



**Frequently Asked Questions  
January 25, 2020**

**1. What is the AAML and why should I join?**

The AAML exists to provide leadership that promotes the highest degree of professionalism and excellence in the practice of family law.

The AAML and each of its Fellows aspire to be inclusive of lawyers of varying gender, national origins, racial and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientation, gender identity, lawyers with disabilities and geographic location in our Fellowship, outreach, governance and leadership.

Fellowship in the AAML provides the opportunity to meet new colleagues in all 50 states, exchange thoughts and ideas to the betterment of family law and elevate the practice of family law by access to nationwide resources. AAML membership garners respect and exemplifies the highest professionalism and collegiality in family law.

**2. How do I join the AAML?**

- a.** Requirements vary by state. If your state has board certification, you must be board certified to be eligible to apply. Some states require that you take the national examination and/or state written examination. Please check your chapter for the specific requirements or contact the National Office at (800) 399-3782.
- b.** The next step for all attorneys is to visit [www.AAML.org](http://www.AAML.org) and apply for fellowship by clicking on the button, “Apply for Fellowship”. You will receive an application after you provide some preliminary information and confirm you have read our “Bounds of Advocacy.”
- c.** Complete the application and submit the application fee of \$250.
- d.** National AAML confirms receipt of the application and sends evaluation forms to:
  - i.** All Chapter Fellows
  - ii.** Judges submitted by you
  - iii.** Peer References submitted by you

- e. Once the application and evaluation forms are completed and returned to the National Office, they are reviewed and then the application and forms are sent to the Chapter Board of Examiners for the State where you practice law. You will be interviewed by that Chapter Board of Examiners and, if required in that Chapter, take the written state test.
- f. If your Chapter requires that you take the written National examination, you will be notified as to the next available date for the exam (the exam is given three times per year) and the materials from which the exam is prepared.
- g. The National Board of Examiners will review and make the decision on the applications at their Executive Committee Meetings (five times per year).
- h. The Board of Examiners notifies the Chapter President of the decision on admissions, and a week or so later the Applicant is notified with further instructions.

### **3. Who are the best candidates for Fellowship in the AAML?**

- a. The attorney has demonstrated an active interest and competency in matrimonial law as evidenced by the fulfillment of criteria and standards as established by the AAML Board of Examiners and Board of Governors. Those standards are available in the Apply for Fellowship section of the website, but they include writing professional articles, regularly teaching legal education courses in family law, and leadership in professional organizations.
- b. The attorney has substantial experience and is able to handle complex matters relating to custody and support of children, property division and alimony or spousal support. This includes the ability to litigate a case involving the examination and cross examination of experts, admitting evidence, and general trial advocacy.
- c. The attorney is recognized by the bench and bar as a leading ethical practitioner in the area of matrimonial law.
- d. The attorney has demonstrated substantial involvement in the matrimonial field and has endeavored to encourage the study, improve the practice, elevate the standards and advance the cause of matrimonial law.

### **4. How long is the application process?**

Generally, it takes between 6-14 months, but it depends on several variables including the following:

- a. Scheduling the chapter interview and written examination required for your Chapter, if any and the National Test, if required (the National exam is given three times per year in February, June and October),
- b. Receipt of the required references and evaluations (sometimes this requires reminders from the National Office when peer and judge evaluations are not returned);
- c. Review by the National Board of Examiners which usually meet five times per year.

**5. If I am required to take the National exam, how do I know what is covered?**

The test questions are all derived from specific materials which will be identified in the letter provided to you by National as to the topics to be covered on the National exam. If you study those materials, you should have no problem passing the exam.

**6. Is the application process confidential?**

Yes. Everyone on both the National and State Board of Examiners, has a duty to keep your application and the contents confidential.

**7. Who decides whether I will be admitted?**

The final determination is made by the National Board of Examiners after it reviews the applicant jacket that includes the evaluation forms from other Chapter fellows, Judges and peer references. The National Board of Directors votes on each Applicant.

**8. Can I amend or supplement my application?**

Yes! If you have additional information to share before the final review of your application by the National Board of Examiners, please contact the National office.

**9. Do Fellows advertise their membership and if so, how does a Fellow do so?**

Yes. Fellows may use the AAML logo on personal and law firm marketing materials, including websites and social media. Fellows may also link websites and social media profiles to the website and profiles of the AAML.