Virginia CLE® Phone Seminar General Procedures

- You can expect to be called by our contractor about 15-20 minutes before the seminar begins. We'll do sound checks, and chat about any last-minute details.
  - You may wish to use a headset to keep your hands free to go though your notes.
  - Speaker phones vary in their sound quality; we can test yours in the time before the seminar starts if you plan to use it.
  - Depending on how much back-and-forth discussion you intend to have with your co-speaker, you may choose to mute your line when "off mike," just so long as you remember to un-mute later. If you keep your line live, please be aware of any background noise: rustling papers, keyboarding, cell phones, heavy breathing.
- When the start time arrives, you'll hear an automated voice say something like, "The conference will now begin." The operator will then give about a minutes worth of introduction and instruction. She'll then turn it over to me for a short introduction, after which I will turn the program over to you.
- Once we're all on the line, the only way for us to correspond is by e-mail; we monitor it at all times, in case you need something from us.
- Timing. For the normal 2 hour phone seminar, we need at least 1:46 of instruction to qualify for 2.0 hours of MCLE credit. It's OK to go a little long (up to about 1:55—we need to leave some time at the end for questions), but please don't go short.
  - When your presentation is complete, please say something like, "We'll be happy to take your questions," or something else to signal that you're done.
  - At that point, the operator will come back on the line and give our listeners instruction about how they can ask questions. There will be a lag between the time she finishes and the first question pops up on her system. She may ask if you have anything additional you'd like to say while we wait for a question: you may or may not.
- Assume a question comes in. (We don't typically get many questions in phone seminars—don't take it as a reflection on your presentation. Indeed, having made everything so clear, no one needs to have anything clarified!) The operator will announce the questioner who, after invariably asking, "Can you hear me?" often identifies themselves and then asks the question. One or all of you should respond.
- Please be wary of the questioner who asks a very detailed hypothetical: he or she is generally trying to get you to solve the thorny legal issue from their current case. To some extent, that's OK, and you can answer if it fits within your presentation and will be of some interest to the general audience. However, if it gets too far afield, or too detailed, please offer to discuss the matter with the person off-line, and hope that this is satisfactory.
- At around the 2 hour mark, the operator is instructed to provide the MCLE code for the seminar. She'll return to questions if there are some. We generally see the switchboard go dark after announcing the code, but sometimes people hang around for more questions. We don't have a specific end time; rarely will we go beyond 2:10.
- The operator will announce the end of the seminar, and the MCLE code again even if she did so earlier.
- You'll hear another automated voice say something like, "The conference is now ended. Please hold while we disconnect the audience." After a few moments, the same voice will announce that we are in a private chat room, just as we were before the seminar began.
- We'll have a very short after-action review, and then we're done!