

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT [CPD] PROGRAM

PART A: FRAMEWORK FOR CPD REGIME

I. MANDATORY AND ELECTIVE CPD

- Lawyers must take 10 credits of CPD courses per year.
- Half of the required credits are on mandatory CPD courses.
- The mandatory CPD courses in Maldives are:
 - Ethics and Professional Responsibility (2 credits)
 - Mental Health and Wellness for Lawyers (1 credit)
 - Anti-money Laundering and Combatting the Financing of Terrorism (1 credit)
 - Practice Management (1 credit)
- Half of the required credits are on elective topics, provided that they are approved by BCM accordingly.
- Elective trainings on the following areas are recommended:
 - Legal drafting;
 - Criminal procedure & evidence;
 - Civil procedure & evidence;
 - Alternative Dispute Resolution; and
 - FIDIC training.
- Lawyers returning from inactive status of more than 3 years must take:
 - An ethics refresher course
 - A refresher course for core skills, as determined by BCM and announced in advance.
 - For the purposes of this requirement, a judge/justice, returning after their term will **not** be deemed as being on inactive status.
- Lawyers reinstating from a suspended license
 - If suspended due to non-compliance with CPD requirements, they must meet all missed required CPD before reinstating OR, if suspended more than one reporting cycle, the amount of CPD required for one reporting cycle
 - If suspended for ethical violations, an ethics refresher course.

II. CPD PROVIDERS

- BCM will be sole provider of mandatory courses.
 - The fee for mandatory courses will be reflected in the license renewal fee.
- Outside providers: can be recognized to offer CPD courses (other than required courses)
 - Recognition fees will be set by BCM and announced accordingly

- Options will be provided to recognize a single course or to become a recognized provider (reviewable annually) – this may also be submitted by lawyers or the provider themselves.
- Individual lawyers may seek credit for courses/conferences held by non-recognized providers or outside Maldives for a nominal fee
- Recognition of courses is recommended to be carried out prior to undertaking the course, as the BCM cannot guarantee that all applications will be recognized.

III. CREDITS

- 1 credit = minimum 60 minutes of a course, excluding breaks, opening/closing ceremonies, certificate presentations, meals, etc
- To receive credit, lawyers must be present for the entire course if the course is 1 hour. If the course is more than 1 hour, lawyers may receive credit as long as any absences are approved by the provider and are in accordance with the exemptions announced in advance by the BCM – such as prayer breaks or breaks for nursing mothers.
- Online courses are credited the same as in-person courses. Providers must verify online attendance.
 - All courses can be online, unless BCM determines and announces in advance that specific courses teaching lawyering skills require in-person teaching or evaluation.

IV. REPORTING AND COMPLIANCE

- The license issued to lawyers shall be renewed on the condition that lawyers complete the required CPD courses in the next three years.
- Where lawyers exceed the minimum required 5 credits of elective courses in a year, an elective credit may be carried forward for 1 calendar year.
- Credits for mandatory courses cannot be carried forward and must be completed each year.
- CPD reporting must be done by the lawyer at the end of each calendar year, but this does not prevent a lawyer from reporting their credits upon the completion of each course, with the latter being recommended as it will allow for any issues with the submission to be resolved in a timely manner with the accredited provider as well.
 - BCM tracks completion of required courses and other courses offered by BCM and maintains record of credits for each lawyer in a database
 - For individual lawyers requesting credit for a non-recognized course, BCM will enter the credits into the lawyers' database upon approval of the request
 - Lawyers who teach CPD can receive an equivalent number of hours as lawyers who took the course.
- Lawyers who have not completed required CPD in each calendar year will be suspended after a grace period of 30 days
 - CPD taken to avoid suspension during the grace period will count toward the prior year and cannot be double counted toward the current year
 - Waivers or extensions should be granted under extenuating circumstances and shall be determined by the BCM.
- There will be an appeal process for lawyers who believe they should not have been suspended.