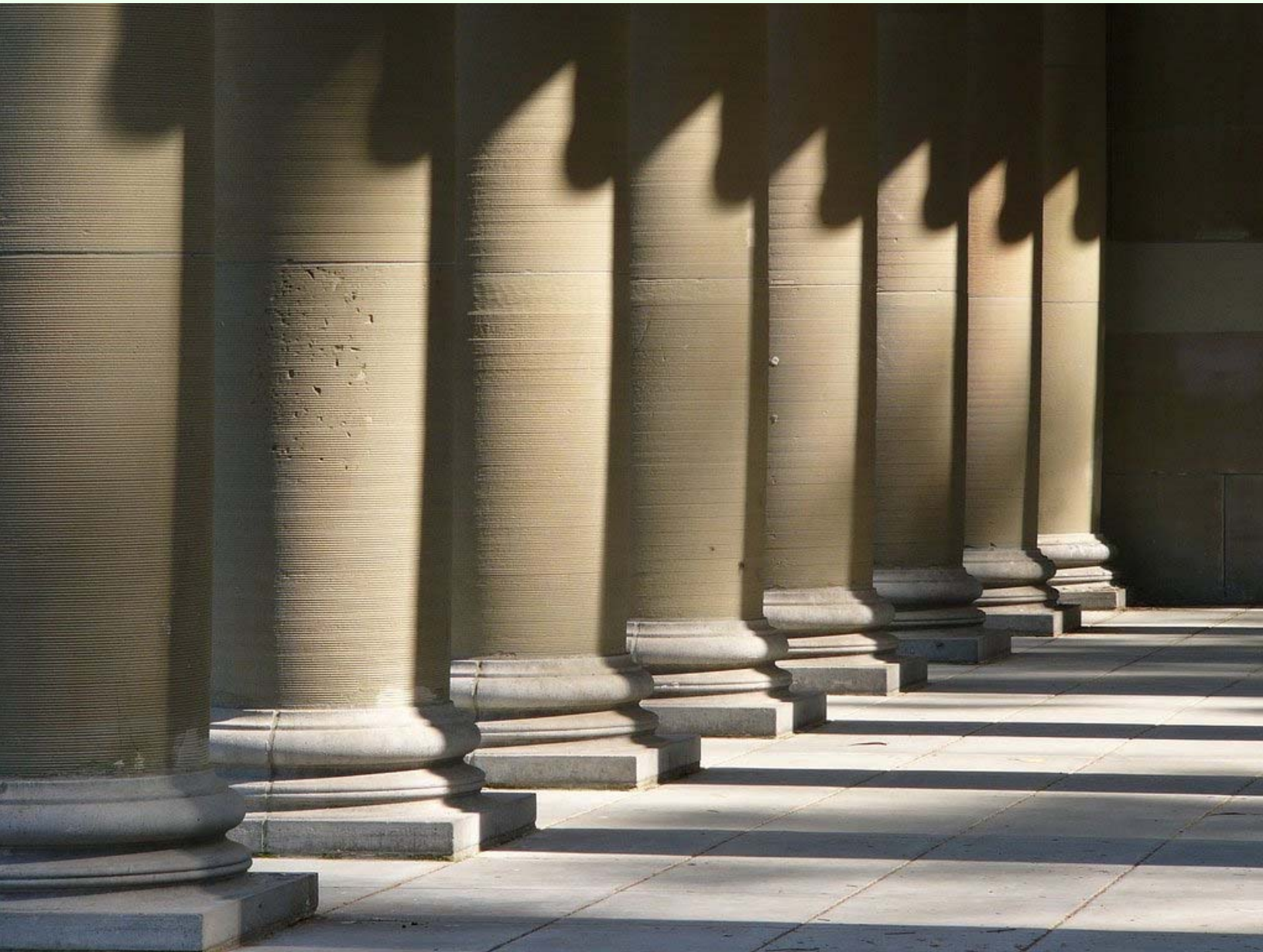


# **MINNESOTA BOARD OF LEGAL CERTIFICATION**

**2017 Annual Report**



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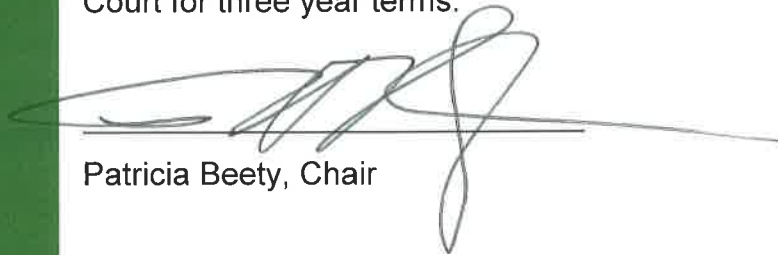
## Who We Are

The Minnesota Board of Legal Certification authorizes legal agencies to certify Minnesota lawyers as specialists in defined fields of law. The Board's purpose is to provide the public with enhanced information about lawyers who specialize in one or more fields of law. The Board seeks to ensure that lawyers identifying themselves as "specialists" have the appropriate knowledge and expertise associated the specialist designation.

To become accredited, a legal agency must show that it certifies as specialists only those lawyers who meet these standards:

- Are licensed to practice law and on active status in Minnesota;
- Have "substantial involvement" in the field of law during the three-year period before becoming certified;
- Obtain three or more verified peer recommendations as well as references from other judges and lawyers;
- Pass an examination in the substantive, procedural, and ethical aspects of the field of law; and
- Complete continuing legal education (CLE) courses in the certified specialist's field of law.

The Board reviews each agency's standards and examinations at least once every three years. Members of the Certification Board are appointed by the Minnesota Supreme Court for three year terms.



Patricia Beety, Chair



Emily Eschweiler, Director

# Legal Agencies that Certify Lawyers

These five legal agencies certify Minnesota lawyers as specialists:

- American Board of Certification (ABC), Cedar Rapids, IA
- Minnesota State Bar Association (MSBA), Minneapolis, MN
- National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC), Aurora, CO
- National Board of Trial Advocacy (NBTA), Wrentham, MA
- National Elder Law Foundation (NELF), Tucson, AZ

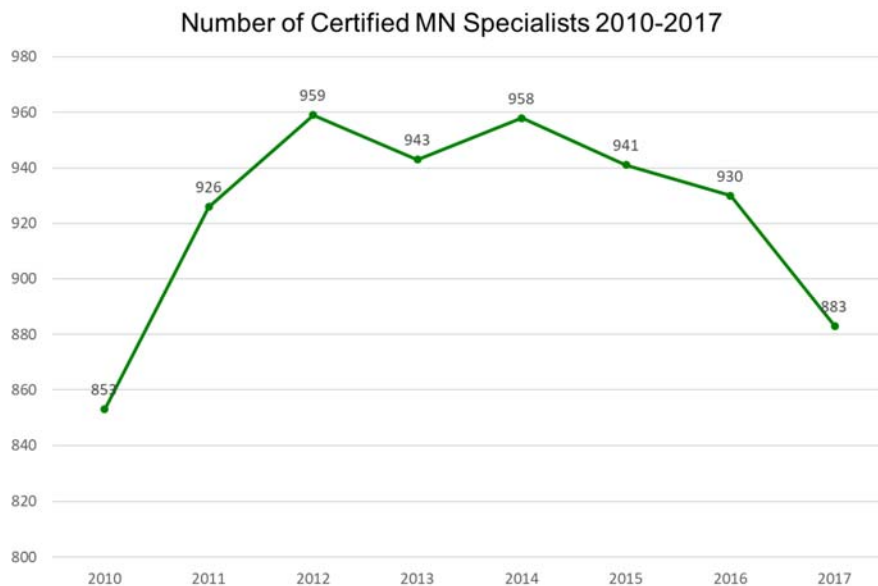


One or more of the legal agencies certify Minnesota lawyers as specialists in these fields of law:

- Business Bankruptcy (ABC)
- Child Welfare Law (NACC)
- Civil Trial Practice (MSBA and NBTA)
- Criminal Law (MSBA and NBTA)
- Consumer Bankruptcy (ABC)
- Creditors' Rights (ABC)
- Elder Law (NELF)
- Family Law (NBTA)
- Labor and Employment Law (MSBA)
- Real Property (MSBA)

# Certified Specialists

Each year, legal agencies submit annual reports showing the number of Minnesota lawyers certified, recertified, and decertified, as well as how many have applied for their programs. The chart below shows the number of certified specialists over the last several years. Between 2016 and 2017 there was a steep decrease in the number of certified specialists. Agencies have noted that many lawyers are retiring, while lawyers indicate it is harder to obtain certification due to some of the trial requirements. The Board has discussed ways to encourage promotion of certification in Minnesota and routinely asks agencies for additional information on how the agency promotes certification.



## Certified Minnesota Specialists by Specialty

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
ABC Consumer Bankruptcy	5	3	3	3	3
ABC Business Bankruptcy	7	6	6	5	5
ABC Creditors' Rights	2	1	1	1	1
MSBA Civil Trial Practice	297	291	292	281	268
MSBA Criminal Law	52	55	59	63	59
MSBA Labor & Employment Law	99	116	115	117	112
MSBA Real Property	353	361	343	341	322
NACC Child Welfare Law	-	-	0	0	0
NBTA Family Law Trial Advocacy	3	4	7	12	13
NBTA Civil Trial Practice	111	109	103	95	89
NBTA Criminal Law	9	8	8	8	8
NELF Elder Law	5	4	4	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>943</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>883</b>

The Certification Board is self-funded through certified lawyers and certifying agency fees. Fees collected include:

- Agency application fees: \$1,000
- Agency annual fees: \$250 per specialty field
- Lawyer annual fee: \$45
- Initial lawyer certification fee: \$100

The Board has a cash-carry-forward fund balance that is close to its annual expenses, and is in stable financial condition.

### Revenue: Calendar Years 2014-2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Agency Application Fees	\$1,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Annual Agency Fees	\$2,750	\$2,500	\$2,750	\$3,000
Annual Lawyer Fees	\$39,870	\$38,835	\$39,825	\$38,250
New Lawyer Fees	\$5,100	\$1,200	\$3,100	\$300
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$48,720</b>	<b>\$42,535</b>	<b>\$45,675</b>	<b>\$41,550</b>

### Expenses: Calendar Years 2014-2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Salaries	\$29,679	\$27,803	\$31,517	\$33,846
Rent	\$5,733	\$5,390	\$5,441	\$5,370
Other (supplies, equipment, etc.)	\$6,195	\$10,752	\$9,146	\$6,170
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$41,607</b>	<b>\$43,945</b>	<b>\$46,104</b>	<b>\$45,386</b>

# Board Members and Staff

The Board is made up of 12 members and a chairperson. Members are appointed by the Minnesota Supreme Court and may serve two 3-year terms.

- 3 public members
- 3 lawyers nominated by the Minnesota State Bar Association
- 6 lawyers nominated by the Supreme Court

## Contact Us

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## 2017 Board Members

- Patricia Beety, Chair, League of Minnesota Cities, St. Paul
- Martin A. Cole, St. Paul
- V. John Ella, Trepanier MacGillis Battina, P.A., Minneapolis
- Thomas A. Jacobson, Swenson Lervick Syverson Trosvig, Alexandria
- Justice Ericson Lindell, Winthrop and Weinstine, Minneapolis
- Marc J Manderscheid, Briggs and Morgan, Minneapolis
- Elizabeth Martin, Public Member
- Todd V. Peterson, Todd Peterson Law, Sauk Rapids
- Penelope J. Phillips, Felhaber, Larson, Fenlon & Vogt, P.A., Minneapolis
- Raj Pillai, Public Member, Minneapolis
- Andrew J. Pratt, Eckberg Lammers, Stillwater
- Aimee Zweber, Public Member, Minneapolis

## 2017 Supreme Court Liaison

- Hon. John Rodenberg, Court of Appeals

## 2017 Board Staff

- Emily Eschweiler, Director, effective April 2017 (previously Assistant Director)
- Margaret Fuller Corneille, Director, retired April 2017
- Natasha Karn, Managing Attorney
- A.J. Dordel, Staff Attorney
- Kirsten Hedin, Office Administrator - Finance and Technology