

A proposed [class action lawsuit](#) has been filed by Martin & Jones and Shipman & Wright, on behalf of all students attending the Charlotte School of Law during the fall 2016 semester. The complaint alleges that Charlotte Law and its owners, InfiLaw, violated North Carolina's prohibition against unfair or deceptive trade practices, breached its fiduciary duty to students, was unjustly enriched, and committed a constructive fraud against its students. The complaint further alleges that Charlotte Law made multiple misrepresentations to current and prospective students regarding Charlotte Law's compliance with American Bar Association Standards, and failed to disclose its noncompliance even after being ordered to do so. Specifically, the complaint alleges the following:

In March 2014, the ABA visited Charlotte Law for a regularly-conducted review of the school. Charlotte Law was provided a copy of the ABA inspection report later that year, and responded to it. In January 2015, Charlotte Law was informed that there was "reason to believe" they had not demonstrated compliance with ABA Standards, and more information was requested. Charlotte Law was ultimately found to be in compliance with the Standards called into question. However, the ABA also requested information to address possible noncompliance with other ABA Standards.

On February 3, 2016, Charlotte Law was informed by the ABA that they were **not in compliance** with multiple ABA Standards: Standard 301(a) which requires, in part, that a law school "maintain a rigorous program of legal education," Standard 501(a) which requires, in part, that a law school "maintain sound admissions policies," and Standard 501(b) which prohibits law schools from accepting applicants who do not "appear capable of satisfactorily completing its program of legal education and being admitted to the bar."

In July 2016, Charlotte Law was again found to be **out of compliance** with the same ABA Standards. Charlotte Law's noncompliance was described as **substantial and persistent**. Charlotte Law was further ordered by the ABA to **disclose the decision to its students and the public**.

The named defendants **did not disclose** Charlotte Law's noncompliance with current students, prospective students, or the public, as ordered by the ABA. Effective November 14, 2016, Charlotte School of Law was placed on **probation** by the ABA. On December 19, 2016, based in part on the ABA's findings and reports, the United States Department of Education informed Charlotte Law that it would no longer have access to federal student loan programs.

The lawsuit contends that the named defendants failed to notify current and prospective students of the ABA's findings, as ordered, and continued to misrepresent Charlotte Law as being in full compliance with all ABA Standards, even after being informed that Charlotte Law was out of compliance with multiple Standards in February 2016.

The Charlotte School of Law opened in 2006 and is a member of the InfiLaw System, a consortium of three for-profit law schools. Charlotte Law earned provisional accreditation from the ABA in 2008, and full accreditation in 2011. By 2012, Charlotte Law had become the largest law school in North Carolina, with nearly double the number of students of the state's next-largest law school. However, for the same year, Charlotte Law's incoming class had the lowest median GPA and LSAT scores of any North Carolina law school.

While Charlotte Law's size increased dramatically following receipt of ABA accreditation, its Bar Exam passage rate declined significantly. According to data published on Charlotte Law's website, Charlotte Law's average first time bar passage rate from July 2009 to July 2011 was 76.28 percent. However, from February 2012 through the most recent July 2016 bar exam, Charlotte Law students have an average first time bar passage rate of just 53.23 percent. According to the same date, Charlotte Law students have not exceeded the 50 percent first time bar passage rate figure in the last *four* examinations, with an average passage rate of only 41.88 percent.

Martin & Jones continues to investigate Charlotte School of Law's response and representations related to the ABA's findings of noncompliance, as well as other concerning practices related to the school. If you attended Charlotte School of Law and have any questions or information related to the school, we ask that you please contact Martin & Jones at (919) 821-0005 and ask for attorneys [Steven Corriveau](#) or [Forest Horne](#).