MODEL
STANDARDS FOR CERTIFICATION OF LAWYERS
(Revised 05/02/01)

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Arizona Board of Legal Specialization (the "BLS") by the Board of Governors of the State Bar of Arizona (the "Board"), the BLS prescribes the following model standards and requirements for certification of lawyers in accordance with the program in Legal Specialization established by the Board.

No provision herein contained shall in any way limit the right of a lawyer certified as specialists to practice law in all fields or to act as counsel in every type of legal matter. Any lawyer, alone or in association with any other lawyer, shall have the right to practice in all fields of law, even though he or she is certified as specialist.

No lawyer shall be required to be certified as specialist before he or she can practice law in any field of law or act as counsel in any particular type of matter. Any lawyer, alone or in association with any other lawyer, shall have the right to practice in any field of law and to act as counsel in every type of case, even if he or she is not certified as specialist.

I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Active Member of State Bar. An applicant for certification as a legal specialist shall be an active member in good standing of the State Bar of Arizona.

B. Application. An applicant shall be required to complete an application in a form prescribed by the BLS, to furnish such additional and supplemental information as may be required by the BLS, and to comply with all applicable rules and regulations of the BLS.

C. Recommendation. An applicant shall be recommended to the BLS for certification as a legal specialist when the applicant is found to have complied with the applicable standards by a majority of not less than five (5) members of the applicable Advisory Commission.

D. Expiration of Certification. A certificate of legal specialization shall expire five years after the date thereon; provided, however, that if timely application for renewal of certification is made as provided under the Rules and Regulations of the Arizona Board of Legal Specialization, the certificate shall remain in effect until the BLS has acted upon the renewal application. Renewal of certification shall be required every five years.

E. Revocation of Certificate. The BLS may revoke the certification of a legal specialist for any reason specified in the Rules and Regulations of the Arizona Board of Legal Specialization, including but not limited to advice from the appropriate Advisory Commission that the certified lawyer no longer meets the criteria for substantial involvement in the specified field of law as set forth in Section II(B) hereof.

F. Fees. Every applicant shall pay such application and testing fees as may be prescribed by the BLS.

II. STANDARDS FOR CERTIFICATION.

A. Required Period of Law Practice. Applicants must be admitted to the practice of law for at least five years, of which a minimum of two years immediately preceding the application must have been in the practice of law within the State of Arizona and after such admission shall have engaged
in legal service (as defined in Section I of the Rules and Regulations of the Arizona Board of Legal Specialization) equivalent to at least 50% of a full-time law practice.

B. **Substantial Involvement.** The BLS shall establish specific, objective, substantial involvement criteria in each specialty field with advice from the appropriate Advisory Commission.

C. **Competence and Integrity.** An applicant must demonstrate honesty, integrity, professionalism as defined by the Lawyer’s Creed of Professionalism of the State Bar of Arizona, and a high degree of competence in the specialty field. The required degree of competence is substantially higher than that possessed by a general practitioner who regularly handles a matter in the specialty field. A “high degree of competence” shall mean the satisfaction of the following standards:

1. The applicant demonstrates a substantially complete knowledge of substantive law and rules of practice, procedure, evidence and ethics pertaining to the specialty field;

2. The applicant demonstrates a high degree of skill, thoroughness, professionalism, respect for the proceedings, parties and witnesses, preparation, effectiveness and judgment in the specialty field; and

3. The applicant satisfactorily completes a written examination in the topics specified in paragraphs 1 and 2 above. This examination shall be given at least once each calendar year at a date, time and location determined by the certification entity. The test and its grading criteria shall be approved by the ABA and/or BLS.

4. That the applicant demonstrate a substantially complete knowledge of and a high degree of skill in the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms as they apply in the field.

D. **References.** With each application, the applicant will submit the names of at least five Arizona attorneys or professionals who practice in the specialty field or judges before whom the applicant has appeared, familiar with the applicant’s practice, and not including current partners or associates. The BLS/certifying entity will select at least five additional Arizona lawyers, judges, or qualified professionals as references from cases/matters/projects submitted by the applicant to demonstrate substantial involvement. All references will be requested to provide written comments concerning the applicant not only on such specific topics as knowledge, skill, thoroughness, preparation, effectiveness, and judgment, but also concerning the applicant’s ethics and professionalism.

E. **Continuing Legal Education Requirements.** Continuing legal education requirements for legal-specialists shall be 12 hours per year of advance level programming in the specialty field in one or more seminars and, in addition, 3 hours in professional responsibility.

III. **STANDARDS FOR RE-CERTIFICATION.**

The BLS shall establish specific, objective, recertification criteria in each specialty field with advice from the appropriate Advisory Commission.