

POLICIES

CERTIFICATION POLICIES

PURPOSE

To establish policies for the management of the NCMA certification program, including the Contract Management Body of Knowledge, certification applications, recertification applications, and exam administration.

The certification program provides professional credentials testifying to individuals' professional growth and accomplishments in the contract management profession. The Certified Federal Contracts Manager (CFCM) program is designed for professionals primarily involved with Federal Government contracts. The Certified Commercial Contracts Manager (CCCM) program is designed for professionals primarily involved with commercial contracts. The Certified Professional Contracts Manager (CPCM) program recognizes individuals with significant experience, education, and training who have earned both the CFCM and CCCM designations, or satisfied CPCM precursor requirements.

Specific requirements for each certification are published in the Guide to the Contract Management Body of Knowledge (CMBOK).

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Contract Management Certification and Accreditation Board (CMCAB) is responsible for the development and maintenance of the Contract Management Body of Knowledge (CMBOK), the module exams (general business, federal contracting, and commercial contracting), certification qualification standards, and recertification standards, awarding waivers of requirements, and obtaining accreditation. The CMCAB shall ensure an appropriate high standard of professional excellence is maintained for the certification program.

The Executive Director is responsible for implementing and administering the certification program, including publishing and distributing the CMBOK, implementing the exams developed by the CMCAB, processing certification and recertification applications, maintaining information on certification recipients and applicants, marketing the certification program, and interfacing with customers, contractors, and the CMCAB. The Executive Director is also responsible for developing and implementing educational programs and materials for certification study and preparation.

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

A body of knowledge is one of the essential requirements of any profession. It is a listing and description of the competencies required for the mastery of the jobs within the profession. The

purpose of the Contract Management Body of Knowledge, as set forth by NCMA, is to identify and define the competencies for the contract management profession.

The CMBOK supports NCMA's purposes as stated in the National Bylaws, and implements NCMA's Mission, Values, Vision and Objectives as stated in the NCMA Long Range Plan.

The CMBOK is published and distributed in a stand-alone document, and it is used in the development of the certification examinations, educational products (such as the National Education Seminar and National Educational Conferences), the management of the certification program, and for other purposes.

The CMBOK is periodically updated through the use of various research methodologies, such as job analyses, questionnaires, and focus groups.

CERTIFICATION ELIGIBILITY

CPCM Eligibility Requirements: a candidate must have a degree at a level higher than a bachelor's, five years of experience, and provide a self-authored "Statement of Professional Qualification" (500-800 words), along with the application. In addition a candidate must hold current Certified Federal Contract Manager (CFCM) and Certified Commercial Contract Manager (CCCM) designations. Waivers to the advanced degree requirement will be considered for those candidates who have a Bachelor's degree and ten years of experience who present a letter from a supervisor supporting their candidacy.

CCCM Eligibility Requirements: a candidate must have a degree at the bachelor's level with 24 hours of course work in business management topics, two years of experience, and 120 hours of continuing professional education-at least 40 of which are specific to commercial contracts management topics. Waivers are available for those candidates who lack the degree requirement but have ten years of experience and a letter from a supervisor supporting their candidacy.

CFCM Eligibility Requirements

CFCM Eligibility Requirements: a candidate must have a degree at the bachelor's level, with 24 hours of course work in business management topics, two years of experience, and 120 hours of continuing professional education-at least 40 of which are specific to federal contracts management topics. Waivers are available for those candidates who lack the degree requirement but have ten years of experience and a letter from a supervisor supporting their candidacy.

RECERTIFICATION

Recertification for Certified Professional Contracts Manager (CPCM), Certified Federal Contracts Manager (CFCM), and Certified Commercial Contracts Manager (CCCM) designations is required every five years until Lifetime Certification can be achieved.

To recertify, individuals must submit a recertification application and fee. Application for recertification is the responsibility of the certification holder. Applicants on assignment outside the continental United States for longer than ninety (90) days can request an extension on their recertification period.

Holders of more than one certification will have their original recertification deadline date changed to coincide with their latest recertification date. They will be required to submit only one recertification application and pay only one fee. Furthermore, completing the required hours of continuing education within the recertification period satisfies the recertification requirements for all designations.

To qualify for recertification, the applicant must complete sixty (60) hours of continuing education every five years in areas that upgrade specific contract management skills or address developments in the field. This requirement can be met by attending or speaking/teaching at educational courses, conferences, workshops, seminars, lectures, professional meetings, or other documented educational events, or by authoring scholarly works and publications, in contracting-related topics. The required hours must have been completed during the five-year recertification period, with a minimum of ten (10) hours of study completed during the last eighteen (18) months of the recertification cycle.

The applicant must provide documentation evidencing completion of the continuing education activities. Each document must contain the following information to be acceptable:

Name of attendee/participant.
Title of event and brief description of topic.
Hours of actual instruction.
Sponsor of event.
Date(s) of event.

The hours assigned will be the cumulative hours of actual instruction, or attendance, including questions and answers, films/slides, and speaker presentations (including luncheon or dinner speakers). Judgments concerning the number of hours awarded for a specific scholarly work or publication will be made on a case by case basis by the CM CAB.

An optional Certificate of Attendance form is available for chapter use from the NCMA Office. However, any document evidencing the above information is acceptable.

RECERTIFICATION ALTERNATIVE

Because it is not always feasible for the certification holder to accumulate sixty (60) hours of continuing education within the five-year period, successful completion of the current certification examinations is an alternative method for recertification.

RECERTIFICATION DELINQUENCY

If an application is received within one year after the five year recertification date, the applicant must demonstrate an additional twelve (12) hours of training (beyond the normal sixty (60) hours requirement) for a total of seventy two (72) hours in order to be recertified.

If an application is received after the period identified in paragraph (A) above, the applicant must recertify by taking the current certification examination. If the applicant has documented a record of continuing contract management education (total hours = number of years since original certification/recertification x 12 hours), the requirement for the recertification examination may be waived by the CMCAB. The new recertification expiration date shall be five (5) years from the 31st of December of that current recertification year.

Additional recertification fees may be charged for processing of delinquent applications.

NCMA records will show that all delinquent designees are no longer certified. The designation of all delinquent designees will be removed from NCMA correspondence and publications. All designees who fail to recertify in accordance with the policy will be informed that they are no longer authorized to use the designation. Any requests for information regarding the certification status of such individuals will state that they are not currently certified.

LIFETIME CERTIFICATION

For those currently certified individuals who reach the age of 60 during their recertification period, a Lifetime Certification is available. Applicants for Lifetime Certification must submit with their application verification of age and application processing fee.

Once awarded Lifetime Certification, the designee is no longer required to meet the five-year recertification requirements.

Members who are unemployed in the profession may obtain Lifetime Certification at age 55 subject to the above and upon self-certification that they are retired from or no longer employed in the profession.

TEST REIMBURSEMENT FOR U.S. VETERANS

Under the provisions of Section 122 of Public Law 106-419, the Veterans Affairs Office is now reimbursing some licensing and certification tests as part of an extension of its education service benefits. NCMA's certification program is among those approved testing programs. Eligible veterans can now be reimbursed for the costs of the CFCM, CCCM, CPCM as well as the legacy CACM and CPCM designations. Reimbursement can be sought up to one year after the candidate takes the examinations.

ACCREDITATION OF CONTINUING EDUCATION

The Contract Management Certification and Accreditation Board (CMCAB) establishes standards for recognizing continuing education activities for the purposes of determining an individual's eligibility to sit for certification examinations and for periodic recertification.

These standards are used by NCMA when reviewing applications for certification and recertification. They also provide candidates with a basis for making an objective assessment of the value of a particular continuing education activity against the qualification requirements of NCMA's certification programs. However, candidates evaluate the acceptability of a course, or rely on any organization's statements regarding its course's meeting NCMA's standards, at their own risk.

The standards provide guidance to training organizations wishing to make accurate statements concerning their course offerings' acceptability under NCMA's certification programs. Organizations wishing to promote their courses as meeting the NCMA continuing education standards must independently evaluate whether particular courses qualify under NCMA's certification programs. However, use of NCMA's course requirements will not guarantee that any particular course will be accepted by the CMCAB. Organizations wishing to promote their courses as acceptable under NCMA certification programs may use the following language:

(Name of training organization) course(s) are (is) designed to meet the course requirement(s) of the National Contract Management Association's certification programs (CPCM/CFCM/CCCM).

Questions regarding the CMCAB's rejection of any given course for NCMA's certification program must be settled between the candidate and the organization providing the course.

It is NCMA's policy not to pre-approve, i.e., accredit on a prospective basis, continuing education courses offered by institutions of higher education, or commercial or government training organizations. The exception to this policy is other associations with which NCMA has cooperative agreements. Associations with which NCMA has cooperative agreements may use wording to the effect that NCMA accepts attendance at their programs for professional recertification credit.