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## Peer Review Ratings - Explanation

### An Explanation of the Peer Review Ratings Categories

There are two components to each Martindale-Hubbell Peer Review Rating:

#### 1. General Ethical Standards Rating

The General Ethical Standards Rating denotes adherence to professional standards of conduct and ethics, reliability, diligence and other criteria relevant to the discharge of professional responsibilities.

The General Recommendation Rating is:

**V** - Very High

A lawyer must receive a General Ethical Standards Rating before his or her review can proceed to the next step.

#### 2. Legal Ability Ratings

Legal Ability Ratings take into consideration the standard of professional ability in the area where the lawyer practices, the lawyer's expertise, and other professional qualifications. If a lawyer's practice is limited or specialized, Peer Review Ratings are based on performance in those specific fields of law.

Legal Ability Ratings are:

**C** - Good to High

**B** - High to Very High

**A** - Very High to Preeminent

When both categories of Peer Review Ratings are confirmed, a lawyer receives an **CV**, **BV** or **AV** Rating.

If a lawyer moves to a different state, his or her rating will appear in Martindale-Hubbell with the state abbreviation indicating that it was established in another state or province.

### Peer Review Ratings reflect career development

A lawyer's Peer Review Rating will generally improve over time. But Peer Review Ratings can be revised downward, or even removed if a decline is noted in ability or ethical standards.

**CV® Peer Review Rating** — The CV is a good first rating for lawyers and a definitive statement of their above-average ability and unquestionable ethics. This is the maximum rating a lawyer can receive who has been admitted to the bar from 3-4 years.

**BV® Peer Review Rating** — The BV is an excellent rating for a lawyer with more experience. This is the maximum rating a lawyer can receive who has been admitted to the bar from 5-9 years.

**AV® Peer Review Rating** — An AV rating is a significant accomplishment - a testament to the fact that a lawyer's peers rank him or her at the highest level of professional excellence. A lawyer must be admitted to the bar for 10 years or more to receive an AV rating.

### Inquiries

Questions about the Peer Review Ratings system can be sent by email to [ratings@martindale.com](mailto:ratings@martindale.com).

### More resources...

Attorney directory from  
*Lawyers.com*

Counsel to Counsel Forums

eAttorney

LexisNexis®

lexisONE® for Small Firms

or by mail to:

Peer Review Rating Services  
LexisNexis Martindale-Hubbell  
121 Chanlon Road  
New Providence, NJ 07974

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