



# Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan

## BEST PRACTICES RECOMMENDATION CONTINUOUS LEGAL EDUCATION

In order to ensure that prosecutors maintain a level of knowledge and skill necessary for duties required, and to improve their abilities to seek justice for victims, defendants and their communities, ongoing legal education is recommended. Specifically, PAAM recommends:

- All assistant prosecutors participate in a minimum of 30 hours of legal education over the course of a two year period.
- New assistant prosecutors undergo an orientation to provide an understanding of their responsibilities in the criminal justice system, office protocol and technical skills. Included within this orientation would be a minimum of one hour trainings on the Michigan Rules of Professional Responsibility, ethics and *Brady/Giglio* issues.
- Legal education should include areas of substantive law (e.g. domestic violence), rules of evidence, discovery, forensic evidence, trial advocacy and other matters relevant to their duties as prosecutors. Ethics education, either as a component to a larger subject or as a stand-alone, should be a component of a prosecutor's training.
- The prosecuting attorney for each office shall determine the suitability of the legal education, which may include but is not limited to training performed within the office, offered by the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan (PAAM) or the Prosecuting Attorneys Coordinating Council (PACC), and trainings offered by other acceptable local, statewide or national organizations. Legal education can be fulfilled by attendance at trainings, online participation, review of online or written documents or materials or any other method that the prosecuting attorney approves.
- Prosecutors should seek funding in their budgets to meet these standards, emphasizing the essential role that training has in assuring the fair, efficient and effective performance of prosecutorial duties. Counties should be responsive to such requests by providing a serviceable level of funding for training, including appropriate staffing to allow for same.

A best practices recommendation by the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan (PAAM) is the product of careful consideration of experienced prosecuting attorneys. However, it is only a recommendation. A best practices recommendation may or may not be feasible or desirable to implement in every jurisdiction. There may be other methods in local jurisdictions to reach the same or similar objectives.

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