



# CMLX Executive Summary

## Background

Certification programs are designed to identify and recognize individuals who meet a specified standard defining competence in a field. In keeping with this practice, the goal of the CMLX program is to produce certified MLS management specialists as recognized by the accreditation program of the Council of Multiple Listing Services.

Recipients of an MLS designation are recognized for professional competency based on mastery of core skills, compliance with the standards manifested within the industry, skill sets identified by professional peers, and willingness to continually acquire new skills in an effort to advance multiple listing services and build a better marketplace.

This certification credential will be awarded to candidates based solely on their ability to successfully pass courses along with having met specified experience and membership requirements. By doing so, they will be able to answer "YES" when someone asks if they have the knowledge to perform everything to the highest standards within the industry.

Designation also ensures the professional not only has expertise within the MLS industry, but also broad knowledge within the profession. For instance, even though a designee may not be involved with a REALTOR® association-owned MLS, the designee will be expected to understand NAR policies and MLS requirements, as these areas have historically had significant impact on MLSs.

## Why Should I Get Certified?

Identifying skill sets and competencies is critical to a rapidly changing industry. Successful MLS management includes an awareness of technology and its uses in the real estate marketplace, increased sophistication in negotiating mergers and cooperative agreements, the ability to manage layers of employee and volunteer structures, and the oversight necessary to ensure sound financial management. In addition, the specialty knowledge involved in data systems and internet marketing is important for today's successful MLS management.

The benefits of earning this designation are apparent. Designees will be recognized for having proven themselves to be knowledgeable within the industry and increase their opportunities for career mobility and advancement. For employers, certification is a trusted way of recognizing accomplished employees. For the MLS industry, certification builds an image of professionalism and encourages the hiring of professional MLS executives and senior staff.

## CMLS Member Benefit Opportunity

Within MLS management ranks, there is a great diversity of experience, skill, and knowledge. In developing a certification program, the Designation Committee considered the target market and the knowledge expectations for candidates. In response to these issues, the committee articulated the following objective:

*“The program will be designed for MLS specialists. It is not intended solely as a training ground for an entry-level MLS staff person: certification holders will be a prestigious group that sets a performance precedent and attracts designation candidates. It is the intent of the program to set a role model design and expectations, and to establish a core subject matter. The understanding of the subject matter will set a standard for the MLS executive profession and establish professional standards.”*

## Benefits to the CMLS Community

The benefits of certification come in the form of a better trained MLS manager, a more effective business partner community, a skill and knowledge acquisition path for certification candidates, a body of knowledge appropriate to the specialty of MLS management, a mark of achievement to certification holders, and a benchmark to measure the core competencies within the profession.

In addition, Level 1 courses are available to MLS volunteer leadership, which provides a resource for education of key stakeholders and decision-makers in serving as volunteer leaders and policy makers. It empowers a more efficient marketplace.

## CMLX Designation Levels

The CMLX designation is structured into tiered segments, which is based loosely on a collegiate, graduate, and post-graduate program. Here, certification is designated as “Professional,” “Executive,” and “Expert.” Some have pre-course requirements, and some are followed by a pass/fail exam or case study analysis.



### Level 1 Certification: MLS Professional

**Overview:** The MLS Professional program is the first in a three-level educational program. CMLX1 is designed to cover broad MLS-related subject matter for an overall review of the key components of a successful MLS.

The MLS Professional course is available to all CMLS members and MLS volunteer leadership, with MLS volunteer leaders eligible to earn the CMLXV designation by completing CMLX1 coursework. In either case, member organizations are responsible for registration and payment on behalf of their volunteers.

**General Outline:** The MLS Professional program is generally outlined as a five-module self-paced program. Upon completion of the module, an exam must be passed prior to moving on to the next module. After all five modules are passed the MLS Professional designation is awarded.

**Conclusion:** Upon completion of the MLS Professional designation, recipients will have broad knowledge of all key components of an MLS, a general understanding of the distribution and protection of data and an awareness of the various governing and ownership models existing in the industry today.



## Level 2 Certification: MLS Executive

**Overview:** The MLS Executive program is the second in a three-part educational program. While CMLX1 covers broad MLS subject matter, CMLX2 is designed to clarify expectations for and improve the core competency of MLS executives. This level designation is open to MLS executives, MLS staff (with approval of the MLS Executive) and industry partners.

**General Outline:** The MLS Executive program is generally outlined as six 2-hour programs. Upon completion of coursework, a white paper must be completed prior to earning the second-level designation and moving on to the final expert level program.

**Conclusion:** By the end of the MLS Executive level program, graduates should be fluent in the terminology, practices, relationships, and capabilities expected of leaders in the industry.



## Level 3 Certification: MLS Expert

**Overview:** The MLS Expert program is the last of a three-part educational series to prepare MLS executives to be experts in critical areas of the MLS industry. The Expert Level designation is available to MLS Executive and senior staff only (such as COO) with permission of the MLS Executive.

Graduates are exposed to critiques, classroom debates, high-level writing skills, challenging subject matter, critical thinking skills, and a defense of their final project to industry peers. Participants also receive individualized professional coaching to improve their management skills and leadership style.

**General Outline:** The MLS Expert program is designed to challenge the skills of MLS executives by expanding their core competency skills to include finance, predictive strategies, high-level leadership interaction, and strategic planning.

All MLS Expert classes are live format only, as the benefits of peer review, critique, and participation are too great to diminish at the highest level.

CMLS members interested in submitting an application to participate in the CMLX designation program may contact the CMLS office at [cmlx@councilofmls.org](mailto:cmlx@councilofmls.org) for more information.