

SECTION 11: PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

SECTION 11.1 CERTIFICATION EXAM EXPENSES

Development and maintenance of the Paralegal Certification Exams (including PCCE® and PACE®) (“Exams”) will be funded by the Certification portion of the NFPA Budget and, accordingly, will be bound by the Financial Guidelines contained in Section 18 of this Manual for persons authorized to do business on behalf of NFPA. The Vice President and Director of Paralegal Certification (“VPDPC”) will submit a budget request annually to the Treasurer for the administration of the exams during the normal budget proposal time frame.

Expenses incurred in connection with speaking engagements to NFPA member associations to promote PCCE® and PACE® will be borne by the requesting member association, unless the expenses have been included in the annual budget. Other expenses and costs associated with Certification will be paid in accordance with Section 18 of this Manual.

SECTION 11.2 PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The Paralegal Certification Standards Committee (“Standards Committee”) will include the VPDPC as a non-voting Committee member and serve in an advisory capacity; two (2) practicing paralegals, each in good standing with NFPA and/or their member association(s); one (1) paralegal educator who is not an attorney; one (1) attorney, an individual in good standing with their Bar; and, one (1) Public Member, an individual who does not work in the legal field. Individual members of the Standards Committee will each be appointed by the NFPA Board during the winter board meeting for a two (2) year term of office. The public member, the educator, and one of the practicing paralegals shall be appointed in even-numbered years, and the attorney and second practicing paralegal shall be appointed in odd-numbered years. Individual members shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms, unless so approved by the NFPA Board. A term of more than one (1) year and one (1) day (or 366 consecutive days) shall count as a full term. NFPA agrees to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend the members of the Standards Committee from any claims arising from any act or omission except those occasioned by the individual’s willful or deliberate acts.

(a) **Member Criteria.**

(1) **Paralegal.**

To qualify to serve as a member of the Standards Committee, the paralegals:

- Must be RP® certified or meet PACE® criteria regarding education
- Must have at least seven (7) years of paralegal experience
- Must meet the character and fitness requirements of PACE®
- Cannot simultaneously serve on the NFPA Board
- Cannot simultaneously be an NFPA Primary or Secondary Representative

- Cannot simultaneously be an NFPA Coordinator (except in the case of the Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Study Materials)
- Cannot simultaneously serve on NFPA's Advisory Council or Ethics Board
- Cannot simultaneously serve on NFPA's Standards Committee and another committee

(2) Paralegal Educator.

To qualify to serve as a member of the Standards Committee, the paralegal educator:

- Cannot be a member of NFPA's Advisory Council or Ethics Board
- Cannot be a lawyer
- Must meet the character and fitness requirements of NFPA's Exams

(3) Lawyer.

To qualify to serve as a member of the Standards Committee, the lawyer:

- Must be licensed to practice law in a U.S. jurisdiction
- Must be in good standing with bar in state(s) where licensed to practice
- Should have experience supervising paralegals in substantive paralegal work
- Cannot simultaneously serve on NFPA's Advisory Council or Ethics Board
- Must meet the character and fitness requirements of NFPA's Exams

(4) Public Member.

To qualify to serve as a member of the Standards Committee, the public member:

- Must meet the character and fitness requirement of NFPA's Exams
- Must be a legal service advocate
- Cannot simultaneously serve on NFPA's Advisory Council or Ethics Board

(b) **Disqualification.**

Members of the Standards Committee may be disqualified from service on the Standards Committee for any one of the following reasons:

- (1) Conviction of a felony or comparable crime as defined by an individual state that does not have a felony designation;
- (2) Currently under suspension, termination, or revocation of a certificate, registration, or license to practice by a professional organization, court, disciplinary board, or agency in any jurisdiction; or
- (3) No longer meet the criteria requirements of his/her Standards Committee member category.

(c) **Duties and Responsibilities.**

Standards Committee duties and responsibilities shall include:

- (1) Reviewing appeals from candidates who do not qualify to sit for Exams and responding with a decision within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the appeal is submitted;
- (2) Reviewing appeals from Paralegals whose certification will or has been revoked and responding with a decision within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the appeal is submitted;
- (3) Reviewing requests for renewal extensions exceeding sixty (60) days and responding with a decision within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the request is submitted;
- (4) Reviewing and approving requests for Emeritus Status and responding with a decision within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the request is submitted;
- (5) Reviewing and approving requests for Inactive Status and responding with a decision within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the request is submitted;
- (6) Reviewing and approving agenda topics to be presented during the annual policy meeting in regard to certification related matters and responding with a decision within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the request is submitted;
- (7) Reviewing, analyzing, and timely responding to email communications relating to Standards Committee business within a reasonable time period;
- (8) Reviewing, analyzing, and timely responding to determination of eligibility applications or applications for eligibility waivers and responding with a decision within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the request is submitted;
- (9) Reviewing standards and policies of the NFPA Exams as necessary; and

- (10) Providing guidance and input on other related NFPA paralegal certification issues as may arise.

SECTION 11.3 PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION COORDINATOR - STUDY MATERIALS

(a) **Appointment.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Study Materials will be appointed by the Board as provided in Section 8.4.

(b) **Requirements for Appointment.**

To qualify to act as the Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Study Materials, the candidate:

- (1) Must be CRP® or RP® certified or meet the PCCE® or PACE® criteria regarding education
- (2) Must have at least four (4) years of paralegal experience
- (3) Must meet the character and fitness requirements of NFPA's Exams
- (4) Cannot simultaneously serve on the NFPA Board
- (5) Cannot simultaneously sit on the Standards Committee
- (6) Cannot simultaneously serve on NFPA's Advisory Council or Ethics Board
- (7) Must agree to comply with the duties and responsibilities as listed in the NFPA Procedures Manual

(c) **Duties and Responsibilities.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Study Materials will be responsible for:

- (1) Drafting of annual goals and submitting them to the VPDPC for approval within one month of appointment;
- (2) Study Manuals:
 - (a) Annually reviewing the PCCE® and PACE® study manuals and evaluating them for completeness;
 - (b) Recommending revisions, additions, or updates of the study manuals to the VPDPC;
 - (c) Compiling a glossary, including additional legal terminology;
 - (d) Ensuring that publications remain current; and

- (e) Drafting and updating practice tests and answer keys;
 - (3) Reviewing published books and recommending updated books for additional study for various domains, as needed;
 - (4) Coordinating creation of additional study materials, as warranted;
 - (5) Researching study materials available to law students for materials that would be of assistance to Exam candidates;
 - (6) Working with the VPDPC, Secretary and Director of Operations, and Host Convention Committee in developing paralegal certification seminars (if desired) at the NFPA conventions, including recommending topics and potential speakers;
 - (7) Working with the other Paralegal Certification Coordinators to create and/or maintain a pool of Certification Ambassador Resource documents, such as a Certification Ambassador Survival Guide, to assist the Certification Ambassadors in their duties and to provide access to resources and templates for same;
 - (8) Working closely with the Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Public Relations to market the study materials and to update marketing materials for same;
 - (9) Participating in bi-annual updates to ensure the Exams remain current and relevant; and
 - (10) Posting reminders regarding online review courses offered by third-party providers, *i.e.*, API and PEG.
- (d) **Report.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Study Materials will report regularly to the VPDPC and will be required to submit information relating to his/her position to be included in the annual and pre-board meeting reports of the VPDPC, known as Insider Reports.

SECTION 11.4 PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION COORDINATOR - CERTIFICATION AMBASSADORS

- (a) **Appointment.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Certification Ambassadors will be appointed by the Board as provided in Section 8.4.

(b) **Requirements for Appointment.**

To qualify to act as Paralegal Certification Coordinator – Certification Ambassadors, the candidate:

- (1) Must be CRP® or RP® certified or meet PCCE® or PACE® criteria regarding education
- (2) Must have at least four (4) years paralegal experience
- (3) Must meet the character and fitness requirements of NFPA’s Exams
- (4) Cannot simultaneously serve on the NFPA Board
- (5) Cannot simultaneously sit on the Standards Committee
- (6) Cannot simultaneously serve on NFPA’s Advisory Council or Ethics Board
- (7) Must agree to comply with the duties and responsibilities as listed in the NFPA Procedures Manual.

(c) **Duties and Responsibilities.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Certification Ambassadors will be responsible for:

- (1) Facilitating the development of the Certification Ambassadors Program by:
 - (a) Drafting annual goals and submitting them to the VPDPC for approval within one month of appointment;
 - (b) Making recommendations to the VPDPC for the development of the Certification Ambassadors Program;
 - (c) Assisting Certification Ambassadors in fulfilling their duties;
 - (d) Developing Guidelines of Responsibilities and Goals for the Certification Ambassadors to be included in the Certification Ambassador materials available on the NFPA website;
 - (e) Reviewing the Certification Ambassador reference materials annually, updating as necessary, and coordinating with the Management Company and the Secretary and Director of Operations to update the appropriate areas of the website or social media;
 - (f) Facilitating and encouraging communication on the Certification Ambassadors’ discussion board;
 - (g) Working with each member association to encourage appointment of a Certification Ambassador;

- (h) Working with the other Paralegal Certification Coordinators to create and/or maintain a pool of Certification Ambassador Resource documents, such as a Certification Ambassador Survival Guide, to assist the Certification Ambassadors in their duties and to provide access to resources and templates for same;
 - (i) Participating in bi-annual updates to ensure the Exams remain current and relevant; and
 - (j) Obtaining testimony statements from Certification Ambassadors regarding newly credentialed paralegals for inclusion on NFPA's website and other certification marketing materials.
- (2) Assisting in the arrangement of the Certification Ambassador Conference by:
- (a) Working with the host association, Management Company, Regulation and Leadership Coordinators, and the VPDPC to schedule the date and advertise the conference;
 - (b) Attending and participating in conference calls to plan and finalize details of the Certification Ambassador Conference as a portion of the Joint Conference;
 - (c) Preparing the Certification Ambassador Conference agenda;
 - (d) Recruiting and confirming qualified speakers;
 - (e) Ensuring speaker information is timely provided to the Management Company, including bios, photos, topic descriptions, PowerPoints, and handouts;
 - (f) Determining speaker needs and providing to the Management Company, including AV, flip charts, pens, printed handouts, etc.;
 - (g) Applying for NFPA CLE approval for all substantive sessions;
 - (h) Ensuring that the event is appropriately advertised in conjunction with the Region Directors, as well as in NFPA's News You Can Use, the *National Paralegal Reporter*, and via other readily available media, e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, etc. by working with the Vice President and Director of Marketing;
 - (i) Preparing or obtaining materials for the Certification Ambassador Conference Handbook to be uploaded and available on the NFPA website; and
 - (j) Attending and assisting the VPDPC to facilitate the Certification Ambassador Conference, as part of the Joint Conference.

- (3) Collaborating in the decision-making regarding the Certification Ambassador Award by:
 - (a) Reviewing and, if necessary, making recommendations to the VPDPC regarding the application and procedures for the Certification Ambassador Award;
 - (b) Marketing the Certification Ambassador Award to member associations; and
 - (c) Acknowledging that, during Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Certification Ambassador's term, his/her local association is not eligible to receive this award.

(d) **Reports.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Certification Ambassadors will report regularly to the VPDPC and will be required to submit information relating on his/her position to be included in the annual and pre-board meeting reports of the VPDPC, known as Insider Reports.

SECTION 11.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CERTIFICATION AMBASSADORS

11.5A Purpose

The purpose of the Certification Ambassador Program is to educate paralegals, attorneys, judges and members of the legal community by promoting the NFPA's Certification Programs, such as PACE®, PCCE® and the Assurance of Learning Program. NFPA asks that each member association appoint a Certification Ambassador -- someone whose primary focus will be to promote NFPA's Certification Programs in the local area. The Certification Ambassador acts as a liaison between NFPA and the local association in order to disseminate information about the certification exams and programs but serves at the pleasure of the Board that appointed them. The local association may choose to incorporate these recommendations into their own policies and procedures or when describing the role of a Certification Ambassador.

11.5B Who Should Be a Certification Ambassador?

The Certification Ambassador role is a leadership position within local member associations. While Ambassadors should not be required to be CRP® s or RP®s, paralegals who have taken the exams or are extremely motivated to take the exams are encouraged to take on the Certification Ambassador role in their associations. The Certification Ambassador position is a great opportunity for local associations to motivate someone to become more actively involved in leadership. It is an important position and should be filled by a person who is not already overburdened with other association responsibilities.

11.5C Goals of the Certification Ambassadors:

- Educate paralegals, employers, the general public, and members of the bar associations about NFPA's Certification Programs. NFPA's vision of the role of Certification Ambassadors is to educate attorneys, bar associations, judges, and the public about the opportunity to utilize NFPA's certification exams, PCCE® and PACE®, as criteria to evaluate paralegal professionals in the various stages of their careers and the use of the Assurance of Learning program to help measure a paralegal programs effectiveness.
- When possible, the Certification Ambassador should attend the Certification Conference, whether held in conjunction with the Leadership and Regulation Conferences as NFPA's Joint Conference, or as a stand-alone conference. The goal of the Certification Conference is to provide information about paralegal certifications and to motivate those interested in obtaining their paralegal credentials and provide resources and tools to help Certification Ambassadors be more effective.
- Each Certification Ambassador, with input and guidance from their local association, sets their own goals. However, NFPA encourages Certification Ambassadors to consider the following:
 - Review and become familiar with NFPA certification information and resources on NFPA's website;
 - Be familiar with the Certification Ambassador reference materials;
 - Participate on the Certification Ambassador discussion board; and
 - Plan a ½ day or full day certification review seminar each year (association keeps proceeds);
 - Organize and mentor one or two study groups for the PCCE® and/or PACE® each year;
 - Speak to paralegals, members of the local bar association, law firms, corporations or paralegal educators during luncheons or meetings each year;
 - Make announcements or presentations about PCCE® and PACE® at local association programs and member events;
 - Promote and encourage local association members to apply for NFPA's PACE® and PCCE® scholarships;
 - Provide information and make presentations at local paralegal program schools regarding the Assurance of Learning Program;
 - Provide timely reminders to local association members holding an NFPA Credential of renewal deadlines;

- Share new study techniques and information obtained from the Certification Conference with local association leaders and members;
- Interview or request testimony statements from newly credentialed association members for use in promoting certification exams;
- Develop and encourage PACE® and PCCE® exam scholarships sponsored by the local member association, if funding permits or in the alternative, seek sponsorships of same;
- Assist paralegals in obtaining employer support for PCCE® and PACE® and with new CRP® and RP approval, including sending letters explaining what the CRP® or RP credentials mean to employers when obtained;
- Insert articles, announcements, or study tips about NFPA’s exam programs in the local association’s newsletters or social media.

11.5D Term of Office:

Each local association appoints its own Certification Ambassador for a term determined by the Board of the local association.

SECTION 11.6 PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION COORDINATOR - PUBLIC RELATIONS

(a) **Appointment.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Public Relations will be appointed by the Board as provided in Section 8.4.

(b) **Requirements for Appointment.**

To qualify to act as the Paralegal Certification Coordinator – Public Relations, the candidate:

- (1) Must be CRP® or RP certified or meet PCCE® or PACE® criteria regarding education
- (2) Must have at least four (4) years paralegal experience
- (3) Must meet the character and fitness requirements of NFPA’s Exams
- (4) Cannot simultaneously serve on the NFPA Board
- (5) Cannot simultaneously sit on the Standards Committee
- (6) Cannot simultaneously serve on NFPA’s Advisory Council or Ethics Board
- (7) Should have a background in public relations

- (8) Should have demonstrated experience in public speaking
- (9) Must agree to comply with the duties and responsibilities as listed in the NFPA Procedures Manual.

(c) **Duties and Responsibilities.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Public Relations will be responsible for:

- (1) Drafting annual goals and submitting them to the VPDPC for approval within one month of appointment;
- (2) Updating current Paralegal Certification marketing materials by:
 - (a) Providing Management Company, Vice President and Director of Marketing, and VPDPC with updates to publications to keep materials current with new procedures and resolutions upon adoption;
 - (b) Providing Management Company, the Secretary and Director of Operations, and VPDPC with updates to the Certification section of NFPA's website to keep it current with new procedures and resolutions upon adoption; and
 - (c) Reviewing the PCCE® and PACE® marketing brochures and other marketing materials to ensure accuracy and completeness for information contained therein and make recommendations to the Management Company, the Vice President and Director of Marketing, and VPDPC for updates.
- (3) Assisting President and VPDPC in responding to requests for speakers regarding Exams and paralegal certification in general;
- (4) Assisting the VPDPC, who receives all media inquiries, with any research required and/or proofreading and editing the VPDPC's response(s);
- (5) Assisting the Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Study Materials in promoting Exams to paralegal educational institutions;
- (6) Responding to e-mail requests for additional information regarding Exams that do not meet the common responses given by Management Company;
- (7) Assisting Management Company, Vice President and Director of Marketing, VPDPC, and the NFPA Board of Directors in developing marketing strategies by doing the necessary research required;
- (8) Working with the Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Bar Association to develop quarterly articles regarding the importance of paralegal certification, specifically Exams for bar journals. The subject of the articles must be written based on "what's in it for me" from the attorney/employer perspective;

(9) Developing quarterly articles for publication in local member association paralegal newsletters. The subject of the articles must be written based on “what’s in it for me” from the paralegal perspective;

(10) Working with the Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Certification Ambassadors to ensure that articles are distributed in a copy-ready format to the Certification Ambassadors;

(11) Developing quarterly articles for the *National Paralegal Reporter* for association highlights on activities the local associations have been doing to promote the Exams or in development of unique educational tools such as seminars and study groups;

(12) Developing quarterly articles for the *National Paralegal Reporter* on developments with respect to employer support of paralegal certification, PCCE® /PACE®, and paralegal success stories with respect to the Exams. These should not be the same articles published in local association newsletters;

(13) Assisting Management Company, Vice President and Director of Marketing, and VPDPC in development of the overall marketing of PACE® /PCCE® ;

(14) Participating in bi-annual updates to ensure the Exams remain current and relevant;

(15) Working with the other Paralegal Certification Coordinators to create and/or maintain a pool of Certification Ambassador Resource documents, such as a Certification Ambassador Survival Guide, to assist the Certification Ambassadors in their duties and to provide access to resources and templates for same;

(16) Assisting with other duties as may be determined by the VPDPC and the NFPA Board of Directors.

(d) **Reports.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - Public Relations will report regularly to the VPDPC and will be required to submit information relating on his/her position to be included in the annual and pre-board meeting reports of the VPDPC, known as Insider Reports.

SECTION 11.7: PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION COORDINATOR(S) - PACE® RENEWALS

(a) **Appointment.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator(s) - PACE® Renewals will be appointed by the Board as provided in Section 8.4.

(b) **Requirements for Appointment.**

To qualify to act as a Paralegal Certification Coordinator - PACE® Renewal, the candidate:

- (1) Must be RP certified or meet PACE® criteria regarding education
- (2) Must have at least four (4) years paralegal experience
- (3) Must meet the character and fitness requirements of PACE®
- (4) Cannot simultaneously serve on the NFPA Board
- (5) Cannot simultaneously sit on the Standards Committee
- (6) Cannot simultaneously serve on NFPA's Advisory Council or Ethics Board
- (7) Must agree to comply with the duties and responsibilities as listed in the NFPA Procedures Manual

(c) **Duties and Responsibilities.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator(s) - PACE® Renewals will be responsible for:

- (1) Drafting annual goals and submitting them to the VPDPC for approval within one month of appointment;
- (2) Updating current materials:
 - (a) Participating in bi-annual updates to ensure the Exams remain current and relevant;
 - (b) Providing the VPDPC and the Management Company with updates on publications to keep materials current with new procedures and resolutions upon adoption;
 - (c) Providing the VPDPC and the Management Company with updates to the PACE® Renewals section of NFPA's website to keep it current with new procedures and resolutions upon adoption;
 - (d) Working with the other Paralegal Certification Coordinators to create and/or maintain a pool of Certification Ambassador Resource documents, such as a Certification Ambassador Survival Guide, to assist the Certification Ambassadors in their duties and to provide access to resources and templates for same;
- (3) Assisting the VPDPC by reviewing all assigned PACE® renewal applications using the current review platform which may include requesting additional documents or information from the applicant in order to complete the review;

- (4) Working with the VPDPC to determine any special requests made, *i.e.*, extension of time to submit renewals or requests for inactive status;
- (5) Responding to requests for additional information for PACE® renewals that do not meet the common responses given by Management Company.
- (6) Providing the VPDPC information regarding requests for extension of time for renewal, inactive status, and renewals requiring follow-up, *i.e.*, additional information, questionable or additional continuing education and any other special handling that may require the VPDPC's determination or further determination by the Standards Committee.
- (7) Assisting with other duties as determined by the VPDPC and the NFPA Board of Directors from time to time.

(d) **Reports.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - PACE® Renewals will report regularly to the VPDPC and will be required to submit information relating on his/her position to be included in the annual and pre-board meeting reports of the VPDPC, known as Insider Reports.

SECTION 11.7 PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION COORDINATOR(S) - PCCE® RENEWALS

(a) **Appointment.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator(s) - PCCE® Renewals will be appointed by the Board as provided in Section 8.4.

(b) **Requirements for Appointment.**

To qualify to act as a Paralegal Certification Coordinator - PCCE® Renewal, the candidate:

- (1) Must be CRP® certified or meet the PCCE® criteria regarding education; however, if no candidates meet this requirement, the position may be filled with one who is RP certified
- (2) Must have at least two (2) years paralegal experience
- (3) Must meet the character and fitness requirements of PCCE®
- (4) Cannot simultaneously serve on the NFPA Board
- (5) Cannot simultaneously sit on the Standards Committee
- (6) Cannot simultaneously serve on NFPA's Advisory Council or Ethics Board

- (7) Must agree to comply with the duties and responsibilities as listed in the NFPA Procedures Manual.

(c) **Duties and Responsibilities.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - PCCE® Renewals will be responsible for:

- (1) Drafting annual goals and submitting them to the VPDPC for approval within one month of appointment;
- (2) Updating current materials:
 - (a) Providing the VPDPC and the Management Company with updates on publications to keep materials current with new procedures and resolutions upon adoption;
 - (b) Providing the VPDPC and the Management Company with updates to the PCCE® Renewals section of NFPA's website to keep it current with new procedures and resolutions upon adoption;
 - (c) Working with the other Paralegal Certification Coordinators to create and/or maintain a pool of Certification Ambassador Resource documents, such as a Certification Ambassador Survival Guide, to assist the Certification Ambassadors in their duties and to provide access to resources and templates for same;
- (3) Assisting the VPDPC by reviewing all assigned PCCE® renewals using the current review platform which may include requesting additional documents or information from the applicant in order to complete the review;
- (4) Working with the VPDPC to determine any special requests made, *i.e.*, extension of time to submit renewals or inactive status;
- (5) Responding to requests for additional information for PCCE® renewals that do not meet the common responses given by Management Company;
- (6) Providing the VPDPC with information regarding requests for extension of time for renewal, inactive status, and renewals requiring follow-up, *i.e.*, additional information, questionable or additional continuing education, and any other special handling that may require the VPDPC's determination or further determination by the Standards Committee;
- (7) Participate in bi-annual updates to ensure the Exams remain current and relevant;
- (8) Assisting with other duties as determined by the VPDPC and the NFPA Board of Directors from time to time.

(d) **Reports.**

The Paralegal Certification Coordinator - PCCE® Renewals will report regularly to the VPDPC and will be required to submit information relating on his/her position to be included in the annual and pre-board meeting reports of the VPDPC, known as Insider Reports.

SECTION 11.9 PROCEDURES FOR RECERTIFICATION/MAINTAINING CREDENTIALS

(a) **Renewals.**

The RP/CRP® renewal containing the Affidavit and supporting documentation, such as CLE attendance certificates, as well as a notice from NFPA verifying the approval of any CLEs not pre-approved, as outlined by NFPA's CLE policies in Section 9, must be submitted jointly to NFPA with the appropriate CLE Review fee approximately sixty (60) days, but no more than six (6) months, before the renewal deadline. An additional fee of \$50 must be submitted to request a renewal extension of up to sixty (60) days from the date of the deadline to renew. If the recertification is not received prior to the deadline, the \$50 fee will be assessed as a late fee and requires the individual to request a retroactive extension to the date of the credential renewal deadline

Additional information or documentation may be requested by the reviewer in support of the application for extension or retroactive extension. The RP®/CRP® must provide the requested information or documents within thirty (30) days of the request in order to complete the review process. If the additional documentation or information is not supplied with the 30 day deadline, unless extenuating circumstances apply such as hospitalization, active duty service, etc, the application will be denied and a new application will need to be submitted. No refunds will be provided based on non-compliance with a request for additional documentation or information.

NoteA retroactive extension cannot exceed six (6) months from the date the expired credential or Section 11.12 (Suspension and Revocation) of these Procedures applies. Questions about renewing the credentials should be directed to the appropriate Paralegal Certification Coordinator, or you can simply email vpdpc@paralegals.org with your questions.

(b) **CLES.**

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING PROOF OF REQUIRED CLE CREDITS IS EVERY TWO (2) YEARS ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE DATE ON WHICH THE EXAM WAS SUCCESSFULLY PASSED. Procedures for NFPA's CLE Guidelines can be found in Section 9 of the NFPA Policies and Procedures.

Certificates of Attendance or Certificates Awarding CLEs are the required proof to verify the required CLEs. Receipts or applications for CLE credit are not sufficient

proof of attendance at a CLE. Seminars that are not pre-approved by NFPA, or a state or local bar association, must be submitted and approved by the NFPA CLE Coordinator first, together with the appropriate fee per bundle of CLE applications, prior to submission in support of a credential renewal. The date on the Certificate of Attendance or the Certificate Awarding the CLE shall be the date used to compute whether the CLE was completed within the two-year time period in advance of the renewal deadline. The Certificate will state the issuing organization, the organization approving CLE such as NFPA or the local bar association, the number of hours of CLE awarded, the type of CLE (general or ethics), and the date of completion to be compliant with NFPA-Certification purposes.

Submission of the renewal statement and supporting documentation as outlined in subsection (a) above should be made a minimum of sixty (60) days prior to the individual's renewal date to allow for sufficient time to review, but not sooner than six (6) months before the renewal deadline. However if CLEs do not conform to the pre-approved CLE guidelines as outlined in NFPA's CLE Policies and Procedures, the CLEs and supporting documentation should be submitted to NFPA's CLE Coordinator in advance of any renewal application. Once NFPA provides a CLE Approval Certificate, then and only then, should those CLEs and the Approval Certificate be submitted as part of a renewal application. Submitting CLEs without prior approval by NFPA substantially delays the Credential Renewal process.

(c) **Reminders.**

As a courtesy, NFPA will send a reminder email before the renewal deadline; however, obtaining the required CLE credits and submitting the online Affidavit and supporting documentation before the renewal deadline is the responsibility of the individual. Failure to receive a reminder email from NFPA is not a valid reason for an individual to miss their specific renewal deadline and may be cause for denial, temporary suspension or revocation. RPs and CRP® s have an obligation to notify NFPA of address changes/contact information within thirty (30) days of such change.

(d) **Non-Compliance.**

Any holder of an RP/CRP® credential who fails to apply for recertification within two (2) months from their specific renewal deadline shall be deemed to be non-compliant of these provisions, and the RP®/CRP® credential shall be revoked effective thirty (30) days later as set forth below in Section 11.12(b).

(e) **Request for Supporting Documents or Additional Information.**

When an application reviewer, the VPDPC, or the Standards Committee sends a written request for additional documents or supporting information to verify information submitted as part of an application, renewal, extension, or appeal, the individual who submitted the original request should respond with the requested documents or information within thirty (30) days of the request, or the request will be denied.

(f) **Recertification/Maintaining the PACE® /RP Credential.**

In order to maintain the PACE® Registered Paralegal (RP®) credential, the holder of such credential must obtain twelve (12) substantive CLE hours (in a legal or specialty field) every two (2) years from the anniversary of the date on which the exam was successfully passed. At least one (1) hour of the twelve (12) required CLE hours must be in legal ethics. CLE hours may be obtained through pro bono work, teaching/lecturing, authoring and publishing substantive legal articles, and self-study within established guidelines. The link for CLE requirements for an RP® is: <https://www.paralegals.org/i4a/ams/meetings/?controller=meetings&action=startRegistration&conferenceID=165®init=1>

(g) **Recertification/Maintaining the PCCE® /CRP® Credential.**

In order to maintain the PCCE® Core Registered Paralegal (CRP®™) credential, the paralegal must obtain eight (8) substantive CLE hours (in a legal or specialty field) every two (2) years from the anniversary of the date on which the exam was successfully passed. At least one (1) hour of the eight (8) required CLE hours must be in legal ethics. CLE hours may be obtained through pro bono work, teaching/lecturing, authoring and publishing substantive legal articles, and self-study within established guidelines. The link for CLE requirements for a CRP®™ is: <https://www.paralegals.org/i4a/ams/meetings/?controller=meetings&action=startRegistration&conferenceID=171®init=1>

(h) **Dual Credential Renewals.**

Those paralegals in good standing holding both the CRP® and the RP® credentials may use the same CLE hours required in the renewal process, as long as they were obtained within the two year time period preceding their renewal date. Evidence of meeting the continuing legal education requirements for each credential must be submitted with the correct online Renewal Forms and can be located under Paralegal Certification and then Renewing your Credential. Certificates of Attendance are the required proof to verify attendance at a seminar. Receipts or applications for CLE credit are not sufficient proof of attendance at a CLE. Seminars that have not been approved by NFPA, or a state or local bar association, must be submitted and approved by the NFPA CLE Coordinator first, together with the appropriate fee per bundle of CLE applications, prior to submission in support of a credential renewal.

(i) **Request for Extensions or Retroactive Extension.**

Extensions to authorizations to test, eligibility extensions, renewal applications, and retroactive Renewals are rarely granted; however, a sixty (60) day extension may be considered, subject to review and verification, in cases of active duty deployment, medical crisis, or family emergencies.

Extensions fall under the following categories:

(a) Extension or retroactive extensions for Active Duty Military submitted beyond sixty (60) days

Extensions of renewal periods or retroactive extensions submitted beyond sixty (60) days from the renewal deadline are submitted to the VPDPC for review. The VPDPC will request verification of active duty status through a DD214 or a letter from the commanding officer and, once verified, the request will be approved within ten to fifteen (10-15) days. The extension can be approved for up to sixty (60) days from the date of the extension approval, unless other accommodations are requested to accommodate the service requirements.

(b) Extension of renewal period under sixty (60) days

Extensions of renewal periods under sixty (60) days from the renewal deadline are submitted to the VPDPC for review. The VPDPC will review the request, may ask for additional documents or information, and then issue a decision whether to approve or deny the request within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the request is submitted. The extension can be approved for up to sixty (60) days from the date of the extension approval.

(c) Extension of renewal period beyond sixty (60) days, but before the six (6) month revocation period

Extensions of renewal periods submitted beyond sixty (60) days from the renewal deadline are submitted to the VPDPC for review by the Standards Committee. The Standards Committee will review the request, may ask for additional documents or information, and then issue a decision whether to approve or deny the request within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the request is submitted. The extension can be approved for up to sixty (60) days from the date of the extension approval.

(d) Retroactive extension of renewal period under sixty (60) days

Retroactive extensions of renewal periods submitted under sixty (60) days from the renewal deadline are submitted to the VPDPC for review. The VPDPC will review the request, may ask for additional documents or information, and then issue a decision whether to approve or deny the request within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the request is submitted. The extension can be approved for up to sixty (60) days from the date of the extension approval.

(e) Retroactive extension of renewal period beyond sixty (60) days, but before the six (6) month revocation period

Retroactive extensions of renewal periods submitted beyond sixty (60) days from the renewal deadline are submitted to the VPDPC for review by the Standards Committee. The Standards Committee will review the request, may

ask for additional documents or information, and then issue a decision whether to approve or deny the request within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the request is submitted. The extension can be approved for up to sixty (60) days from the date of the extension approval.

SECTION 11.10 INACTIVE STATUS

NFPA authorizes the Standards Committee to grant “Inactive” status for any PACE® Registered Paralegal or CORE Registered Paralegal® in good standing for a period of up to four years upon submission of a written request showing good cause. RP®s and CRP®s on inactive status are required to obtain one-half of the regular CLE requirements every two (2) years of inactive status, with at least one hour (1) being ethics, to remain eligible for reactivation.

The Standards Committee will approve the reactivation of the inactive RP® or CRP® upon receipt of a renewal application providing documentation of CLE compliance requirements and payment of the appropriate renewal fee(s), received at least sixty (60) days prior to the expiration of the inactive period.

SECTION 11.11 RP®/CRP® EMERITUS STATUS

- (a) NFPA authorizes “Emeritus” status for any PACE® Registered Paralegal or Core Registered Paralegal who meets the following requirements:
 - (1) Is an active RP® or CRP® and is in good standing at the time the request for Emeritus status is requested; or has already retired due to age, circumstance, or illness and was an RP® in good standing at the time of his/her retirement;
 - (2) Completes an Application for Emeritus status;
 - (3) Maintains accurate contact information with NFPA by notifying the Management Company of any changes in mailing address, email, and phone number within thirty (30) days of the change; and
 - (4) Submits the appropriate application fee.
- (b) If the Application for Emeritus status is approved by the Standards Committee, the RP® or CRP® will use the designation of “RP® Emeritus” or “CRP® Emeritus.” All credentialed paralegal having been granted the use of the Emeritus status will cease from using the “RP®” and “PACE® Registered Paralegal” or “CRP® ” and “Core Registered Paralegal” credentials unless/until they are reactivated as active RP®s/CRP® s pursuant to the criteria in subsection 3 below.
- (c) The designation “Emeritus” is intended only for paralegals who have retired or left the legal profession. No active paralegal should use the title of Emeritus. If a paralegal who has been granted “Emeritus” status returns to work as a paralegal following retirement, he/she can apply for reactivation as a PACE® Registered Paralegal or Core Registered Paralegal.

- (1) In the event an Emeritus returns to work following retirement, that person must meet all of the current CLE requirements for their specific credential prior to the reactivation request. CLE hours must have been obtained no longer than two (2) years prior to the date of the reactivation request. Proof of CLE hours must be submitted with the reactivation request. All reactivation requests must be approved by the Standards Committee.
- (2) An applicant seeking reactivation from Emeritus status must pay a \$50 reactivation fee to NFPA, separate and apart from the renewal fee, regardless of NFPA membership.
- (d) Any PACE® Registered Paralegal or Core Registered Paralegal® who has retired prior to October, 18, 2007, due to age, circumstance, or illness shall be eligible to apply for “Emeritus” status on a retroactive basis, provided they met the requirements outlined above prior to their retirement.
- (e) The intent of “Emeritus” status is to honor retirement as a life event which occurs due to age, circumstance, or illness. “Emeritus” status should be granted to support those credentialed paralegals who attained this professional distinction, supported NFPA and certification, and who maintained their credentials over the years. Providing an “Emeritus” status for credentialed paralegals allows a retiring RP® or CRP® to retain the professional credential they obtained during their career, without being mandated to maintain CLE requirements after retirement.

SECTION 11.12 SUSPENSION, REVOCATION, AND REINSTATEMENT

(a) Suspension.

The Standards Committee shall suspend the RP® or CRP® credentials for a period of sixty (60) days based upon any of the following:

- (1) Failure to file a Registration Statement with Management Company by the renewal deadline;
- (2) Failure to meet CLE requirements by the renewal deadline; or
- (3) Failure to provide evidence of continuing education by the renewal deadline.

The Standards Committee will provide written notice (via e-mail) to the RP® or CRP® of the action taken, effective date and time period of action, termination of rights to RP or CRP® credentials, requirements for reinstatement, consequence of failure to meet requirements, and appeal procedure.

(b) Revocation.

The Standards Committee shall permanently revoke the RP or CRP® credentials based upon any of the following:

- (1) Failure to renew the credential, complete the extension process within two (2) months of the renewal date, or complete the required CLEs during pre-approved “inactive status.”

Any holder of an RP/CRP® credential who fails to apply for recertification within two (2) months from their specific renewal deadline shall be deemed to be non-compliant of these provisions, and the RP®/CRP® credential shall be revoked effective thirty (30) days after the two (2) month deadline.

The individual may apply for a retroactive extension after the credentials have expired but in advance of the two (2) month deadline by directing their request via first class mail to the VPDPC, NFPA Headquarters, 3502 Woodview Trace, Suite 300, Indianapolis, IN 46268, or via email to VPDPC@paralegals.org. The request must be made no later than two (2) months from the anniversary of the date on which the exam was successfully passed and must set forth justification for such an extension. The retroactive extension will be reviewed by the Standards Committee. Additional information or documentation may be requested by the Committee in support of the application for extension or retroactive extension. The Applicant shall provide the requested information or documents within thirty (30) days of the written request or the request will be denied.

Should any holder of an RP®/CRP® credential fail to submit the appropriate renewal documentation or complete the retroactive extension process within the stated deadlines, their credentials are revoked, and an appeal or request for extension is denied by the Standards Committee, said holder will be required to reapply to determine eligibility, retake, and pass the certification examination in order to have the credentials reinstated.

- (2) Knowingly making a false statement or misrepresentation deemed material to the application, registration statement, or status of credentials or renewals;
- (3) Knowingly and intentionally disclosing any or all Exam questions;
- (4) Suspension, termination, or revocation of a certification, registration, or license to practice by a professional organization, court, disciplinary board, or agency in any jurisdiction;
- (5) Conviction of a felony or comparable crime as defined by an individual state that does not have a felony designation;
- (6) Becoming the subject of a second suspension pursuant to Section 6 of these Procedures; or

The Standards Committee will provide written notice to the RP® or CRP® of the pending actions addressed in Items 2-6 immediately preceding, grounds for pending action, effective date of action, right to respond to allegations within thirty (30) days, in writing, with any supporting documents, and a deliberation schedule.

The Standards Committee shall consider all responses to notice of intention to revoke the credential within thirty (30) days of receipt of response to allegations. After such consideration, the Standards Committee will again provide written notice to the RP® or CRP® of their acceptance or rejection of the response. The credential will not be revoked and removed from all public lists until such time as the RP® or CRP®'s response has been considered by the Standards Committee, if such response has been timely submitted. If the reason for a revocation is listed in Items 2-6 identified above, the individual is not eligible to reapply to determine eligibility or to retake the certification examination, and the credential will not be reinstated.

(c) **Reinstatement of Credentials.**

As noted in Section 11.12(b)(1), should any holder of a credential fail to submit the appropriate renewal documentation or complete the retroactive extension process within the stated deadlines, their credentials are revoked, and an appeal or request for extension is denied by the Standards Committee; said holder will be required to reapply to determine eligibility, retake, and pass the certification examination in order to have the credentials reinstated.

If the revocation is for a reason addressed in 11.12(b)(2-6), the individual is not eligible to reapply to determine eligibility or to retake the certification examination, and the credentials will not be reinstated. The final decision issued by the Standards Committee may be appealed to the NFPA Board of Directors no later than thirty (30) days after a final decision by the Standards Committee is issued.

Should the Board of Directors uphold a denial of waiver or eligibility, the appellant has the right to submit a request for binding arbitration within 60 days of the date of the notice of denial of appeal. Requests for arbitration must be filed with the Seattle, Washington office of the American Arbitration Association pursuant to its Commercial Arbitration Rules, along with the appropriate fee, to the following address:

American Arbitration Association
701 Pike Street, Suite 950
Seattle, WA 98101
Telephone 206-622-6435
Website: www.adr.org

Arbitration applications and rules may also be obtained at the above address.

SECTION 11.13 APPEALS

Appeal from any of the policies stated herein should be in writing and submitted to the VPDPC at the address noted previously.

Appeals submitted to the Standards Committee:

- (a) Appeals from candidates whose application to sit for exams are denied. The Standards Committee will respond with a decision within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the appeal is submitted.
- (b) Appeals from individuals whose certification has been revoked The Standards Committee will respond with a decision within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the appeal is submitted.
- (c) Denials of requests for extensions. The Standards Committee will respond with a decision within ten to fifteen (10-15) days of the date the appeal is submitted.

SECTION 11.14 ASSURANCE OF LEARNING

The Assurance of Learning (“AoL”) Program has two levels of participation: (1) Affiliate Program and (2) Partner Program. The AoL Program shall be open only to: American Association for Paralegal Education (AAfPE) member, American Bar Association (ABA) accredited paralegal programs, and the Judge Advocate General (JAG) and/or Military Paralegal Certification Programs. There shall be no charge to the programs for participation. The AoL Program offers schools a valuable means to: (i) track and report outcomes for graduates; (ii) demonstrate that graduates acquired knowledge required for entry into the progression; and, (iii) evaluate the effectiveness of paralegal curriculum.

(a) **Affiliate Program.**

- School registers for program through NFPA and promotes exam to students
- No minimum number of candidates is required
- Candidates independently register online and pay current exam fee and applicable application processing fee
- All Exam eligibility requirements apply
- School receives **Annual School Performance Report**
 - School wide performance:
 - By domain
 - Current year vs. three previous years
 - Pass rate of graduates

(b) **Partner Program.**

- School registers for program through NFPA
- School group registers and pays exam fee (current member rate plus one \$25 application processing fee per batch of students registered)

- Ten percent (10%) reduction in PCC Exam fee per student
- Students may sit for exam no sooner than two months before graduation
- Upon graduation, School confirms graduation of candidates who sat for the Exam and credential is released by NFPA to those who passed
- School receives **Annual School Performance Report**
 - School wide performance criteria noted in the Affiliate Program, in addition to:
 - Pass/fail status by student

SECTION 11.15 PACE® AND PCCE® APPLICATION AUDITS

- (a) Seven percent (7%) of the successful candidate applications may be audited by the Standards Committee.
- (b) Once a year, or upon demand, the VPDPC will request up to seven percent (7%) of the applications and supporting documents of candidates eligible to sit for PACE® for auditing by the Standards Committee.
- (c) Once a year, or upon demand, the VPDPC will request seven percent (7%) of the applications and supporting documents of candidates eligible to sit for PCCE® for auditing by the Standards Committee.
- (d) The Standards Committee will contact the following entities:
 - (1) Listed employers to verify dates and capacity of employment
 - (2) Listed references to verify substantive legal nature of paralegal experience
 - (3) Listed educational institutions to verify authenticity of diplomas and/or certificates
 - (4) The VPDPC will refer to the Standards Committee any apparent impropriety for appropriate review and action by the Committee.
- (e) The Standards Committee will provide a written report to the NFPA Board of Directors delineating the results of the audits conducted.

SECTION 11.16 REPROCESSING FEES AND REFUNDS

A separate service charge will be imposed for payments of certification fees by invalid credit cards and dishonored checks or returned echecks.

It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that their application meets the eligibility requirements prior to submitting an application to NFPA for review. No refunds will be awarded once an application is submitted and the appropriate fees are paid, except for instances of clerical or banking error on the part of NFPA.

**SECTION 11.17 CERTIFICATION SCHOLARSHIPS - REDEMPTION
PROCEDURES, WHEN SCHOLARSHIPS ARE FUNDED**

Administrative procedures related to the redemption of certification scholarships are contained in internal administrative policies titled Section 11A – Certification Admin Policies and Procedures.