



South African Medico-Legal Association
In Pursuit of Excellence

POLICY AND REGULATIONS REGARDING CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR REGISTERED SAMLA MEDICO-LEGAL PRACTITIONERS

Policy date approved: 5 September 2023

Policy date for revision: _____

1. Standard outcome

The purpose of SAMLA CPD is to assist SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners to maintain and acquire new and updated levels of knowledge, skills and ethical attitudes that will be of measurable benefit in professional medico-legal practice. SAMLA seeks to promote continuing professional development of competent, ethical professionals to facilitate excellence in medico-legal practice for the good of the public of South Africa.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 Promote the development of professional standards of excellence, knowledge, and skills in medico-legal practice.
- 2.2 Provide opportunities towards professional development of skills and proficiency of medico-legal practitioners in keeping with the changes in the South African context.
- 2.3 Commitment of medico-legal practitioners to conduct ethical practice.
- 2.4 Facilitation of competence of medico-legal practitioners with regards to knowledge in select portions of law and medicine relevant to personal injury and medical malpractice claims.

3. Scope

This policy is intended for use by all SAMLA Registered Medico-Legal Practitioners.

4. **Description of Terms (as defined in the SAMLA MOI)**

SAMLA	South African Medico-Legal Association.
CPD	Continuous professional development refers to learning activities professionals engage in to develop, enhance, and maintain their knowledge and skill in their area of practice.
Area of practice	Healthcare, Law, and Allied professions, as they are practiced by their members, and as prescribed and regulated by the different professional bodies, i.e., SANC, HPCSA, Legal Professional Council of SA.
Medico-Legal Practitioner	Is an amalgam of healthcare-, legal- and aligned practitioners and other stakeholders, who pool their expertise, knowledge, and experience within their areas of expertise, in furthering the cause of justice in both litigation and mediation, where healthcare and law interact.
Medico-Legal	Conduct involves or relates to all areas where healthcare and law interact.
Medico-Legal practice	Generic term used by Medico-Legal Practitioners to describe a field of practice where the Healthcare Practitioners collaborate with Legal Practitioners and Health Practitioners to resolve medical disputes and to further the cause of justice.
Competence	Characteristics, knowledge, and skills essential to practice efficiently in a specific field.
CPD points	Referring to the continuing professional development points accrued per hour.
CPD activity	Refers to continuous educational learning opportunities undertaken for the purpose of accruing SAMLA CPD points.
Portfolio of evidence	Proof of activities undertaken to accrue CPD points.
Compliance	Refers to the SAMLA CPD requirements and submission of the portfolio of evidence in each two-year period.
Non-compliance	Refers to the failure to comply with the CPD requirements and/or failure to submit a portfolio of evidence for the SAMLA CPD points accrued in any two-year period.
Deferment	Referring to the postponement of CPD activities for a specific period. Any application for deferment will be considered by the SAMLA Credentialing Committee and SAMLA CPD representative based on the circumstances.
Exemption	Release from the obligation to accrue SAMLA CPD points for the purpose of meeting the CPD requirements.

5. Measurement of Continuing Professional Development

- 5.1 To remain on the SAMLA register, registered SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners need to accrue 20 medico-legal CPD points per 24-month cycle, i.e., 10 points per annum with the facility to roll over between one year and the next.
- 5.2 The requirement to accumulate CPD points will become effective on the date a member was registered as a SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioner.
- 5.3 The 5 ethics CPD points per annum awarded to any practitioner by the HPCSA will be recognized by SAMLA as 5 of the 10 SAMLA CPD points required per annum by SAMLA i.e., 10 of the 20 CPD points required per 24-month cycle may be earned in HPCSA-recognized ethics CPD activities.
- 5.4 Only activities related to **ethics and medico-legal practice** will be considered for SAMLA CPD points. This will be based on the discretion of the SAMLA Education and Training Committee. For example, if a SAMLA medico-legal practitioner attends a CPD activity for the requirements of the HPCSA, and that specific activity is related to medico-legal practice the SAMLA medical practitioner can also accrue that same CPD points as SAMLA CPDs.

5.5 CPD Allocation

Activity	Definition	Points
Attendance	Medico-Legal Practitioner attending seminars, workshop, webinar and alike.	1 point/hour
Presenters	Medico-Legal Practitioner presenting a seminar, workshop, webinar and alike.	2 points/hour
Development	Medico-Legal Practitioner developing a tool, policy or guideline related to medico-legal practice.	Points will be allocated at the discretion of the SAMLA Education and Training Committee and will be dependent on the proof of time and value of the activity.
Research	Medico-Legal Practitioner publishing a research article related to medico-legal practice.	Points will be allocated at the discretion of the SAMLA Education and Training Committee and will be dependent on the proof of time and value of the activity.
Mentorship	According to the SAMLA Mentorship Policy.	Points will be allocated at the discretion of the SAMLA Education and Training Committee and will be dependent on the proof of time and academic value of the activity. Mentors must be in good standing with SAMLA and must provide their portfolio of evidence.

5.6 Activities that do not qualify for SAMLA CPD points include the following:

- i. Time spent preparing presentations.
- ii. Meetings
- iii. Membership of professional bodies.

6. SAMLA Registered Medico-Legal Practitioners responsibilities

6.1 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners on the SAMLA register would have to be committed and take responsibility towards the enhancement of their professional competence in medico-legal practice.

6.2 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners have the responsibility to acquaint themselves with the content, information and SAMLA CPD requirements contained in this policy document.

6.3 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners are required to fully engage in CPD activities.

6.4 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners should be compliant and meet the requirements for the accumulation of 20 SAMLA CPD points per 24-month cycle.

6.5 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners should keep a personal portfolio of SAMLA CPD evidence for the CPD activities they attended.

6.6 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners may be audited at any given time during a 24-month cycle. They may then be requested to submit their portfolio of evidence via e-mail to info@samla.org.za

6.7 The portfolio of SAMLA CPD evidence should be kept safe for a minimum of five years in case of a randomly selected audit.

6.8 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners need to ensure that they are in possession of an attendance and participation certificate after the completion of a CPD activity.

6.9 They should also ensure the certificate contains the following details:

- i. Name and Surname/Registration number of the participant
- ii. Topic of the Activity
- iii. Number of CPD points
- iv. Attendance/Completion Date of activity
- v. Name of Service Provider
- vi. Confirmation of continuous attendance

6.10 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners should submit a copy of their certificate of attendance and participation in CPD activities as CPD evidence to SAMLA in the event a non-SAMLA event was attended.

6.11 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners should start to report their CPD activities to SAMLA from the 1st of January after registration as a SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioner.

7. Monitoring and recordkeeping of SAMLA CPDs

7.1 SAMLA Medico-legal practitioners should keep their portfolio of evidence in readiness as the SAMLA CPD representative may request SAMLA Registered Medico-Legal Practitioners to submit their POE for auditing at any given time during a 24-month cycle.

7.2 SAMLA will comply with the objectives and criteria as set out in this policy.

7.3 SAMLA CPD database will be audited annually, and a report submitted.

8. Non-compliance and disciplinary steps

8.1 SAMLA Registered Medico-Legal Practitioners should submit their portfolio of evidence to SAMLA Information <info@samla.org.za> for the CPD representative to audit if requested.

8.2 If they are non-compliant the following procedure will be followed:

- i. Six months before the expiry of each 2-year cycle a reminder will be sent out to the SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioner notifying them that they have 6 months before their 2-year SAMLA CPD's are due.
- ii. A grace period of 6 months will be afforded to meet the SAMLA CPD requirements.
- iii. Evidence of compliance should be submitted by the SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioner at the end of the 6-month period.

8.3 If they remain non-compliant, they will be removed from the SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners register.

8.4 To re-register, they would need to apply for re-registration as a SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioner on the exact same terms as any new applicant.

9. Deferral and Exemption

9.1 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners eligible for deferral/exemption will be required to apply in writing to the SAMLA Credentialing Committee. The reason for application for deferral/exemption should be stated clearly. Deferral/exemption will be determined and granted at the discretion of the SAMLA Credentialing Committee on an individual basis.

9.2 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners moving/working abroad may be eligible for deferral at the discretion of the SAMLA Credentialing Committee.

9.3 Exemption may be granted for SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners engaged in formal education programs i.e., Master's/Doctoral' degree at the discretion of the SAMLA Credentialing Committee.

9.4 SAMLA Medico-Legal Practitioners suffering from an illness rendering them unable to complete CPD activities may be granted deferral at the discretion of the SAMLA Credentialing Committee.

9.5 Medico-Legal Practitioners whom voluntary remove themselves from the SAMLA register will have to re-apply to become a SAMLA Registered Medico-Legal Practitioner on the same terms as any new applicant.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'E Stellenberg', enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape.

Prof E Stellenberg
SAMLA National Chairperson

Date: 24 January 2025