

The Path to Clerk Certification: Requirements, Benefits, and Impact

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About the Program

The Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program was established to encourage professional development and educational growth within the court clerk profession. It is a partnership between the Texas Court Clerks Association (TCCA), the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center (TMCEC), and Texas State University in San Marcos.

Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program Participant Guide

The Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program was established to encourage professional development and educational growth within the court clerk profession. It is sponsored by the Texas Court Clerks Association (TCCA), the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center (TMCEC), and Texas State University. Program participants achieve certification upon successful completion of each of the three levels: Level I (CCCI), Level II (CCCII), and Level III Municipal Court Clerk (CMCC). Each level requires specific education hours, exams, and an application. Level III certification has additional requirements, including books, journals, and specific seminars.

For more detailed information about the program, visit <https://www.tmcec.com/clerk-certification/>. Please direct any certification-related questions to certification@tmcec.com.

I. General Overview of Certification Requirements by Level

Note: All education hours must be completed within three years of the application date to count toward the required hours below. Participants who completed the New Clerks Seminar or Level III Assessment Clinic more than three years before the application date do not have to attend those seminars again, but the hours from those past seminars do not count toward certification.

A. Level I

- Complete 40 hours of TMCEC, TCCA, or other [approved alternative education](#) (must include the 32-hour TMCEC New Clerks Seminar unless attended more than three years before application date)
- Score 70 or above on each part of the Level I exam
- Complete and submit an [application](#) to TMCEC

B. Level II

- Level I Certification
- Complete 40 hours of TMCEC, TCCA, or other [approved alternative education](#) (participants may reuse unexpired hours)
- Score 70 or above on each part of the Level II exam
- Complete and submit an [application](#) to TMCEC

C. Level III¹

- Level II Certification
- Complete required reading
- Score 70 or above on each part of the Level III exam
- Complete 40 hours of TMCEC, TCCA, or other [approved alternative education](#), including specific events (i.e., Level III Assessment Clinic and Court Administrators Seminar)
- Complete court observations
- Complete and submit a journal with a passing grade of 70
- Complete and submit an [application](#) to TMCEC

¹ Please see the [Level III Course of Study & Requirements](#) document for specific details.

Course Materials

Objectives

1. Identify the requirements and process for obtaining Level I, II, and III municipal court clerk certifications;
2. Explain how clerk certification enhances professional development, improves court operations, and benefits the public; and
3. Develop an action plan to support clerks pursuing certification while fostering a positive and sustainable learning environment.

Requirements & Process



Education Providers

- Texas Municipal Courts Education Center
 - Online Academic Schedule
- Texas Court Clerks Association
 - Education Events webpage
 - Testing Events webpage
- Approved alternative education providers (list maintained online by TMCEC)

Education Formats

- In-person Seminars
- Live, Virtual Courses
- On-demand Virtual Courses



TMCEC Training

New Clerks	Regional Clerks	Specialty Programs	Virtual Clinics	Webinars
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• December & July• 32 hours• Austin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Up to 16 hours• 9 In-person seminars across the state• 1 Virtual simulcast	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Court Administrators• JCM Seminar• Teen Court• MTSI• Legislative Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 hours• Topics vary but may include court security, C3, and mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 hour• Scheduled on various Thursdays at 10:00 a.m.• Air live and recorded for on-demand

TCCA Training

Annual Conference & Business Meeting

- Live in the Fall
- 20 hours credit
- 2025 – San Marcos
- Live virtual option for business meeting only (2 hours credit)
- Member & Non-member fees apply

Regional Road Show

- Live
- March - August
- 8 hours credit
- 6 locations across the state
- Free to TCCA members

Level I & II Prep Sessions

- Virtual
- Live in conjunction with TCCA Annual Conference
- Level I – 5 hours credit
- Level II – up to 6 hours credit
- Free to TCCA members
- \$50 fee for non-members, if space available

Level III Book Club

- Virtual On Demand
- Average 1.5 hours credit
- Free to TCCA members
- \$50 fee for non-members, if space available

Level I - CCC1

- 40 hours of education (must include New Clerks Seminar unless attended more than 3 years before application date)
- Successfully pass all 3 parts of the Level I exam
- Submit application to TMCEC
- Do not need to be employed by court to obtain certification but such employment is required to attend TMCEC events

Level II - CCC2

- Level I Certification
- 40 hours of education (may re-use unexpired hours from Level I)
- Successfully pass all 3 parts of the Level II exam
- Submit application to TMCEC
- Do not need to be employed by court to obtain certification but such employment is required to attend TMCEC events

Level III - CMCC

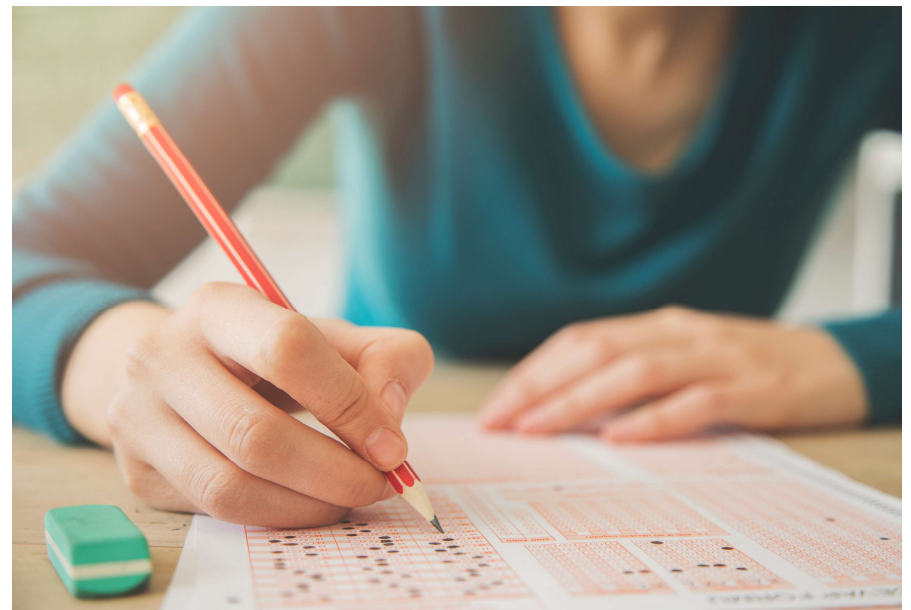
- Level II Certification
- 40 hours of education that includes:
 - Level III Assessment Clinic (24 hours) (does not expire)
 - Court Administrators Seminar (12 - 16 hours)
- Pass all 3 parts of Level III Exam (within 5 years of application date)
- 40 hours of court observations
- Passing grade for court observation journal
- Submit application to TMCEC
- Must be employed by court to obtain certification

Other Requirements for All Levels

- All education hours must be completed within three years of the application date to count toward the required hours
 - Exception: Level III Assessment Clinic hours do not expire for purposes of the Level III Certification
- Up to eight (8) of the total hours may be earned by attending approved virtual on-demand (recorded) courses.

Exams

- For all levels, can test and/or retest in parts
- Grade
 - Successful/Unsuccessful
 - Unsuccessful exams receive a number grade
- Eligibility
 - Cannot test for next level until previous level perfected
- Results
 - Posted on TMCEC profile within 45 days



Tips for Test Registration

- All registration and payments through TCCA website at www.texasclerkclerks.org .
- Exam registration must be completed and paid in full at time of registration.
- No walk-ins allowed.
- No refunds or transfers.

Resources & Study Materials

TMCEC and TCCA offer many materials and events to assist participants with certification, including the following:

- Clerk Certification Webpage
- Clerk Study Guides for Level I and Level II
- Prep Sessions
- Practice Exams
- Level III Book Club
- Level III Study Questions
- Mentors
- Flashcards
- Questions? Email certification@tmcec.com.

Applications

- For each level, participants must complete and submit an application to TMCEC with required proof of passing the exam and completion of applicable credit hours.
- For more instructions, go to TMCEC's Becoming Certified webpage.

Certificates

- Upon achievement of certification at Level I or Level II, participants will receive a paper certificate.
- For Level III certificates, participants will receive a mounted certificate, unless the participant requests a paper copy without a mount.
- Replacements are available through the TCCA website at a cost.
- For members, TCCA will present the Level III certificate at a city council meeting.



Maintaining Certification

- Level I & II Certified Clerks: Must complete 12 hours of approved continuing education annually (Sept 1 – Aug 31).
- Level III Certified Clerks: Must complete 20 hours of approved continuing education annually.
- Virtual Courses: Up to 8 hours may be earned through approved virtual on-demand courses.
- Deadline: All continuing education hours must be completed by August 31st each year.

Maintaining Certification

- **Proof of Continuing Education:**
 - Certified clerks must submit proof with renewal application each academic year (Sept 1 – Aug 31), unless eligible for automatic renewal.
 - Clerks do not need to file a renewal application in the same year they become certified.
- **Renewal Application Deadline:** Due by August 31st each year
- **Automatic Certification Renewals:**
 - **Level I & II Clerks:**
 - Automatically renewed after attending a TMCEC event (at least 12 hours), if a record of attendance is submitted on the final day.
 - If submitted after the event, a renewal application is required.
 - **All Levels:**
 - Automatically renewed for attending the TCCA Annual Conference and being on the approved certificate list.
- **Renewal Status Verification:**
 - Clerks can check renewal status under the Clerk Certification tab on the TMCEC Registration Site.

Benefits of Clerk Certification



Increases Efficiency, Professionalism, and Administration of Justice



- Specialized knowledge and expertise
- Efficient handling of court system complexities
- Streamlined processes and reduced delays
- Timely resolutions
- Training on best practices (case management, document handling, legal protocols)
- Well-prepared clerks for responsibilities
- Improved professionalism in the court system
- More reliable and efficient judicial environment
- Enhanced administration of justice

Provides Clerks with Knowledge and Skills to Navigate Complex Court Processes

- Courts are complex with laws, regulations, and procedures
- Certification provides tools and knowledge to navigate complexities
- Certified clerks understand legal terminology, procedures, and case management
- Serve as a knowledgeable resource for judges, attorneys, and the public
- Ensure cases are processed according to the law
- Help the court system run smoothly and effectively

Develops Deeper Legal Knowledge, Stronger Management Capabilities, and Advanced Leadership Skills:

- Certification program focuses on legal procedures, management, and leadership skills
- Certified clerks gain a deeper understanding of court systems and legal frameworks
- Improved decision-making and enhanced legal acumen
- Includes leadership and management modules for higher-level responsibilities
- Fosters a competent and confident workforce
- Capable of managing court operations, leading teams, and improving workflows
- Ensures the court's mission is carried out effectively

Benefits to the Public:

- Certified clerks offer efficient and professional service to the public
- Enhanced ability to answer questions accurately and provide guidance
- Assist the public in navigating the court system
- Faster, more reliable, and user-friendly court services
- Fosters trust in the judicial process
- Improves access to justice

Support Clerks Pursuing Certification



Develop an Action Plan

- Encourage participation

Recognize the value of the program and actively encourage eligible staff to enroll. Acknowledge the benefits certification brings to the court's operations and to the community.

- Provide resources

Allocate time and resources to support clerks as they pursue certification. This includes allowing adequate study time, granting access to TMCEC training events, and providing financial assistance for program fees where possible.

- Be mindful of challenges

Understand that deadlines and requirements can sometimes cause stress. Open lines of communication and offer reassurance that the journey to certification is not a race but a process of growth and development.

- Celebrate milestones

Recognize and celebrate accomplishments at every stage of certification. Public acknowledgment of efforts and achievements reinforces the importance of the program and boosts morale.

Thank you

Questions? Email Us!
certifiction@tmcec.com