



Marital and Family Law

What is Board Certification?

Board certification recognizes attorneys' special knowledge, skills and proficiency in various areas of law, and professionalism and ethics in practice. Certification is the highest level of evaluation by the Florida Bar of the competency and experience of attorneys in the 24 areas of law approved for certification by the Supreme Court of Florida. Marital and Family Law is one of the approved areas for certification. Marital and Family Law includes divorce, paternity, child support, timesharing, name change, and injunctions for protection.

Established in 1982 by the Florida Supreme Court, board certification helps consumers identify specialists and experts in various areas of law. Board Certified Florida Bar members are the only Florida attorneys allowed to use the terms "Board Certified", "Specialist", "Expert" or "B.C.S". for "Board Certified Specialist" when referring to their legal credentials.

Only six percent of eligible Florida Bar members, approximately 4,600 lawyers, are board certified. As of January 2017, there were 273 [Board Certified Marital and Family Lawyers](#) in Florida. Mira Staggers White is part of that small group of lawyers certified in marital and family law, and is one of only two attorneys certified in that area with an office in Charlotte County.

A lawyer who is a member in good standing of The Florida Bar and who meets the standards prescribed by the state's Supreme Court may become board certified. The minimum requirements for certification are listed below, although each area of certification may contain higher or additional standards.

- A minimum of five years in law practice.
- Substantial involvement in the field of law for which certification is sought.
- Satisfactory peer review from other lawyers and judges to assess competence in the specialty field as well as character, ethics and professionalism in the practice of law.
- Satisfaction of the certification area's continuing legal education requirements.
- A passing grade on the examination required of all applicants.

Board certification is valid for five years. The attorney during that time must continue to practice law and attend Florida Bar-approved continuing legal education courses. Recertification requirements are similar to those for initial certification. Not all qualified lawyers are certified, but those who are board certified have voluntarily taken the extra step to have their competence and experience evaluated.