction of the certification area's continuing legal education requirements

Board certification is valid for five years, during which time the attorney must continue to practice law and attend Florida Bar-approved continuing legal education courses. To be recertified, requirements similar to those for initial certification must be met. **Not all qualified lawyers are certified, but those who are board certified have taken the extra step to have their competence and experience recognized.**

"With professionalism and competence at its core, the Florida Bar's certification program sets ongoing goals to make us better lawyers and to improve the system of justice for the public we serve. This evaluation of competence and character offers an opportunity for us as lawyers and provides an unparalleled benchmark for the public."

*Florida Bar President
Alan Bookman
Board Certified
Real Estate Attorney*

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