

**SUMMARY OF TBLS REQUIREMENTS  
FOR CERTIFICATION IN  
PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION LAW**  
~ A CATEGORY OF REAL ESTATE LAW ~

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If you're a Texas lawyer who's thinking about applying for certification in Property Owners Association Law (POA Law), please visit the website of the Texas Board of Legal Specialization (TBLS) at [www.tbls.org](http://www.tbls.org). This Summary is no substitute for your careful reading of the official and complete General Requirements for Attorney Certification (Part I) and the Specific Area Requirements for Real Estate Law (Part II, Section VIII), as published by TBLS on its website at [www.tbls.org](http://www.tbls.org).

## DEADLINE NEARS . . .

Caution One. Midnight on **April 30, 2018** (a Monday) is the absolute deadline for applying to be in the inaugural 2018 class of POA Law certifications. The application takes time to complete. At the bewitching hour, the system locks and applications cannot be improved or completed.

Caution Two. The application uses TBLS lingo. Sometimes "Specialty Area" means POA Law, other times it means Real Estate Law, the parent specialty of which POA Law is one of four subcategories. Before assuming you know the correct context, please check with TBLS staff. You may be surprised.

Caution Three. "POA Law" is the nickname for the multi-faceted law of common interest communities - from creation to termination, and everything in between. The new specialty is not only for lawyers who represent POAs. Read about it on the TBLS website.

### YEARS OF PRACTICE

Have at least **5 years of full-time law practice**. An applicant for "grandfathering" (see below) must also be licensed for at least 10 years.

**Source.** Part I, Section II.G,<sup>1</sup> TBLS General Requirements  
Part II, Section VIII.B.1.b.(4)(b),<sup>2</sup> TBLS Specific Area Requirements for Real Estate Law

### PERCENTAGE OF PRACTICE

For **each of the 3 years before applying**, applicant's time must have been devoted to the following practices:

- (1) At least **20% to the practice of POA Law** (as defined in the Standards)
- (2) At least **30% to the practice of Real Estate Law** (including POA Law)

Looking ahead, the same minimums must be met annually to continue qualifying for certification in POA Law as a subcategory of Real Estate Law.

**Source.** Part I, Section VI.A,<sup>3</sup> TBLS General Requirements  
Part II, Section VIII.B.1.a.,<sup>4</sup> TBLS Specific Area Requirements for Real Estate Law

## RESUME

Submit a resume or job description showing activities in Real Estate Law for at least the **previous 5 years**.

**Source.** Part II, Section VIII.B.1.b.(1),<sup>5</sup> TBLS Specific Area Requirements for Real Estate Law

## TASKS

For the 3-year period before applying, state the number of matters handled (if any) in each of 11 listed task categories. The 11 categories cover all aspects of Real Estate Law.

\* **Tip.** Focus on the task categories that support your POA Law application.

**Source.** Part II, Section VIII.B.1.b.(2),<sup>6</sup> TBLS Specific Area Requirements for Real Estate Law

## BREADTH OF EXPERIENCE

For **each of the 3 years before applying**, describe 20 substantive tasks or services performed in at least three of the 13 areas of experience listed in the Specifications, for a total of at least 60 descriptions of substantive tasks.

\* **Tip.** Draft your answers on a mock application, from which you can copy and paste to the online application. That way there's less risk of losing your text if the State's computer skips a beat, and you'll have a copy of your answers for your file.

**Source.** Part II, Section VIII.B.1.b.(4)(a),<sup>7</sup> TBLS Specific Area Requirements for Real Estate Law

## CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

Complete at least **60 hours of CLE in Real Estate Law** (not limited to POA Law) during the 3 years immediately preceding application, through December 31 of the year of application. The CLE may be in any category of Real Estate Law - Residential, Commercial, Farm & Ranch, and POA.

\* **Tip.** For 2018 applicants, the 60 hours must be earned between April 2015 and year-end 2018.

**Source.** Part I, Section V, TBLS General Requirements

## REFERENCES

Furnish at least **5 references who are Texas attorneys or judges** with whom applicant had dealings involving real estate law within the last 3 years, and who are familiar with applicant's POA Law practice. A reference must not be a current law partner or associate of applicant. TBLS may screen and qualify references.

\* **Tip.** References are not required to be POA lawyers or real estate lawyers.

**Source.** Part I, Section IV <sup>8</sup>, TBLS General Requirements  
Part II, Section VIII.C <sup>9</sup>, TBLS Specific Area Requirements for Real Estate Law

## FEES

- \$150 - Application fee, payable to TBLS by April 30, 2018
- \$250 - Examination fee, payable to TBLS by October 15, 2018 (date of exam)
- + \$50 - If candidate uses laptop to take exam, TBLS charges an additional \$50

## EXAM

Exams for all specialties are given at the same time - in Austin on October 15, 2018. POA Law is tested as part of the Real Estate Law specialization exam, which is divided into two parts - essay and objective.

**Essay.** The essay portion of the Real Estate Law exam is specific to POA Law, and consists of three questions, each worth 100 points. Essay questions typically have multiple parts, making partial credit possible.

**Objective.** The objective portion of the Real Estate Law exam consists of 100 multiple-choice questions, each worth 2 points. Of the 100 multiple-choice questions, 10 are in ethics. The other 90 multiple-choice questions cover all four Real Estate specialties - POA, Residential, Commercial, and Farm & Ranch. A candidate in any specialty is tested in all 4 areas. It's not enough to know only POA Law.

**To Pass.** Together, the objective and essay parts have a combined maximum score of 500 points. To pass requires a score of at least 350 points (70% correct).

## GRANDFATHERING

In TBLS-talk, "grandfathering" means certification without examination. Attorneys who are already TBLS certified in Residential Real Estate Law or Commercial Real Estate Law (or both) may become certified in POA Law **without taking the examination**, if they meet all of the other certification requirements, plus they must have been licensed for at least 10 years. The grandfathering opportunity is available through 2020.

**Source.** Part II, Section VIII.B.1.b.(4)(b) <sup>10</sup>, TBLS Specific Area Requirements for Real Estate Law

*(End of Summary)*