



# The State Bar *of California*

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## **OPEN SESSION AGENDA ITEM IV.B. MARCH 2021**

**DATE:** March 1, 2021

**TO:** Members, California Board of Legal Specialization

**FROM:** Amy C. Nuñez, Director, Office of Admissions

**SUBJECT:** Report on Initial Certification Application Statuses

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### **SUMMARY**

A total of 82.8 percent of the applicants who passed the 2017 Legal Specialist Examination (LSX) have filed their initial certification application as of March 1, 2021. The remaining eligible applicants must do so by April 30, 2021 in order to avoid having to take the examination again.

A total of 49.5 percent of the applicants who passed the 2019 LSX have filed their initial certification application as of March 1, 2021. The remaining eligible applicants must do so by April 24, 2021, or request an extension of time.

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### **BACKGROUND**

To receive initial certification as a specialist, applicants must comply with a two-part process. Applicants must first pass the Legal Specialization Examination (LSX). Only then do they become eligible to file a post-examination application for initial certification documenting experience, education and references, and they must do so within three years and three months of the original examination date.

Because examination results expire after that amount of time has lapsed, applicants who fail to file their initial certification applications by the extension deadline must take and pass the examination again in order to continue with their eligibility for certification.

### **DISCUSSION**

## **2017 Successful Examination Applicants**

As of March 1, 2021, 583 of the 704 candidates who passed the 2017 LSX have filed their initial certification applications. Attachment A provides a breakdown of those candidates by specialty area. Notably, Estate Planning, Trust & Probate Law and Family Law have received the most initial certification applications from 2017 LSX eligible applicants, accounting for more than half of the total received applications.

Remaining candidates had until April 24, 2019 to submit their initial certification application, unless an extension of time to submit their application by January 31, 2021 had been granted. However, the CBLIS approved a three-month extension due to COVID-19, that allows applicants to now submit their applications by April 30, 2021. Staff continues to work with the pending applicants to submit their applications by the new deadline.

## **2019 Successful Examination Applicants**

As of March 1, 2021, 189 of the 382 candidates who passed the 2019 LSX have filed their initial certification applications. Attachment B provides a breakdown of those candidates by specialty area. As with the 2017 LSX, Estate Planning, Trust & Probate Law and Family Law have received most of the initial certification applications from 2019 LSX eligible applicants, which also accounts for more than half of the total received applications.

Remaining candidates have until April 24, 2021 to submit their initial certification application, unless an extension of time to submit their application by January 31, 2023 is granted. Of the 196 candidates pending filing of the initial certification application, 13 have already requested and received an extension.

The most common reason for requesting an extension is to accumulate the minimum five years' time in practice required to become a certified specialist. Candidates are allowed to submit their applications before they meet the five-year time-in-practice requirement so that other portions of the application can be evaluated until that requirement is met.

## **ATTACHMENT(S) LIST**

- A. 2017 Post-Examination Initial Certification Applications Filed by Specialty as of March 1, 2021
- B. 2019 Post-Examination Initial Certification Applications Filed by Specialty as of March 1, 2021