

Bridge the Gap (BTG) Mentorship Program Process Overview

New Attorney

- ❖ **Read Rule 24-110 NMRA**, the New Mexico Supreme Court Rule that establishes and governs the BTG Mentorship Program. The rule is available at www.nmbar.org/mentorship. Some highlights from the rule are as follows:
 - Participation in the BTG Program is required for all attorneys newly admitted in New Mexico who have not practiced for a minimum of 2 years in another jurisdiction unless the new attorney qualifies for a deferment or an exemption.
 - Newly admitted attorneys must complete the BTG Program by December 31 of the first full calendar year following the year the attorney was admitted.
 - New attorneys receive 12 continuing legal education credits (10 general and 2 professional/ethics).
 - Failure to complete the BTG program can result in suspension.

- ❖ **Enroll** in the BTG Program **within 30 days of being sworn in**. Whether you're exempt or plan to defer, part I of the registration form must be completed.
 - Use the New Lawyer Registration form, which is available at nmbar.org/mentorship to enroll in the Program.
 - This form is also used to request a Deferral or an Exemption.
 - If you have already selected a mentor at the time you enroll, you should specify your mentor's name on your application.
 - If you have not selected a mentor at the time of enrollment, you must complete the Mentor Selection Form when you select your mentor. The Mentor Selection Form is available at nmbar.org/mentorship.

- ❖ Notes regarding mentor selection:
 - Mentor's must be approved by the New Mexico Supreme Court (NMSC) prior to participating in the BTG Program. A list of approved mentors is available at nmbar.org/mentorship. NMSC approval may take several months and is not guaranteed. If your chosen mentor is not already on the approved mentor list, be sure to take into account the time needed for approval.
 - *Your mentor cannot be your direct supervisor at work.*
 - *Your mentor should not be a family member.*

- ❖ **Pay** the \$300 participation fee. Rule 24-110(F) permits payment of the fee in two parts. The first half of the fee (\$150) is due by March 1 of the year immediately following your admission to the Bar. The second half of the fee (\$150) is due by December 31 of that same year. The credit card payment form is available at www.nmbar.org/mentorship.

- ❖ **Register** for and attend the BTG Practical Skills for New Lawyers CLE class. This CLE is offered 4 times each year by the State Bar Foundation Center for Legal Education. Each class is webcast statewide. *Your mentor does not have to attend with you.* The schedule of classes is available at www.nmbar.org/mentorship.
- ❖ **Register** for and attend the Basics of Trust Accounting: How to Comply with Disciplinary Board Rule 17-204. The schedule of classes is available at www.nmbar.org/mentorship.
- ❖ **Contact your mentor** to plan activities and arrange a meeting. Complete a minimum of 5 hours of activities with your mentor. Activities should focus on an introduction to the legal community in New Mexico such as, volunteering at a legal fair together, attending a court proceeding together and/or attending professional events together.
- ❖ **Certify** to the BTG Program that you have completed the program requirements. The Certification Form is available at nmbar.org/mentorship.
- ❖ **Receive CLE Credits.** New attorneys receive a full year of CLE credits (10.0 general and 2.0 ethics/professionalism) upon completion of the BTG Program. BTG staff will file your CLE credits when the BTG Program has received the following:
 - Your mentor's Certification of Completion; and
 - Verification from the Center for Legal Education of your completion of both the BTG and Trust Accounting CLEs.
- ❖ **Optionally Audit** up to 18 hours of Center for Legal Education programming. See nmbar.org/cle for a schedule of upcoming classes.

Mentor

- ❖ **Read Rule 24-110 NMRA**, the New Mexico Supreme Court Rule that establishes and governs the BTG Mentorship Program. The rule is available at www.nmbar.org/mentorship.
- ❖ **Apply to be a mentor.** If you are not already an approved mentor, complete and submit the Mentor Application Form available at nmbar.org/mentorship. Please note that all mentors must be approved by the New Mexico Supreme Court prior to participating in the BTG Program.
- ❖ **Pair with a mentee.** Approved mentors are listed on the State Bar's website.
- ❖ **Meet** with the new attorney with whom you have been paired.
- ❖ **Complete** 5 hours of activities/discussion with the new attorney.

- ❖ **Certify** to the BTG Program that you and the new attorney have completed the mentorship portion of the BTG Program requirements. The Certification Form is available at nmbar.org/mentorship.
- ❖ **Receive CLE Credits.** Mentors receive a total of 6.0 CLE credits (4.0 G, 2.0 EP) upon completion of their work with a new attorney in the BTG program. BTG staff will file your CLE credits when the BTG Program has received your certification that you and your mentee have completed the mentor portion of the BTG program.