

COMPARISON OF NATIONAL LEVEL PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION EXAMS

PLEASE NOTE: the content of this chart is verified only as to the information about NFPA's Paralegal Advanced Competency Exam (PACE¹) and the new Paralegal CORE Competency Exam (PCCE). Information regarding the NALA and NALS exams is unverified, other than from information generally available on their respective websites. This information is for comparison purposes only. Please contact NALA and/or NALS for more information on their exams.

Association	NFPA PARALEGAL CORE COMPETENCY EXAM	NFPA PARALEGAL ADVANCED COMPETENCY EXAM	NALA CERTIFIED PARALEGAL/ CERTIFIED LEGAL ASSISTANT EXAM	NALS PROFESSIONAL PARALEGAL EXAM
Credential	CORE Registered Paralegal (CRP)	PACE Registered Paralegal (RP)	Certified Paralegal (CP); Certified Legal Assistant (CLA)	Professional Paralegal (PP)
Established	2011	1996	1975	2004
Exam Eligibility (Education and/or experience)	<p>Bachelor's degree in any subject, a paralegal certificate, no experience or continuing legal education (CLE);</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Bachelor's degree in paralegal studies, no experience or CLE;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Bachelor's degree in any subject, no paralegal certificate, six months of experience and 1 hour of ethics taken in the year preceding the examination application date;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Associate's degree in any subject, no experience or CLE required;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Associates degree in paralegal studies, no experience or CLE required;</p> <p>OR</p>	<p>Associate's degree in paralegal studies obtained from an institutionally accredited and/or ABA approved paralegal program and six years of substantive paralegal experience;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Bachelor's degree in any course of study obtained from an institutionally accredited school and three years of substantive paralegal experience;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Bachelor's degree and completion of a paralegal program within an institutionally accredited school (which may be embodied in the bachelor's degree) and a minimum of two years substantive paralegal experience;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Four years of substantive legal experience on or before December 31, 2000.</p>	<p>Graduation from legal assistant program approved by the ABA or associate degree program or post-baccalaureate certificate program in legal assistant studies; or bachelor's degree program in legal assistant studies, or legal assistant program of 60+ hours, 15 hours in substantive legal courses;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Bachelor's degree in any field plus one year's experience as a legal assistant (15 hours of substantive legal courses equivalent to one year of experience as a legal assistant);</p> <p>OR</p> <p>High school diploma or equivalent plus seven years of experience as a legal assistant under the supervision of an attorney, plus a minimum of 20 hours of CLE within the two year period prior to the exam</p>	<p>Five years of experience performing paralegal duties;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Two years waived for candidates with a paralegal degree;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>One year waived for candidates with a post-secondary degree, plus successful completion of the PLS exam or other certification.</p>

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	<p>Paralegal certificate from a program that meets or exceeds the requirements set forth in NFPA's Short Term Paralegal Program Position Statement, 1 year of experience, and six hours of CLE, including one hour of ethics taken in the year preceding the examination application date;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Active duty, retired or former military personnel qualified in a military operation specialty as a paralegal and 1.0 hour of Ethics CLE within the year preceding the exam application;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Candidates who are within two months of graduating and registered for the PCCE by a Paralegal Studies Program Director participating in the PCCE Assurance of Learning (AoL) Program at the Partner level;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>High school diploma or GED, five years of experience and 12 hours of CLE, including one hour of ethics taken in the two years preceding examination application date.</p>			
Exam Fees	\$215 – non-refundable	Member: \$225 Non-member: \$250 Plus \$25 non-refundable application fee	Member: \$225 Non-Member: \$250 Plus additional test site fees ranging from \$40 to \$47 per section. Total additional test site fees for all 5 exam sections: \$214	Member: \$200 Non-member: \$250

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Testing dates and locations	Every day except Sundays and legal holidays at Prometric Testing Centers across the US, Guam, etc. Candidates must take the exam within 90 days of application approval	Every day except Sundays and legal holidays at Prometric Testing Centers across the US, Guam, etc. Candidates must take the exam within 90 days of application approval.	January, May and September in many major metro areas.	First Saturday of March and last Saturday of September in most major metro areas.
Retesting	\$215 and six month waiting period to apply for retest	\$250 member fee; \$275 non-member fee. Six month waiting period to apply for retest.	\$50 per section, plus test site fees as stated above for both members and non-members.	\$50 per section for Members; \$60 per section for Non-Members; no waiting period to retest.
Delivery Methods	Computer generated	Computer generated	Computer generated	
Test Length	Two and one-half (2.5) hours allowed	Four (4) hours allowed	8 hours allowed in 5 sections: Communications – 1.5 hours Judgment & Analytical Ability – 2 hours Ethics – 1 hour Legal Research – 1.5 hours Substantive Law – 2 hours	One day
Composition of Exam	Domain 01: Paralegal Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Paralegal Practice ◆ Ethics and Professional Practice ◆ U.S. Legal System ◆ Branches of Government ◆ Legal Research ◆ Legal Writing and Critical Analysis ◆ Communication ◆ Law Office Management and Legal Technology ◆ Civil Litigation Domain 02: Substantive Areas of Law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Business organizations ◆ Contracts ◆ Criminal ◆ Estates, Wills and Trusts 	Domain I: Administration of Client Legal Matters Domain II: Development of Client Legal Matters Domain III: Factual and Legal Research Domain IV: Factual and Legal Writing Domain V: Office Administration Exam based on Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, related to the following substantive areas of law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bankruptcy ▪ Corporate law 	Substantive Law section includes FIVE mini-exams in four areas of the examinee's choosing from: administrative law, bankruptcy, business/corporate organization; family law, criminal law and procedure; litigation, probate and estate planning, or real estate, plus all candidates MUST take the exam covering the American legal system. As of May 2011, Judgment & Analytical Ability section is solely an essay. The January 2013 Communications section will only consist of objective questions.	Part I: Written Communications Part II: Legal knowledge and skills Part III: Ethics and Judgment Part IV: All areas of substantive law from administrative law to worker's compensation.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Family ◆ Real Estate ◆ Torts <p>Exam based on Federal Rules of Civil Procedure</p> <p>For detailed information, please see Appendix A of the PCCE Candidate Handbook available at www.paralegals.org</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Civil Litigation ▪ Contracts ▪ Criminal ▪ Estates, Wills and Trusts ▪ Family ▪ Intellectual Property ▪ Real Estate ▪ Torts 	<p>The essay(s) are graded subjectively by members or former members of NALA's Certifying Board.</p> <p>Exam is based on federal law and procedure.</p>	
Renewal Requirements	Eight hours of CLE every two years, including at least 1 hour of ethics (based on anniversary date).	12 hours of CLE every two years, including at least 1 hour of ethics (based on anniversary date).	50 hours every five years, including at least 5 hours of ethics.	75 hours every five years, including at least 5 hours of ethics.
Renewal Fee	\$25.00 ¹	\$25.00	\$50.00	\$75.00
Number Certified	206 (3/31/13)	887 (2/15/13) ²	17,249 (11/12/12) ³	541 (9/1/12) ⁴

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¹ Plus \$10 fee to approve any CLE not previously approved by NFPA , a court of competent jurisdiction, a bar association, NALA or AAPI, applies to both CRP and RP designations

² This figure represents the cumulative total of Registered Paralegals who have passed the exam, and does not reflect those who are no longer active or who may otherwise have given up their certification.

³ Figures from NALA website, unknown if this includes those no longer active as paralegals or who may otherwise have given up their certification.

⁴ Figures from NALS website, unknown if this includes those no longer active as paralegals or who may otherwise have given up their certification.

NFPA 4/26/2013