The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) has granted accreditation to the NALA Certified Paralegal program for demonstrating compliance with the NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs. Accreditation is effective through April 30, 2019. To maintain accreditation, NCCA requires annual reports of all certification programs. Re-accreditation is required every five years.
The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) has granted accreditation to the NALA Certified Paralegal program for demonstrating compliance with the NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs. Accreditation is effective through April 30, 2019. To maintain accreditation, NCCA requires annual reports of all certification programs. Re-accreditation is required every five years.
Description of program

In the working environment, professional certification is a time-honored process respected by both employers and those within the career field. The following is a definition used by many to describe professional certification:

Professional certification is a voluntary process by which a nongovernmental entity grants a time-limited recognition to an individual after verifying that the individual has met predetermined, standardized criteria. (Source: Rops, Mickie S., CAE, Understanding the Language of Credentialing, American Society of Association Executives, May 2002.)

The definition hits the high points. Certification is voluntary, not imposed by government. It is time limited, which means that those with the certification must fulfill ongoing educational requirements to keep the certification current, and the criteria for certification is recognized in the community.

Purpose of the Certified Paralegal Certification Program

Established in 1976, NALA’s Certified Legal Assistant (“CLA”) program allowed the paralegal profession to develop a strong and responsive self-regulatory program offering a nationwide credential for paralegals. The Certified Paralegal program establishes and serves as a:

- National professional standard for paralegals.
- Means of identifying those who have reached this standard.
- Credentialing program responsive to paralegal needs and responsive to the necessity of self-regulation to strengthen and expand paralegal career development.
- Positive, ongoing voluntary program to encourage the growth of the paralegal profession, attesting to and encouraging a high level of achievement.

The Certified Paralegal credential has been developed to recognize paralegals who have demonstrated entry-level knowledge and skill to provide competent assistance in the delivery of legal services for lawyers, law offices, corporations, or governmental agencies in the United States. The CP credential is a prestigious indicator to clients, potential clients, employers, and the public at large that the paralegal professional has proficiency in the legal services field.

Note: When the CLA program was developed, the preferred term was “legal assistant” to designate a non-lawyer employee with specialized education who does work of a legal nature that, absent the legal assistant, the attorney would perform. Legal assistant time is billed to clients at market rates in the same manner as other legal professional staff. By 2004, the preferred term changed to “paralegal” even though bar association rules and guidelines, and some statutes still used the term “legal assistant.” In 2004 NALA registered the certification mark CP® and encouraged paralegals to use either mark depending on their preferred designation, their employer’s preference, or the prevalent designation in their geographic area. Since 2011, the term “paralegal” is used almost exclusively, and the certification
program is referred to as the Certified Paralegal program which awards the Certified Paralegal credential.

Administration

The NALA Certifying Board for Paralegals is responsible for content, standards and administration of the Certified Paralegal Program. It is composed of paralegals who have received the Certified Paralegal certification designation, attorneys, and paralegal educators.

Accreditation of Certified Paralegal Program

On April 30, 2014, the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) has granted accreditation to the NALA Certified Paralegal program for demonstrating compliance with the NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs. NCCA is the accrediting body of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence. The NCCA Standards were created to ensure certification programs adhere to modern standards of practice for the certification industry. The NALA Certified Paralegal program joins an elite group of more than 120 organizations representing over 270 certification programs that have received and maintained NCCA accreditation. More information on the NCCA is available online at www.credentialingexcellence.org/NCCA. To maintain accreditation, NCCA requires annual reports of all certification programs. Re-accreditation is required every five years.

Background and Numbers

Established in 1976, the CLA (Certified Legal Assistant) program has enabled the profession to develop a strong and responsive self-regulatory program offering a nationwide credential for legal assistants. The Certified Paralegal program establishes and serves as a:

- National professional standard for legal assistants
- Means of identifying those who have reached this standard.
- Credentialing program responsive to the needs of paralegals/legal assistants and responsive to the fact that this form of self-regulation is necessary to strengthen and expand development of this career field.
- Positive, ongoing, voluntary program to encourage the growth of the paralegal/legal assistant profession, attesting to and encouraging a high level of achievement.

There are over 19,000 (active and inactive) Certified Paralegals and over 3,900 Advanced Certified Paralegals in the United States. Over 33,000 paralegals have participated in this program. A table of the numbers of Certified Paralegals is included at the end of this document.
The Certified Paralegal Credential

Use of the Certified Paralegal credential signifies that a paralegal is capable of providing superior services to firms and corporations. National surveys consistently show Certified Paralegals are better utilized in a field where attorneys are looking for a credible, dependable way to measure ability. The credential has been recognized by the American Bar Association as a designation which marks a high level of professional achievement. The CLA or CP credential has also been recognized by over 47 legal assistant organizations and numerous bar associations.

Is it CLA or CP?

The terms "legal assistant" and "paralegal" are synonymous terms. This is not a choice or opinion of NALA, but a fact. The terms are defined as such throughout the United States in state supreme court rules, statutes, ethical opinions, bar association guidelines and other similar documents. These are the same documents which provide recognition of the paralegal profession and encourage the use of paralegals in the delivery of legal services.

NALA has become increasingly aware that while the terms are the same as "lawyer" and "attorney", a preference in terms is emerging. Different geographic areas use one term more than another. For this reason, NALA filed for a certification mark "CP" with the US Patent and Trademark Office. The certification mark was successfully registered on July 20, 2004. Most paralegals are now using the CP credential.

CLA is a certification mark duly registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (No. 113199). CP (design) is a certification duly registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (No. 78213275). Any unauthorized use of these credentials is strictly forbidden.

Am I a Certified Paralegal?

Occasionally, paralegals call themselves "certified" by virtue of completing a paralegal training course, or another type of preparatory education. Although a school may award a certificate of completion, this is not the same as earning professional certification by an entity such as NALA. In this instance the school's certificate is designation of completion of a training program.
CP EXAMINATION DATA
As of December 21, 2018

STATES REPRESENTED AT TIME OF CERTIFICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>New CPs</th>
<th>Total CPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>787</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>157</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
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<td>192</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
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<td>34</td>
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<td>California</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
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<td>77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Idaho</td>
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<td>Indiana</td>
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<td>Iowa</td>
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<td>Canada</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>Japan</td>
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<td>Taiwan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19,595</td>
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</table>

CP CERTIFICATION ACTIVITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Date</th>
<th>Full and Retake Candidates</th>
<th>New CPs</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 2015</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2015</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>171</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2016</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>133</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2016</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>178</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>146</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2017</td>
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<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2017</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2017</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1 – December 21, 2018</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Certified Paralegal candidates examined</td>
<td>33,211</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total candidates certified through December 21, 2018</td>
<td>19,595</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total active Certified Paralegals through December 21, 2018</td>
<td>8,575</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Through the September 2017 testing window, the CP examination consisted of five separate sections. Candidates were not required to take all five sections during the same testing window. All sections were required to be completed within a two-year application period.

Effective with the 2018 CP examination structure, the exam consists of the Knowledge Exam administered year-round, and Skills Exam administered during the months of February, April, July, and October. All candidates must take and pass the Knowledge Exam before receiving authorization to take the Skills Exam.
Effective with the 2018 CP examination structure, the exam consists of the Knowledge Exam administered year-round, and Skills Exam administered during the months of February, April, July, and October. All candidates must take and pass the Knowledge Exam before receiving authorization to take the Skills Exam.
The Certified Paralegal Program

Exam Description

Section 2

Published by NALA, Inc. – 7666 E. 61st Street, #315 – Tulsa, OK 74133
November 2018
This information appears on the NALA website (www.nala.org) under “Certification.”
Please check the website frequently for updated information.
The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) has granted accreditation to the NALA Certified Paralegal program for demonstrating compliance with the NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs. Accreditation is effective through April 30, 2019. To maintain accreditation, NCCA requires annual reports of all certification programs. Re-accreditation is required every five years.
The Certified Paralegal Exam Description

How the Certified Paralegal Exam is Developed

The Certifying Board provides oversight for the development and ongoing maintenance of the examination. The Certifying Board, NALA certification program staff, and trained subject matter experts, work in partnership with a qualified psychometric consultant to ensure the examination is developed and maintained in a manner consistent with generally accepted psychometric, educational testing practices, and national accreditation standards for certification programs.

The Certifying Board selects diverse groups of qualified subject matter experts (SMEs) to participate in exam development activities throughout the exam development and maintenance process. Activities that involve subject matter expert participation include creating job analysis surveys, creating test content outlines, writing and reviewing exam items, and establishing the passing point for exams. Ad-hoc committees and/or working groups of subject matter experts composed of Certifying Board members, paralegals, attorneys, educators, and other outside experts may be assembled for these tasks.

Job analysis studies are conducted periodically to identify and validate the knowledge and skills which will be measured by the examination sections. The results of the job analysis studies serve as the basis for the exam specifications. These exam specifications, with weights for each content area, are approved by the Certifying Board.

Qualified subject matter experts write and review items for the exam. Subject matter expert item writers and reviewers complete mandatory training on item writing/review for certification examinations. Items are subject to multiple levels of review and analysis before being used as graded items on the exam.

The Certifying Board oversees a continual process of item writing, review and evaluation to ensure that exam content remains up-to-date, accurate, and consistent with the content outline.

All NALA certification examinations are prepared and offered in English only. Special accommodations such as requesting translation dictionaries are not permitted; no language assistance will be authorized by the Certifying Board.
2018 Exam Specifications

In October 2016, the NALA Certifying Board conducted its 2016 Job Task Analysis Study ("Study"). This Study examined the duties and responsibilities of paralegals in the workplace and the goals were to:

- Validate and update the Certified Paralegal examination content; and
- Ensure that NALA has current information about the roles and responsibilities of paralegals.

NALA contracted with PSI Services LLC, a leader in developing, delivering, and maintaining licensure and certification examinations, to conduct the Study. As part of the Study, NALA sent an electronic survey to more than 9,500 active Certified Paralegals. 1,839 Certified Paralegals responded, for a 19.2% response rate, which is typical for surveys of this nature. NALA included in the results responses only from those currently working in the paralegal field.

Based on analysis of the Study, improvements in technology, and recent refinements by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), and the advice of NALA’s psychometricians, the Certifying Board approved a new structure for the Certified Paralegal examination effective January 2018.

NALA also modified some policies and procedures based upon best practices in credentialing programs, and they are posted on its website under the Certification link and included in the Candidate Handbook.

The new examination format opened in March 2018 for one-month of post-administration analysis, scoring, and standard setting.

With these modifications, the Certifying Board listened to member and nonmember paralegals working in the field, and applied findings of the Study to the examination. The Certifying Board works diligently to connect the Certified Paralegal examination directly to the day-to-day duties and responsibilities of paralegals in the workplace. The modifications announced for the 2018 examination are part of the continued effort to ensure the Certified Paralegal examination remains an accurate and relevant reflection of today’s paralegals.

Examination Format

The 2018 Certified Paralegal examination will consist of two required sections taken in the following order:

- **Knowledge Exam**
  - The Knowledge Exam will consist of 120 multiple choice questions (100 scored and 20 unscored questions) covering the topic areas listed on the next page.
  - The Knowledge Exam will be administered on-demand, year-round at testing centers with preliminary result reporting upon completion.
• Candidates must successfully complete the Knowledge Exam in order to be eligible to take the Skills Exam.

• **Skills Exam**
  • The Skills Exam will consist of a written assignment; specifications are set forth on the next page.
  
  • The Skills Exam will be administered during four testing windows each year: February, April, July, and October.

• Successful completion of both the Knowledge and Skills Exams is required to obtain the Certified Paralegal credential.

**Certified Paralegal Exam Specifications – Effective 2018**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Exam</th>
<th>100 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 United States Legal System</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.A Sources of Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.B Judicial System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.C Remedies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.D Administrative Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Civil Litigation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.A Jurisdiction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.B Federal Rules of Civil Procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Contracts</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.A Formation, Rights, and Duties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.B Enforcement and Defenses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Corporate/Commercial Law</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.A Business Organizations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.B Rights and Responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.C Transactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Criminal Law and Procedure</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.A Criminal Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.B Criminal Procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Estate Planning and Probate</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.A Estate and Trusts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.B Wills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Real Estate and Property</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.A Property Rights and Ownership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.B Transactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examination Points and Passing Scores

Once admitted to the Certified Paralegal credentialing program, examinees must successfully complete a two-part examination. The two parts and their total points are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination Name</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills Exam</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Passing Score for Each Section of the Certified Paralegal Examination

The Certifying Board determines the passing score based on the *Angoff* method, a method that is widely used by certification programs to set passing standards. This process requires that a passing score is established by a panel of content experts based on their review of each examination question and the assignment of an expectation of the percentage of minimally-competent examinees that would answer each question correctly. Panel members include paralegals, attorneys, and paralegal educators, with each review facilitated by a qualified psychometric consultant.
The question-by-question review conducted by the content expert panel is also useful as a final quality review of the examination questions for other corrections that need to be made such as a misspelled word, an outdated process, or a question that may be culturally biased. If a question is not acceptable to the panel, it may be edited, deleted, or substituted by another question with a similar difficulty rating.

The first administration of the Knowledge Exam will be offered during a 30-day window with 150 items. This administration will be used for post-administration analysis, scoring, and standard setting. For this session, results will not be available upon completion but will be provided once the analysis, scoring, and standard setting has been completed. For subsequent testing, preliminary results for the Knowledge Exam will be available at the testing center. NALA will provide confirmation of the Knowledge Exam results to each examinee.

2016 Job Analysis Report

A report summarizing results of a major job analysis for the paralegal profession was conducted in October 2016. The full report may be found on the NALA web site.

Since 1986, NALA has conducted nationwide utilization and compensation surveys every two years. A portion of the survey looks at the duties and responsibilities of paralegals and later surveys have included a section used by the Certifying Board which presents the major areas of the Certified Paralegal examination and topics included within those areas. Respondents are asked to rate the importance of each skill/knowledge to their work and frequency of use of the skill/knowledge in their day to day work environment. The job task analysis study is conducted to:

- Validate, and update as needed, the Certified Paralegal examination content specifications
- Ensure that NALA has current information about the roles and responsibilities of paralegals

The latest survey was conducted by NALA in consultation with PSI Services LLC psychometric consultant Amin Saiar, PhD. In October 2016, an updated survey was sent electronically to more than 9,000 NALA members and non-members. There were 1,839 respondents for a 19.2 percent response rate, typical of surveys of this nature.
Examinees

Section 3
The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) has granted accreditation to the NALA Certified Paralegal program for demonstrating compliance with the NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs. Accreditation is effective through April 30, 2019. To maintain accreditation, NCCA requires annual reports of all certification programs. Re-accreditation is required every five years.
Examinee Application and Policies

Steps - Application Procedure and Testing Appointments

The application procedure is a two-step process. Examinees must first be admitted to the Certified Paralegal program by filing an application form with NALA Headquarters. Once admitted, examinees must schedule testing times through the PSI Testing Center Network to take the examination.

Examinees may also apply to take the test at non-PSI Testing Centers. More information about these options is found in the section entitled “Testing Centers and Policies.”

Communications to examinees from NALA and PSI are sent via e-mail notifications. PLEASE inform NALA of any changes in your e-mail address. Be sure to check your spam filters to allow all e-mail messages from NALA and PSI. From application to testing appointments, the steps are:

Filing the Application Form
All candidates for the Certified Paralegal credential must meet the examination eligibility requirements and complete and submit an application form for the Certified Paralegal exam. Application forms may be submitted at any time.

Application Acknowledgment
NALA Headquarters will acknowledge receipt of the application form and payment. Examinees will also be advised if additional information is needed to complete the form, such as a school transcript or an additional employer attestation.

Examinee Test Packet – Notification sent via e-mail
Approximately 72 hours after approval, all approved examinees will receive an Authorization to Test form by e-mail. The Authorization to Test form includes the login information required to access the computer-based examination before the application expiration date. If any information is incorrectly listed on the Authorization to Test form, examinees should contact NALA Headquarters immediately.

The Authorization to Test form also includes a link to the most current examinee information on NALA’s web site. Examinees are expected to read and understand the rules and policies of the NALA Certifying Board. Rules and procedures of testing centers including Terms and Conditions of Testing and Policy Statement are discussed in the section entitled “Testing Centers and Policies.”

E-mail Notification Regarding Scheduling Appointments Through PSI
Examinees will receive an e-mail notification from PSI advising that PSI is ready to accept appointments from NALA examinees. The e-mail message will provide a web address for examinees to use to schedule
the appointment(s), and the examinee ID number, and PIN. These numbers should be identical to the information provided by NALA. If they are not, examinees should contact NALA Headquarters immediately.

This mailing is sent to **ALL** examinees registered for the examination. Examinees taking the exam through non-PSI testing centers may disregard the PSI scheduling e-mails.

**Testing Center Appointments Through PSI’s Web Site**

Upon receipt of the authorization to test, and notification from PSI, all examinees who are attending a PSI testing center are urged to make their appointments as quickly as possible. Depending on the center location, space is limited and if there is a delay in making the appointment, the exact time or date requested may not be available.

**Applying for the Exam**

**Rationale for Eligibility Requirements of New Candidates**

Candidates are required to pass both the Knowledge and Skills Examinations of the Certified Paralegal credential to demonstrate that their education, coursework, experience, and training have resulted in sufficient understanding of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to provide competent evidence-based paralegal services as determined by the job analysis studies and represented on the examination content outlines.

Because there is no comparable means for assessing competence outside of the CP examination, the Certifying Board does not grandfather candidates and requires everyone earning a CP credential to have successfully fulfilled all published eligibility criteria, including passing of the examination.

**Qualifications for the Exam**

Candidates for certification must meet **one** of the requirements in one of the following categories 1, 2, or 3:

**Category 1**

Graduation from a paralegal program that meets one of the criteria listed in sections (a) through (e) below.

a) approved by the American Bar Association; or
b) an associate degree program; or
c) a post-baccalaureate certificate program in paralegal studies; or
   (In addition to the official school transcript, candidate must submit an original course catalog or an original letter from the school registrar or program director attesting that
the program is a post-baccalaureate certificate program requiring a bachelor’s degree as a prerequisite.)

d) a bachelor’s degree program in paralegal studies; or

e) a paralegal program which consists of a minimum of 60 semester hours (or equivalent quarter hours) of which at least 15 semester hours (or equivalent quarter hours) are substantive legal courses.

An official school transcript showing courses taken and date of graduation will also be required.

**Category 2**
A bachelor’s degree in any field plus one year of experience as a paralegal. Successful completion of at least 15 semester hours (or equivalent quarter hours) of substantive paralegal courses is equivalent to the one-year experience requirement.

All candidates under Category 2 must submit an official school transcript showing receipt of a bachelor’s degree and date of completion. Those applying under the provision allowing for additional course work in lieu of the one-year work experience must submit an official school transcript showing completed course work.

**Category 3**
A high school diploma or equivalent plus seven (7) years’ experience as a legal assistant/paralegal plus a minimum of twenty (20) hours of continuing legal education completed within a two-year period.

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1 Application forms submitted under Category 1(c) will be considered incomplete without submission of the official transcript and the school’s verification.

2 900 clock hours of a paralegal program will be considered equivalent to 60 semester hours. 90 quarter hours of a paralegal program will be considered equivalent to 60 semester hours.

3 225 clock hours of substantive legal courses will be considered equivalent to 15 semester hours. 22.5 quarter hours of legal courses will be considered equivalent to 15 semester hours.

4 Candidates applying under Category 1(e) may combine college hours from more than one institution. The candidate must have graduated from a paralegal program consisting of a minimum of 15 semester hours (or 225 clock hours or 22.5 quarter hours.) Evidence of the minimum hours required under Category 1(e) must be provided with the application form.

5 In Categories 2 and 3, "legal assistant/paralegal" is defined as: legal assistants or paralegals are a distinguishable group of persons who assist attorneys in the delivery of legal services. Through formal education, training and experience, legal assistants or paralegals have knowledge and expertise regarding the legal system and substantive and procedural law which qualify them to do work of a legal nature under the supervision of an attorney.

6 See Footnote 5.
prior to application for the examination. Evidence of continuing legal education credit is documented by the attorney/employer attestation that must be signed as part of the application form. No further documentation is required.

Ineligibility

Individuals currently incarcerated for any felony offense, or on probation, parole, or other court-imposed supervision for a felony offense, are ineligible to apply for the Certified Paralegal examination.

Applications may be submitted:

- By mail, with documentation
- By FAX (918-582-6772)
- On-line using the form on NALA’s web site
- E-mail to testing@nala.org

Documentation Required to Complete the Application Form

- All pages of the application form must be complete. All documentation required to complete the Certified Paralegal application form must be submitted at the time of filing the application. Documentation includes official school transcripts, attorney attestations and payment. Incomplete applications are subject to rejection and the payment is nonrefundable.
- Categories 1 and 2 require an official transcript submitted with the application. A transcript is considered “official” if it bears the official seal and authorizing signature of the issuing institution and is sent directly by the school to NALA or sealed by the school and mailed or delivered to NALA by the applicant. The official transcript must indicate all courses taken and date of graduation.
- Category 3 requires a minimum of seven (7) years paralegal experience under the supervision of a member of the bar, along with a minimum of twenty (20) clock hours of continuing education, as verified by one or more attorney attestations.
- Attorney Employer Attestations
  - For those qualifying under Category 1, an attorney/employer attestation is not required
  - For those qualifying under Category 2 the attestation section is required only if applying with one year or more of paralegal experience in lieu of the 15 semester hours of paralegal courses.
  - The attestation section must be completed by all applicants for Category 3.
- All applications are reviewed by certification staff to ensure proper documentation of education or experience. Applications are deemed complete when they satisfy the eligibility requirements listed in the Candidate Handbook and pay the required fee. Once an application has been approved the candidate will receive an acknowledgment and Authorization to Test by e-mail.
- Candidates filing incomplete applications must complete the application within 60 days of initial filing or the application will be denied. The examination fee is nonrefundable. Candidates with incomplete applications will be advised of any application deficiencies by e-mail.

Examinee Attestation

All examinees are required to sign the following attestation on the application for the Certified Paralegal examination. This serves a pledge of confidentiality, and states the reasons for suspension of authorization to use the Certified Paralegal credential:
“I hereby declare that the above information [on the Certified Paralegal Examination Application Form] is complete and truthful. I further pledge not to divulge the contents of any examinations questions for certification as a legal assistant/paralegal by NALA (the “Examination Questions”) and agree to be bound by the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of NALA. Inasmuch as it is and ever will be impracticable and extremely difficult to determine the actual damages resulting to NALA should I divulge the contents of any Examination Questions, I agree to pay NALA as liquidated damages and not as a penalty, the sum of $500 for each breach of my agreement not to divulge the contents of any Examination Questions.

I further understand that the CP designation may be suspended or revoked and that I may be prohibited from taking any further NALA exams, including but not limited to any specialty practice area exams or retaking the general certification exam for the following reasons:

1. Falsification of information on application form.
2. Subsequent conviction of the unauthorized practice of law.
3. Failure to meet continuing legal education requirements as required by the Certifying Board.
4. Divulging the contents of any Examination Questions.
5. Subsequent conviction of a felony.
7. Violation of the “Terms and Conditions of Testing.”
8. Engaging in any other conduct determined by a majority vote of the Certifying Board to be unethical or unprofessional.

With full knowledge of the above requirements and agreement to be bound by any decisions of the Certifying Board for Paralegals of NALA, Inc., with respect to examinations or designations, I submit this application.”

**Fees are nonrefundable**

**Exam fees**
- First time candidates
  - Nonrefundable examination fee of $250 for NALA members, $275 for nonmembers.
  - Includes one attempt for the Knowledge Exam and one attempt for the Skills Exam.
- Retake candidates
  - Nonrefundable attempt fee of $60 per subsequent attempt for the Knowledge Exam.
  - Nonrefundable attempt fee of $60 per subsequent attempt for the Skills Exam.

The Certified Paralegal examination program has been approved by the Veterans Administration under the licensing and certification benefit. The VA will pay the examination fee for qualified veterans. For further information, see [www.gibill.va.gov/](http://www.gibill.va.gov/).

**Withdrawal, Incomplete, or Rejected Applications.**
Candidates filing incomplete applications must provide the documentation and/or fees required to complete the application within 60 days of initial filing or the application will be voided and a new application and nonrefundable fee will be required.
Testing Center Fees: PSI testing center fees are discussed on the PSI Testing Center Information Details page. Non-PSI centers may also charge a fee. This is included with the information describing the Non-PSI centers (Non-PSI Testing Center Details).

General Policies

Knowledge Exam

- Candidates must first pass the Knowledge Exam
- Candidates are eligible to take the Knowledge Exam only after they have graduated from an educational program, if they use that eligibility pathway, or have the required minimum experience if applying under the experience category. The new system of on-demand testing will remove deadlines to apply for the examination. Candidates will be able to apply when they are eligible.
- Once applications for the Certified Paralegal examination have been approved, candidates will have 365 days from the approval date to sit for the Knowledge Exam. If the candidate does not take the Knowledge Exam within 365 days of the initial approval date, the application will be voided and a new application and nonrefundable fee will be required.
- Candidates must wait 90 days before re-taking the Knowledge Exam, in order to have sufficient time to prepare for retaking the exam
- Candidates must pass the Knowledge Exam within the first three attempts and are barred from taking the exam again for 365 days if they do not pass within the first three attempts.

Skills Exam

- Candidates who pass the Knowledge Exam are then eligible to take the Skills Exam and must complete the Skills Exam within the next 365 days after receiving notice of eligibility from NALA.
- Candidates must wait at least 2 weeks after passing the Knowledge Exam before receiving eligibility to take the Skills Exam.
- Candidates must wait 90 days, or for the next available window, before re-taking the Skills Exam.
- Candidates who fail to pass the Skills Exam within the first three attempts within 365 days must start over by re-taking the Knowledge Exam.

Application for Retake of Examination Sections

New applicants for the May 2017 and September 2017 testing windows

- Candidates who have not yet taken any sections prior to the May 2017 testing window have the option to sit for the examination in May 2017 or September 2017 but will have to complete the exam and pass all sections by the closing of the September 2017 testing window. If candidates do not take and pass all sections by the closing of the September...
2017 testing window, NALA will require these candidates to retake the examination in its new format beginning in 2018.

Candidates who have not yet taken any sections of the exam also have the option to wait until 2018 to sit for the examination and the application will be transferred to 2018 upon request.

- **Candidates in retake status**
  - Candidates who first sat for any section in September 2015 through January 2016 will have the full two years provided in their original application to take and pass all sections of the exam since the applications will expire after the September 2017 testing window closes.
  - Candidates who first sat for any section in the testing windows beginning May 2016 through January 2017 will need to successfully complete any remaining sections of the examination by the September 2017 testing window.
  - Any candidates who do not successfully complete all sections by the September 2017 examination will retake the entire exam in its new format starting in 2018. Candidates in this situation have a reduction in time to complete the examination from the time allowed in the initial application. These candidates will be permitted to re-take the new exam once at half cost since the time period to complete the examination has been reduced. Any subsequent re-takes will be at full price.

- **Incomplete/pending applications**
  Candidates filing incomplete applications must provide the documentation and/or fees required to complete the application within 60 days or the application will be denied and the fee is nonrefundable.

**Americans with Disability Act**
The Certified Paralegal examination is administered in compliance with requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act, as amended. Individuals with disabilities that require modification to the examination administration procedures may request specific accommodations, in writing, by submitting the Request for Accommodation form and a letter documenting the disability to certification staff at NALA Headquarters. The request form must be accompanied by a current (within two years of the application date) letter from a healthcare specialist or other professional knowledgeable of the candidate's disability stating the specific disability and his or her specific prescription for accommodations. The Request for Accommodation form is available on the NALA website, in the Candidate Handbook, and is available on the NALA website at [https://www.nala.org/sites/default/files/files/banner/ADA%20form.pdf](https://www.nala.org/sites/default/files/files/banner/ADA%20form.pdf).

Accommodations are provided to a qualified candidate with disabilities to the extent that such an accommodation does not fundamentally alter the exam or cause an undue burden to the Certifying Board or any partner testing agent. The cost of excessive accommodation requirements shall be borne by the candidate (e.g., electronic communication equipment, etc.).
Reasonable requests for special accommodations will be provided for when the documentation supports the need. Reasonable accommodations may include additional time, a private testing area, Braille format or JAWS software for visually impaired.

Requests will be reviewed based on the documentation provided. Either legal counsel or the recommending health professional may be contacted for additional information as needed.

The candidate will be notified by e-mail of the outcome of the request for accommodation, and, if granted, will be required to sign an acknowledgment of the accommodation as part of the application file. Certification staff will coordinate with the candidate’s testing partner to provide the approved reasonable auxiliary aids and services.

As the CP Examination is written in the English language, exams will not be translated into foreign languages and interpreters are not permitted to translate the examination. English as a second language is not considered a disability requiring special testing accommodations.

A candidate who is denied his or her request for special accommodations may file an appeal with the Certifying Board. The appeal should include appropriate documentation supporting the case. The decision of the Certifying Board is final.

Confidentiality
An individual’s application status, exam results, and personal identifying information is confidential and will not be released by NALA to any person without the consent of the individual or as required by law, except to exam proctors as required for administration of the exam.

Nondiscrimination
The Certifying Board adheres to principles of fairness and due process and endorses the principles of equal opportunity. In administering the certification programs, the Certifying Board does not discriminate or deny opportunity to anyone on the basis of race, color, creed, age, gender, national origin, religion, disability, marital status, parental status, ancestry, sexual orientation, military discharge status, source of income, or any other status protected by applicable law. All candidates for certification will be judged solely on the published eligibility criteria determined by the Certifying Board.

Appeal Process for Applicants who Receive an Adverse Eligibility Decision
Applications accepted for the Certified Paralegal examination are accepted on the basis of proof of meeting the eligibility requirements as enumerated on the application form and in the Candidate Handbook and submission of the required fee.

If an applicant is unable to provide proof of meeting any of the requirements, the applicant is encouraged to contact NALA Headquarters. The procedures for approving applications allow the following:

- For those qualifying under the 7 years’ paralegal experience requirement, attestations of employers are required for the entire 7-year period. If it is not possible to reach former employers whose attestation is required, the Certifying Board will accept an affidavit of the current employer attesting to the previous years of work as a paralegal.
As stated in the application requirements, applicants may combine hours of course work from more than one institution.

If an application is not accepted, the candidate may, within 30 days of the date of denial of application, appeal the decision of the Certifying Board under the following circumstances:

- It is not possible to provide a transcript of completed course work because the school no longer exists.
- If qualifying under categories which require experience, the application may be considered if the experience requirement is not fully met, and the paralegal is able to submit proof of the need for certification for employment or advancement in employment.
- An application for the CP examination was submitted and previously accepted but has expired, provided the candidate meets the current eligibility requirements.
- Financial hardship.

In appealing a decision to deny an application based on the reasons listed above, the candidate must submit documentation to substantiate the claim, and a signed and notarized attestation that the information is true and correct.

The Certifying Board Chair, working with certification staff, within 30 days of receipt of the appeal, shall make a determination regarding the appeal and the candidate’s eligibility to take the examination. In the case of financial hardship, the Chair may suggest a payment plan for the candidate, but the fee may not be waived. The decision of the Certifying Board Chair is final.

Cheating and Misconduct in the Certified Paralegal Examination Program

Candidates are expected to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity at all times and during all phases of the certification process - including exam preparation, testing, and re-certification.

Filing a Complaint

If a candidate is believed to have acted with dishonesty or with intent to misrepresent at any time during the certification process, the Certifying Board reserves the right to bar that individual from the program immediately while investigating the circumstances.

Evidence of misconduct includes, but is not limited to, violation of the terms and conditions of testing, unfairly gaining exam information by using unauthorized materials or web sites during the examination, or by providing unfair assistance to another candidate at any time during the exam preparation or delivery period. This evidence may include visual observation during the test period or other tangible evidence.

Evidence may be filed in writing to NALA Headquarters by examination proctors, fellow examinees, or others with knowledge of possible misconduct. Proctors and examinees may also contact NALA certification staff by telephone on the day of testing if it is believed cheating is observed.

Procedures for Investigating Complaint

The Certifying Board’s Procedures for Disciplinary Proceedings are published in their entirety on the
NALA web site at: [https://www.nala.org/node/1075](https://www.nala.org/node/1075) and are found in the Certifying Board’s Policy Manual in Policy #304.

**Discipline**

If the Board concludes that there has been a violation of the terms and conditions of testing by a Certified Paralegal examinee during any testing session, it will determine which of the following disciplines is appropriate, which may include:

- all examination sections will be voided with no refund of fees and no scores reported; the candidate may be prohibited from taking the Certified Paralegal examination indefinitely.
- the candidate will be prohibited from taking the Certified Paralegal examination (or any section) for a period of not less than two years from the date of the violation;
- all sections must be taken or retaken if the examinee is permitted to re-test and, as a condition for re-testing, the Certifying Board shall require the candidate to complete a specific number of hours of Legal Ethics, approved for CLE credit, to be completed within a specific period of time prior to eligibility for re-testing; documentation of completion of the ethics CLE hours is required. The program may be approved by a paralegal professional association, bar association, or offered for college credit or continuing education units.

**Examination Results**

**Grade Reports**

Preliminary results of the Knowledge Exam will be provided to each examinee at the testing center once year-round testing has opened. The Skills Exam requires grading by the Certifying Board and results will not be available at the testing center. Results for the Skills Exam will be released by the end of the month following the testing window, i.e., March, May, August, and November. Final results of the examination are provided to all examinees via upload to each examinee’s NALA online portal. Results are not available by e-mail, telephone or fax.

Examinees are provided with failing scores only. In addition, examinees who need to re-test will receive domain-level reports regarding their performance on the Knowledge Exam and Skills Exam. This information is provided as guidance for examinees in preparation for re-testing.

Passing scores are not provided. Successful completion of each exam is designated with “Pass.” The Certifying Board has determined “Pass” is sufficient to designate successful completion of the exam sections and that if a paralegal has met the standard, the paralegal has earned the Certified Paralegal credential.

**How Passing Score is Established**

The passing points, or cut scores, for the exams are established using a criterion-referenced technique. Qualified and trained SMEs participate in determining the passing points working with the psychometric consultant.

The final passing points resulting from this process are approved by the Certifying Board (or SME working group).
Appeal of examination results
An examinee may appeal, in writing, to the Certifying Board for review of the Board’s actions concerning examination results.

Such appeal must include the candidate’s basis for the appeal and any and all relevant documentation to be considered and must be received at NALA Headquarters within thirty (30) days after release of the examination results. The Board Chair and NALA Headquarters staff will promptly investigate to determine whether the documentation submitted meets the Certifying Board’s requirements for review of examination results. If it is determined that the appeal does not meet the requirements, the examinee will be so advised. If the information meets the Board’s requirements for an appeal, such appeal shall be reviewed by an Appeal Committee which shall be comprised of a minimum of three (3) members of the Certifying Board, to include a paralegal educator, an attorney, and an Advanced Certified Paralegal. Each member of the Appeal Committee shall have served a minimum of one (1) year on the Certifying Board.

The Appeal Committee of the Certifying Board will determine whether a decision made by the Certifying Board was inappropriate if: (1) the decision was based on material errors of fact, or (2) the NALA Certifying Board failed to follow published criteria, policies, and procedures.

Only facts and conditions up to and including the time of the Certifying Board’s decision are eligible for consideration during the appeal process.

After consideration of the matter under appeal, the Appeal Committee shall submit its recommendation for action to the Certifying Board. A majority vote of Certifying Board members shall be final and binding in the matter under appellate review.
APPENDIX
CERTIFIED PARALEGAL EXAMINATION
Request for Accommodation

Please complete the following information. In a separate letter please describe your specific disability, when and how it was first identified, and the accommodations you are requesting because of it. Mail the letter, the completed form, and the requested documentation to the NALA Certifying Board at the address listed above.

I. REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATION:
   A. Do you require any form of reasonable accommodation in order to take the Certified Paralegal examination?
      ☐ Yes ☐ No
   B. If yes, please state the reason for the need:

II. PAST ACCOMMODATIONS MADE FOR THE REASONS SET FORTH IN SECTION I:
   A. High School
      Were you in a special school or program ☐ Yes ☐ No
      Did you receive special accommodations for classroom tests? ☐ Yes ☐ No
      Did you generally receive extra time for classroom tests? ☐ Yes ☐ No
   B. Did you receive special accommodations for taking the SAT or ACT examinations for admission to college? ☐ Yes ☐ No
C. College:
Did you use disabled student services? 
❏ Yes  ❏ No
Did you generally receive extra time for exams? 
❏ Yes  ❏ No

D. Have you received any special accommodations for any other professional examinations? 
❏ Yes  ❏ No

If yes, what accommodations were provided? (Check all that apply)
Formats: ❏ Braille  ❏ Tape  ❏ Large print
Help: ❏ Reader  ❏ Recorder  ❏ Sign language interpreter
        ❏ Extra breaks/rest period  ❏ Extra testing time

❏ Other. Please describe:

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Please include documentation of special services and testing accommodations you have received in other examination situations because of your disability.

III. ACCOMMODATIONS REQUESTED FOR THE CERTIFIED PARALEGAL EXAMINATION (Check all that apply):

Formats: ❏ Braille  ❏ Tape  ❏ Large print
Help: ❏ Reader  ❏ Recorder  ❏ Sign language interpreter
        ❏ Extra breaks/rest period  ❏ Extra testing time

❏ Other. Please describe:

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

IV. I hereby declare under penalty of perjury that the above and foregoing is true and correct. Falsification of any of the above information will result in disqualification.

Signature

Print Name

Address

City, State, ZIP
NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility

Each NALA member agrees to follow the canons of the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility. Violations of the Code may result in cancellation of membership. First adopted by the NALA membership in May of 1975, the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility is the foundation of ethical practices of paralegals in the legal community.

A paralegal must adhere strictly to the accepted standards of legal ethics and to the general principles of proper conduct. The performance of the duties of the paralegal shall be governed by specific canons as defined herein so that justice will be served and goals of the profession attained. (See Model Standards and Guidelines for Utilization of Legal Assistants, Section II.)

The canons of ethics set forth hereafter are adopted by the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc., as a general guide intended to aid paralegals and attorneys. The enumeration of these rules does not mean there are not others of equal importance although not specifically mentioned. Court rules, agency rules and statutes must be taken into consideration when interpreting the canons.

Definition: Legal assistants, also known as paralegals, are a distinguishable group of persons who assist attorneys in the delivery of legal services. Through formal education, training and experience, legal assistants have knowledge and expertise regarding the legal system and substantive and procedural law which qualify them to do work of a legal nature under the supervision of an attorney.

In 2001, NALA members also adopted the ABA definition of a legal assistant/paralegal, as follows:

A legal assistant or paralegal is a person qualified by education, training or work experience who is employed or retained by a lawyer, law office, corporation, governmental agency or other entity who performs specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible. (Adopted by the ABA in 1997)

Canon 1 - A paralegal must not perform any of the duties that attorneys only may perform nor take any actions that attorneys may not take.

Canon 2 - A paralegal may perform any task which is properly delegated and supervised by an attorney, as long as the attorney is ultimately responsible to the client, maintains a direct relationship with the client, and assumes professional responsibility for the work product.

Canon 3 - A paralegal must not: (a) engage in, encourage, or contribute to any act which could constitute the unauthorized practice of law; and (b) establish attorney-client relationships, set fees, give legal opinions or advice or represent a client before a court or agency unless so authorized by that court or agency; and (c) engage in conduct or take any action which would assist or involve the attorney in a violation of professional ethics or give the appearance of professional impropriety.

Canon 4 - A paralegal must use discretion and professional judgment commensurate with knowledge and experience but must not render independent legal judgment in place of an attorney. The services of an attorney are essential in the public interest whenever such legal judgment is required.
**Canon 5** - A paralegal must disclose his or her status as a paralegal at the outset of any professional relationship with a client, attorney, a court or administrative agency or personnel thereof, or a member of the general public. A paralegal must act prudently in determining the extent to which a client may be assisted without the presence of an attorney.

**Canon 6** - A paralegal must strive to maintain integrity and a high degree of competency through education and training with respect to professional responsibility, local rules and practice, and through continuing education in substantive areas of law to better assist the legal profession in fulfilling its duty to provide legal service.

**Canon 7** - A paralegal must protect the confidences of a client and must not violate any rule or statute now in effect or hereafter enacted controlling the doctrine of privileged communications between a client and an attorney.

**Canon 8** - A paralegal must disclose to his or her employer or prospective employer any pre-existing client or personal relationship that may conflict with the interests of the employer or prospective employer and/or their clients.

**Canon 9** - A paralegal must do all other things incidental, necessary, or expedient for the attainment of the ethics and responsibilities as defined by statute or rule of court.

**Canon 10** - A paralegal's conduct is guided by bar associations' codes of professional responsibility and rules of professional conduct.
The Certified Paralegal Program

Testing Centers

Section 4

Published by NALA, Inc. – 7666 E. 61st Street, #315 – Tulsa, OK 74133
November 2018

This information appears on the NALA website (www.nala.org) under “Certification.”
Please check the website frequently for updated information.
The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) has granted accreditation to the NALA Certified Paralegal program for demonstrating compliance with the NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs. Accreditation is effective through April 30, 2019. To maintain accreditation, NCCA requires annual reports of all certification programs. Re-accreditation is required every five years.
# Testing Centers and Policies

## Options of Testing Centers

### PSI Testing Center Network

Most examinees in the Certified Paralegal program will be utilizing the PSI Premier PLUS and PSI Authorized Test Centers. Combined, there are over 500 PSI testing centers throughout the United States. After examinees are admitted to the Certified Paralegal program, they will work directly with PSI to confirm testing appointments. The web site, www.psiexams.com has a list of testing centers. Be sure to choose National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) as the Sponsor name from the drop down menu of certification programs for an accurate list.

### Examinees Participating in Non-PSI Testing Centers

NALA has established procedures which allow an employer or school to apply to become a NALA approved testing center. This is designed for groups of employees, or paralegal students. A packet of forms and requirements to become an authorized testing center for the Certified Paralegal examination is available from the NALA web site and may also be obtained by contacting NALA Headquarters.

### Overview of Testing Centers Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you are taking the exam at an PSI center:</th>
<th>If you are taking the exam at a non-PSI center:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• All centers through the PSI testing center network are available for the Certified Paralegal examination, subject to the center’s hours of operation.</td>
<td>• The center must be approved by NALA in advance of the testing window. An examinee’s employer may qualify or most community colleges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All NALA examinees will receive an e-mail with instructions on how to make an appointment through PSI.</td>
<td>• If you receive a communication from PSI, disregard the PSI communication and its instructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do not contact PSI until you have received your Authorization to Test or confirmation from PSI that they are ready to schedule your appointments.</td>
<td>• You must arrange your own testing schedule through the school or your employer. Be sure you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do not create an account through the PSI website. In order to schedule your appointments, you are required to use the login and PIN provided in your Authorization to Test and confirmation e-mails from PSI. Assignments will only be available to schedule using the ID and PIN provided to you by NALA.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be sure to review the rules posted on the PSI web</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSI Testing Center Network and Appointments</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinees will receive an e-mail notification when PSI is ready to accept appointments and payment for the Certified Paralegal examination.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinees may NOT contact PSI until this notification is received.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The notification will include the web address, PSI login name, examinee ID number, and examinee PIN number. These numbers should be identical to the information provided by NALA. If they are not, examinees should contact NALA Headquarters immediately. PSI provides two easy methods to schedule test appointments: Online at <a href="http://www.psiexams.com">www.psiexams.com</a> or by calling Candidate Service Center 1-800-733-9267.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you schedule your appointment, you should be prepared to provide any of the following information:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The name used to schedule your appointment must exactly match the name shown on your identification. At a minimum, the identification must be a valid, government-issued ID that shows your name in the English alphabet, your signature, your photograph.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Your sponsor issued I.D. Number.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Contact phone numbers - If there is an unexpected event, PSI will use these numbers to contact you.
• Mailing address
• Exam title(s)
• E-mail address
• Method of payment.

Test appointments can be cancelled and/or rescheduled through the PSI Web site. Typically PSI allows you to schedule 1 day prior if space is available and requires a minimum of 2 business days to reschedule your exam without penalty.

PSI has strict rules regarding cancellation or rescheduling appointments. Changes or cancellations received fewer than 72 hours prior to the appointment date will result in a forfeiture of payment. Cancellations more than 72 hours in advance of the appointment date are eligible for refund. Appointments are cancelled or rescheduled on-line using the same link used to schedule appointments. Contact NALA Headquarters for questions regarding refunds. In rare cases weather or an emergency forces a test center closure. If this happens you will be contacted by the PSI rescheduling department within 24-48 hours to reschedule your appointment. Examinees may also call 800-733-9267 for information. Real time site information is posted at psiexams.com.

Once examinees have made the appointment and submitted payment, PSI will send a confirmation with testing center rules. The confirmation will also include directions to the testing center location.

Testing Center Locations

**PSI Premier PLUS™ - National Test Center Network**

PSI Premier PLUS™ centers are a distinct combination of PSI owned and operated and partner sites – with over 260 PSI Premier PLUS™ Test Centers – located in all 50 of the United States, U.S. territories – these sites are available for delivering high-stakes exams and provide the level of consistency in security, design, and registration procedures that yield an unparalleled commitment to quality.

**PSI Authorized -Test Center Network**

PSI Authorized test center network sites are independently-owned and have been carefully selected for their quality, service, amenities and passion to deliver the best candidate test experience possible.
PSI Testing Center Policies and Recommendations

Further details may be found on the web at: PSI FAQ: https://candidate.psiexams.com/faqs/faqs.jsp

- No conversing or any other form of communication among candidates is permitted once you enter the examination area.
- You are prohibited from reproducing, communicating or transmitting any test content in any form for any purpose. Copying or communicating content is a violation of PSI security policy. Either one may result in the disqualification of examination results, may lead to legal action and will be reported to your Licensing Authority/Sponsor.
- Electronic devices and recording devices of any kind (including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, cameras) are NOT permitted in PSI testing centers.
- NO personal items should be brought to the testing centers. PSI will not be responsible for any personal items, and suggests that you leave such items in another safe place of your choosing. Only non-programmable calculators that are silent, battery operated, do not have paper tape printing capabilities, and do not have an alphabet keyboard will be allowed in the examination site.
- You must present valid, unexpired and acceptable ID(s) in order to take your test. Check your Candidate Information Bulletin or Licensing Authority/Sponsor for the specific rules that apply to your test.
- PSI requires all employees and test takers to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times. Exhibiting abusive behavior towards a proctor or other
candidates will be reported to your Licensing Authority/Sponsor and may result in criminal prosecution.

- You must arrive at the testing center at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled exam time in order to be admitted to take your exam.
- Persons not scheduled to take a test are not permitted to wait in the testing center or surrounding common areas.
- Once examinees have made the appointment and submitted payment, PSI will send a confirmation with testing center rules. The confirmation will also include directions to the testing center location.

**PSI Cost Information**
Current appointment fees for PSI testing centers are as listed below. The PSI appointment fees are separate from the examination fees and paid directly to PSI. Payment is required in advance.

- 2.5 hour session – $47
- 3 hour session - $55
- 3.5 hour session - $62
- 4 hour session - $70

The time stated above is the time an examinee will be in attendance at a testing center. Examinees are required to be present 30 minutes prior to the stated exam start time for check-in and sign-in into the exam session.

Examinees are cautioned that those who are termed “NO-SHOWS” will forfeit the examination appointment fee. A candidate may reschedule an appointment an unlimited number of times prior to the “red zone.” The “red zone” is 72 hours prior to the appointment date and time. Once a candidate is inside the “red zone” the appointment fee will be forfeited for a change or no-show.

The scheduled testing windows for the Skills Exam are administered during the months of February, April, July, and October. No appointments are available outside of the testing windows.

NALA is not responsible for changes in fees or policies of the PSI that apply to the PSI Testing Center Network. NALA makes every effort to convey information about the PSI testing center policies and fees, but amendments to the fee schedule and policies may be made by PSI that are not immediately communicated to NALA.

**Non-PSI Testing Centers**
In addition to the testing centers utilized by NALA through the PSI testing network, NALA will approve testing centers at schools, corporations, and law firms which meet standard facility and equipment requirements for computer-based testing. Schools and employers participate to provide an added service to students and employees, and, in some instances, to lower the cost of testing for examinees.
Non-PSI testing centers and contact details may be found on the NALA web site at www.nala.org under Certification/For Examinees/Non-PSI Testing Centers.

Testing Center Rules – All Centers
Terms and Conditions of Testing

Upon login to the testing web site, the Terms and Conditions appear on the computer screen with the login information. These are detailed rules relating to the delivery of the computer-based examination. Each examinee must enter their unique login ID and PIN and click “I accept these terms and conditions” before signing in to the examination.

Terms and Conditions

You are asked to agree to the following terms and conditions related to computer-based delivery of the Certified Paralegal examination any time you sign in to the test web site. This information was provided to you with your examinee information from NALA.

PLEASE read the following carefully – some of the terms are duplicative of requirements of PSI testing centers, others are specifically required of all NALA examinees.

By clicking “I accept these terms and conditions,” you are agreeing to the following:

- I have read the “Policy Statement” and I am familiar with its provisions.
- I will be continuously monitored during my appointment.
- I consent to video and audio recording of my test session and to the examination of the video and/or audio recording of my test session in the event that any questions should arise concerning possible violations of the procedures and/or rules of the test center. (May not apply to all centers.)
- I will follow instructions of the test proctor, represent myself honestly, and conduct myself quietly to avoid interfering with the performance of other examinees.
- I will only use authorized computer equipment.
- I will not open software programs on the computer provided by the testing center unless instructed by the proctor.
- I will neither give nor receive any form of unauthorized assistance during the examination or any breaks.
- I will not bring into the testing room any unauthorized items such as food, drinks, purses, briefcases, backpacks, cell phones, pagers, notes, note pads, photographic equipment, or any electronic devices. If I am observed using an electronic device, including a cell phone, in violation of these rules, it may be confiscated and sent to NALA for examination.
- If I have questions or concerns about the test environment, I will quietly notify the test proctor.
• I will report all problems related to the testing center, proctor, or computer delivery of the exam to the proctor immediately. If an examinee does not report problems with exam delivery immediately to the proctor, NALA will trust there are no problems, and there is no basis for complaint after the examination session has ended.

• I will allow testing center staff 30 minutes to resolve any technical problems that may arise (including power failure). I have the option of continuing the examination or requesting a reschedule of the examination for technical or other problems outside of my control taking more than 30 minutes to resolve.

• I will sign in and out every time I enter or leave the testing room.

• During testing, the exam timer will remain running during any unscheduled breaks; therefore, it is in my best interest to use the restroom or otherwise address personal needs prior to beginning my test.

• I will remain in the test center and may leave only to use those restroom facilities that are closest to the test room. I will not leave the building. I will not access a phone or my personal belongings, except in the case of an emergency. Under such circumstances, I will notify the test proctor before accessing a phone or my personal belongings.

• I will not remove any written, printed, or recorded materials of my examination from the testing center. The examination questions remain the property NALA and I shall maintain the confidentiality of the questions and answers.

• I will return all materials, including scratch paper, provided to me by the test proctor when I have completed my examination and before I leave the test center.

• Once I begin taking the Knowledge Exam, I understand the Knowledge Exam, including a maximum of two additional attempts, must be completed within 365 days.

  ☒ I understand the Knowledge Exam must be successfully completed before I am eligible to sit for the Skills Exam. If I do not successfully complete the Knowledge Exam after three attempts within a 365-day period, I understand I will be ineligible to reapply for the Knowledge Exam for a 365-day period.

  ☒ Once I begin taking the Skills Exam, I understand the Skills Exam, including a maximum of two additional attempts, if needed, must be completed within 365 days. If I do not successfully complete the Skills Exam after three attempts within a 365-day period, I understand I will start over by re-applying for the Knowledge Exam.

  ☒ If the examination is not completed within the above-listed time frames, credit for passed sections will be forfeited and a new application form will be required.

• Abuse of this site, or non-compliance of these terms and conditions will not be tolerated. Should information concerning abuse or non-compliance come to NALA’s attention, the candidate’s ID number and PIN will be terminated and NALA may take further disciplinary action.

  ☒ Confirm your intent to be bound by the terms and conditions of this Agreement by checking the box below. By not checking the box, you will decline the Agreement and your exam session will be terminated.
Policy Statement
One of the terms requires that the examinee is aware of the Policy Statement. This consists of a review of the attestation each examinee signed on the application form, and other policies related to the exam program. The statement is as follows:

Policy Statement
The Certified Paralegal examination was developed by NALA – The Paralegal Association and has been provided to the paralegal profession since 1976. The program is administered by the Certifying Board for Paralegals.

Examinee Attestation
All examinees are required to sign the following attestation on the application for the Certified Paralegal examination. This statement serves a reminder of your pledge of confidentiality, and reasons for suspension of authorization to use the Certified Paralegal credential:

“I hereby declare that the above information [on the Certified Paralegal examination application form] is complete and truthful. I further pledge not to divulge the contents of any examination question for certification as a legal assistant/paralegal by NALA (the “Examination Questions”) and agree to be bound by the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of NALA. Inasmuch as it is and ever will be impracticable and extremely difficult to determine the actual damages resulting to NALA should I divulge the contents of any Examination Questions, I agree to pay NALA as liquidated damages and not as a penalty, the sum of $500 for each breach of my agreement not to divulge the contents of any Examination Questions.

I further understand that the CP designation may be suspended or revoked and that I may be prohibited from taking any further NALA exams, including but not limited to any specialty practice area exams or retaking the general certification exam for the following reasons:

1. Falsification of information on application form.
2. Subsequent conviction of the unauthorized practice of law.
3. Failure to meet continuing legal education requirements as required by the Certifying Board.
4. Divulging the contents of any Examination Question.
5. Subsequent conviction of a felony.
7. Violation of the Terms and Conditions of Testing.
8. Engaging in any other conduct determined by a majority vote of the Certifying Board to be unethical or unprofessional.
Terms and Conditions – Exam Delivery
Prior to allowing examinees to sign in to the testing site, all examinees are required to review the terms and conditions related to taking the CP examination via computer-based testing. The information contained in the terms and conditions are also provided to examinees with the testing PIN and ID number, the NALA account number, and other instructions. Each examinee will be required to check “I accept these terms and conditions” prior to starting an examination.

Results
Preliminary results of the Knowledge Exam will be provided to each examinee at the testing center once year-round testing has opened. The Skills Exam requires grading by the Certifying Board and results will not be available at the testing center. Results for the Skills Exam will be released by the end of the month following the testing window, i.e., March, May, August, and November. Results are not available by telephone or fax.

Examinees are provided with failing scores only. Examinees who need to re-test will receive feedback regarding their performance on the exam. This information is provided to assist examinees in preparation for re-testing.

Passing scores are not provided. Successful completion of each exam is designated with “Pass.” The Certifying Board has determined “Pass” is sufficient to designate successful completion of the exam sections and that if a paralegal has met the standard, the paralegal has earned the Certified Paralegal credential.

Appeal of Results
An examinee may appeal, in writing, to the Certifying Board for review of the Board’s actions concerning examination results. The specific procedure for the appeal of examination results is posted on the NALA website.

Exam Administration Policies and Procedures
Knowledge Exam
- Candidates must first pass the Knowledge Exam.
- Candidates are eligible to take the Knowledge Exam only after they have graduated from an educational program, if using that eligibility pathway, or have the required minimum experience, if using the experience category. The new system of on-demand testing will remove deadlines to apply for the examination. Candidates will be able to apply when they are eligible.
- Once applications for the Certified Paralegal examination have been approved, candidates will have 365 days from the approval date to sit for the Knowledge Exam. If the candidate does not take the Knowledge Exam within 365 days of the initial approval date, the application will be voided and a new application and nonrefundable fee will be required.
- Candidates who do not pass the Knowledge Exam must wait 90 days before re-taking it.
- Candidates must pass the Knowledge Exam within the first three attempts during the 365-day period or wait 365 days before trying again.
Skills Exam
- Candidates who pass the Knowledge Exam are then eligible to take the Skills Exam and must complete the Skills Exam within the next 365 days after receiving notice of eligibility from NALA.
- Candidates must wait at least two weeks after passing the Knowledge Exam before receiving eligibility to take the Skills Exam.
- Candidates who do not pass the Skills Exam must wait 90 days before re-taking it.
- Candidates must pass the Skills Exam within the first three attempts in a 365-day period or start over by re-taking the Knowledge Exam.

Confidentiality of Examinees
The names of examinees for the Certified Paralegal examination are considered confidential and not released by NALA to any person, except examination proctors, without express approval of the examinee.

Other Certified Paralegal Program Requirements
This policy statement refers strictly to the delivery of the Certified Paralegal examination. It is the responsibility of each examinee to be familiar with the other policies and requirements of the Certified Paralegal Program, including but not limited to, the continuing education requirements to maintain the Certified Paralegal credential as well as examination and testing center fees.

Timing of Exam Sections
The following are the required sections of the Certified Paralegal exam with the time allowed as established by the NALA Certifying Board:

- Knowledge Exam – 3.75 hours for the initial 30-day session
  - 3 hours for all subsequent Knowledge Exams
- Skills Exam – 2 hours

The computer-based testing allows the timing of each exam section to be enforced automatically. Timing begins when the test is released by the examination proctor. When the time has expired, the exam will close automatically and the examinee will not have access to it again. If an examinee has not completed the test, and the time allowed expires, the work completed will be scored. Questions that are not completed will be scored as incorrect answers.

Timing begins once the proctor has released the exam. There are no scheduled breaks during the exam. If a break must be taken during testing, the clock will continue to run.

Instructions from Proctors
Testing center proctors are responsible for the delivery of the Certified Paralegal examination, including providing printed copies of the essay questions as needed. Questions regarding facilities or equipment should be directed to the testing center proctor.
The NALA Certifying Board is responsible for the Certified Paralegal examination. Questions regarding the examination content or format should be directed to NALA Headquarters at 7666 E. 61st Street, Suite 315, Tulsa, OK 74133, 918-587-6828, FAX 918-582-6772, or testing@nala.org.

Presentation of Computer-based Exam Questions
Timing begins once a candidate has selected the appropriate test section from the examinee dashboard, and the proctor has entered the appropriate credentials to release the examination. There are no scheduled breaks during the exam. If an unscheduled break is required, the clock will continue to run.

Objective Questions

- Each objective question will be provided one at a time. Once the answer is selected, examinees are instructed to click “Next” for the next question.

- Each question may be flagged by placing a check mark in the box entitled “Mark for Review” which appears below the answer options. The selected answer may be changed on review.

- When all questions are completed, the entire list of questions appears. Examinees may review this list before submitting the test for scoring, provided time remains on the examination clock. Questions marked for review by the examinee will be easily identified. Examinees may also scroll over the text of any question on the list and open it to review the question and selected answer.

- When the time has expired, access to the exam will be terminated, and the test will be submitted for scoring. Questions that are not completed will be scored as incorrect answers.

Essay Questions
The Skills Exam consists of an essay question only. Examinees are allowed 120 minutes (2 hours) to complete the essay.

The essay question requires reading. To assist in answering the essay question, candidates will be provided with a printed copy of the essay question when the proctor releases the exam. If a candidate did not receive the printed copy of the essay question, the proctor should be contacted immediately for the printed copy. Timing for the examination begins when the proctor has provided the printed copy of the essay and has released the examination to the examinee.

The printed copy of the essay may also be used to make notes and for ease in reading the question. However, space is provided on the computer to input the answer and the answer MUST be typed in the text box provided on the computer screen in order to be graded. The Grading Committee may only consider answers typewritten on the computer window. Examinees will be required to return to the proctor the printed pages prior to leaving the testing center.
The text box provided for the essay question answer will allow examinees to move around within the box, delete and add sentences and characters as needed. Examinees may use cut and paste; however, spell-check, and other word processing functions are disabled for the Certified Paralegal examination.

The space provided on the computer screen to type the answer is a text-only box. Do not use any special character keys such as ALT, CTRL, or TAB or the computer workstation may freeze.

Candidates must be sure they have completed the essay answer before clicking the “Finished Reviewing Present Score” button. Once clicked, access to the examination will terminate.

Essay questions are graded by members or former members of the Certifying Board. Examinees are instructed NOT to put their name in the response window.

-end-
Appendix - Screen Shots of the Login and Test Windows
Certified Paralegal Examination Screen Shots

The following pages provide screen shots to provide further detail about the computer testing process.

**Welcome Page**

This screen will display after the examinee clicks “Enter Testing Site” and includes a link to the Policy Statement.

From the “Welcome” screen, examinees may request the TesTrac system Id and Personal Id number, if necessary. However, to do this, examinees will need their NALA account number (“customer-specific id”). All of the required identification information is printed on the Authorization to Test form provided to each examinee by email. **Be sure to bring your Authorization to Test form with you to the testing center so you will have your login information for the exam.**
Examinees again have to agree to the Terms and Conditions before proceeding. At the bottom of this screen, you will be required to click the box "I accept these terms and conditions" to continue with the exam.
Examinee Dashboard

The examinee’s authorized examination sections will appear under “Assigned to me” area of the dashboard. The exam proctor is required to release the examination to provide access to the exam.
Click on the exam section name and the confirmation prompt will display.

If the wrong section is displayed, click No to go back to the dashboard. If the section is correct, click Yes and the Proctor Release prompt will display.
**Proctor Release**

At the Proctor Release prompt, the proctor will select the testing center, enter the unique ID and PIN issued to the proctor, and click Release. Time on the test begins once the proctor clicks Release.
Examination Question Screen

The screen displays a timer, the individual question number, and total number of questions above each question. Please be aware the timer in the testing software is the final authority used to determine time on test regardless of any other clock in the room or on the computer.

Examination questions are presented one question at a time. Please be sure to click the box “Mark item for later review” at the bottom of the screen to note any questions still requiring an answer or responses to review.

Do not use the “Previous” button for more than one question. You will have an opportunity to review the questions before submitting the final examination, as long as time remains on the clock.

Breaks are not scheduled during any test section. If you need to leave the room for any reason, such as a restroom break, the clock will continue to run.

- NOTE: when you have completed the last question of the exam, the “Next” button will be greyed out and unavailable.

The "Review and complete" button should be clicked when you have finished all questions in the exam. This will take you to the Review screen, where questions may be reviewed before submitting the final exam.
The essay question requires reading. To assist in answering the essay question, the proctor will provide a hard copy of the question for you. If you were not provided with the printed copy before beginning the exam, contact the proctor immediately. If you need to wait for a printed copy of the essay, log out of the examination screen so the clock does not continue to run. Once the proctor provides the printed copy of the essay question, log back in, select the Skills Exam section from the “In-progress/incomplete” area of your dashboard and have the proctor enter the credentials to release the exam again. The time on test should begin where it left off when you logged off the examination.

The printed copy of the essay may be used to make notes and for ease in reading the question. However, space is provided on the computer to input your answer and your answer **MUST** be typed in the in the space provided on the computer in order to be graded. You will be required to turn in the printed pages prior to leaving the testing center.

The text box provided for entry of essay question answers will allow examinees to move around within the box, delete, and add sentences and characters as needed. Spell-check and other word processing functions are disabled for all sections of the Certified Paralegal examination, however, cut and paste may be used within the text box screen. Do not have any other programs or windows open during the examination.
The space provided on the computer screen to type your answer is a text-only box. Do not use any special character keys such as ALT, CTRL, or TAB or the computer workstation may freeze.

Be sure you have completed your essay answer **before** you submit the essay. Once submitted, your access to the examination will terminate.

Essay questions are graded by members or former members of the Certifying Board. PLEASE do not put your name on your response!
This screen is displayed when all questions have been answered and examinees are ready to review the exam questions, as long as time remains on the exam timer.

The screen will display as a list of each question number in the exam.

Questions that have been viewed have a checkmark in the column “Displayed to you.” Questions that are marked for review have a checkmark in the “Marked by you” column. Whether questions have been answered are indicated in the “Answer provided” column. The beginning text of each question is shown in the last column. The question numbers are linked back to the individual questions if the completequestionneedstobeseen.
Do not click the "Complete the exam" button until you are ready to submit your examination. Clicking this button will terminate your access. Once clicked, examinees are provided with a confirmation prompt. Click Yes to submit the exam and terminate access or click No to return to the review screen.
Finished

Once the examinee has completed reviewing the questions submitted the examination, the Results screen will display.

Preliminary results of the Knowledge Exam will be provided to each examinee at the testing center once year-round testing has opened. The Skills Exam requires grading by the Certifying Board and results will not be available at the testing center. Results for the Skills Exam will be released by the end of the month following the testing window, i.e., March, May, August, and November. Results are not available by e-mail, telephone or fax.

Examinees are provided with failing scores only. In addition, examinees who need to re-test will receive feedback regarding their performance on the exam. This information is provided to assist examinees in preparation for re-testing.

Passing scores are not provided. Successful completion of each exam is designated with “Pass.” The Certifying Board has determined “Pass” is sufficient to designate successful completion of the exam sections and that if a paralegal has met the standard, the paralegal has earned the Certified Paralegal credential.
At the Results screen, click close to return to the dashboard. At this point, another examination section may be selected, or log out if sections are completed for the day.
The Certified Paralegal Program

Recertification Process

Section 5

Published by NALA, Inc. – 7666 E. 61st Street, #315 – Tulsa, OK 74133
November 2018
This information appears on the NALA website (www.nala.org) under “Certification.”
Please check the website frequently for updated information.
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The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) has granted accreditation to the NALA Certified Paralegal program for demonstrating compliance with the NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs. Accreditation is effective through April 30, 2019. To maintain accreditation, NCCA requires annual reports of all certification programs. Re-accreditation is required every five years.
Recertification Process Policies and Procedures for Certified Paralegals

The Certifying Board supports the ongoing professional development of its certificants. The mandatory recertification process provides certificants with the opportunity to demonstrate the retention, reinforcement and expansion of their knowledge and skills pertaining to new advances and information over the full spectrum of law and procedures in the legal field.

Recertification also provides encouragement to, and acknowledgment for, participation in ongoing professional development activities and continued learning. To support this purpose, the recertification requirements require continuing education and professional activities that enhance ongoing professional development, recognize learning opportunities, and provide a process for both attaining and recording professional development achievements.

To ensure the proficiency of CP certified individuals, the Board requires that each CP certificant participate periodically in continuing education to refresh existing knowledge and skills, and to acquire knowledge and skills pertaining to law and procedures in the legal field.

The five-year time period established for recertification is based on both the scope of issues that face paralegal professionals and the Certifying Board’s belief that new practices, research, and information are introduced in the field with enough frequency that professional development activities should be conducted routinely so that certificants remain current with best practices and emerging knowledge.

The Certified Paralegal credential is valid for a period of five years. Certified Paralegals may renew their certification after complying with the ethical and continuing legal education (CLE) requirements set forth below. The five-year period is enforced as a reasonable timeframe for staying abreast of the rapid changes in law and procedures in the legal field.

To maintain use of the CP credential, certification must be renewed every five (5) years. CPs are responsible for recording their continuing education through their online NALA portal accounts. CPs are also responsible to update their contact information in order to receive communications related to their certification status.

A Certified Paralegal in good standing is prohibited from retaking the CP exam.

Limitations to the Definition of Continuing Competence

The competency-based recertification process is intended to assist certificants with increasing their skills, knowledge, and competence while also ensuring compliance with the Code of Ethics. The recertification process does not, however, warrant or guarantee competency, accuracy, or any particular service result, but, rather, participation in the process helps demonstrate the certificant’s commitment to providing the highest quality paralegal services through continuous education and professional development.
The Certifying Board acknowledges that not all sources or types of continuing education contribute equally to professional development. To maximize the quality and relevance of continuing education earned by certificants, NALA provides a list of approved activity types.

**Ethical Standards**

Certified Paralegals may lose the CP credential if they have a felony conviction or if they violate the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility.

If NALA is aware that a Certified Paralegal has been accused of a violation of the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility, NALA will submit the information to the Certifying Board as soon as practicable.

All Certified Paralegals must submit, with their renewal application, a signed affidavit that they have not been convicted of a felony during the prior five-year period.

**CLE Hours Required**

Certified Paralegals must complete a total of 50 hours of continuing legal education during each five-year certification period. Certifications will only be eligible for renewal after timely submission of proof of CLE compliance in accordance with these rules.

Five of the 50 CLE hours completed must address the topic of legal ethics. For purposes of CLE, legal ethics is defined as the code of professional responsibility detailing the moral and professional duties required in the delivery of legal services.

Of the 45 remaining CLE hours, a maximum of 10 hours may address non-substantive areas (including, but not limited to, law office management, computer programs or applications, communications, and office technology). Of these 10 non-substantive hours, up to two hours may address the areas of mental health or prevention of substance abuse.

CLE hours may be awarded for participation in events, classes, or special experiences that occur after the initial certification or recertification date. If more than 50 hours are recorded during a five-year period, excess hours may not be applied to a subsequent period for active Certified Paralegals. However, if excess CLE hours are acquired during the month renewal is due, the excess hours may be applied to the new period.

**Acceptable CLE**

The Certifying Board will only award CLE hours for education that is relevant to the work of paralegals. Reported CLE hours that are not pre-approved are subject to verification by the Certifying Board.

CLE hours are not awarded for work-required activities (paid or unpaid) such as trial preparation, witness interviewing, or research of a case-related subject.
**Types of CLE Programs and Calculation of Hours**

1. **Seminars, Workshops, and Conferences**

**Sponsors:** The Certifying Board approves programs for CLE hours on a per-program basis. Pre-approval of all programs offered by a particular sponsor is not available. Sponsors for CLE events may include paralegal education providers, bar associations, attorney organizations, law firms, and paralegal associations.

**Speakers:** To qualify for CLE hours, programs are required to feature a qualified presenter whose relevant education, experience, certification, or license is stated in the program materials.

**Minimum Length:** A program or seminar that offers a minimum of 50 minutes of instruction qualifies for one hour of education.

**Types of Programs:** Hours may be awarded for participation in live CLE programs, including in-house employer programs or training. Online programs may qualify, including web-based live programs and web-based self-study programs. In addition, hours may also be awarded for self-study audio or video recordings of relevant CLE events. Hours are available for reading Facts & Findings articles as described below. Hours are not available for reading any other articles or books.

**Facts & Findings articles:** Beginning with the September/October 2018 issue, one hour of CLE credit will be provided to NALA members for reading five designated articles in a single issue of Facts & Findings and successfully completing a follow-up test on those articles. Articles eligible for CLE credit will be identified in each issue of Facts & Findings and Facts & Findings Digital. No partial credit will be given, articles cannot be combined from different Facts & Findings issues, and CLE credit must be submitted within one year of the publication date. No other publications will be considered. Up to two hours of CLE will be available per year with a maximum of five hours of CLE available per each five-year certification period.

**CLE Hours Calculation:** Certified Paralegals will be awarded one CLE hour for each hour completed at a seminar or workshop. Hours are not awarded for session breaks or lunch breaks. If a luncheon includes an educational component, time is awarded only for the actual presentation.

**Filing Requests for CLE Hours:** Requests for participation in seminars, workshops, or conferences must be supported by the following:

- Certified Paralegal Contact Information
- Type of Event
- Date of Event
- Name of Event
- Location of Event
- Event Sponsor
- Sponsor Contact Information
- Event Program or Agenda
The Certifying Board will accept verifications of attendance of a CLE event submitted by an event sponsor. Certified Paralegals must still report all of their own hours through their NALA online portal account according to these rules. The description of the event should include the items listed above and a typewritten list of names of the Certified Paralegals who attended the event. Sign-in sheets and handwritten names are discouraged. NALA will not verify hours for illegible names.

2. College Courses

**CLE Hours:** Hours may be awarded for completion of a college course offered by a college or university that is regionally accredited so long as a grade of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or a grade C or above, is achieved.

**Types of Courses:** Hours may be awarded for completing legal ethics courses or courses in specific practice areas as part of a paralegal or law school curriculum. Some business courses may qualify for non-substantive hours. All courses must be relevant to the work of paralegals.

**CLE Hours Calculation:** Certified Paralegals will be awarded 10 CLE hours for each academic quarter unit completed and 15 CLE hours for each academic semester unit completed.

**Filing Requests for CLE Hours:** Requests for participation in college courses must be supported by the following:

- Certified Paralegal Contact Information
- Course Description
- Unit Value – Specifying Quarter or Semester Credit
- Transcript – Unofficial Acceptable

3. Advanced Paralegal Certifications and State Specialty Certifications

- **Sponsors:** The Certifying Board will award CLE hours to Certified Paralegals upon successful completion of an advanced professional certification program for paralegals.

- **Types of Programs:** Hours may be awarded for the completion of programs administered by a national organization for paralegals, a state paralegal organization working alone or together with a state bar association, and which include completion of a written examination.
  - Product or software certifications qualify as non-substantive seminars, workshops, or conferences.

**CLE Hours Calculation:** Certified Paralegals will be awarded 20 hours for each Advanced Paralegal Certification obtained. Certified Paralegals who pass a state or other eligible national certification exam will be awarded two hours for each hour allotted to take the exam.

**Filing Requests for CLE Hours:** Requests for participation in Advanced Paralegal Certification programs or state specialty paralegal certification programs must be supported by the following:

- Certified Paralegal Contact Information
- Course Description
- Hours Completed in the Course or in Taking Exam
- Sponsor of Certification Program
- Copy of Certificate or Certification Issued

4. Presenting or Teaching

**Types of Teaching:** Hours may be awarded for presenting a seminar or workshop, or for teaching a course in a college-level paralegal program on a subject of substantive law or procedure related to the work of paralegals.

**CLE Hours Calculation:** Certified Paralegals will be awarded two hours for every one hour of instruction. Hours for seminars or courses with more than one instructor will be awarded pro-rata based upon the number of instructors.

**Filing Requests for CLE Hours:** Requests for presenting or teaching must be supported by the following:
  - Certified Paralegal Contact Information
  - Course or Seminar Description
  - Number of Hours Spent Instructing
  - Sponsor of Certification Program

5. Published Articles

**Types of Writings:** Hours may be awarded for publishing an article of at least 1,000 words in a legal periodical or book on a subject of substantive law or procedure related to the work of paralegals.

**CLE Hours Calculation:** Certified Paralegals will be awarded three CLE hours for an individually-authored article of at least 1,000 words published in a legal publication in accordance with NALA Facts & Findings Editorial Guidelines (2014) or similar published guidelines. Hours for articles with more than one author will be awarded pro-rata based upon the number of authors and words.

**Filing Requests for CLE Hours:** Requests for publishing must be supported by the following:
  - Certified Paralegal Contact Information
  - Copy of Article in Publication
  - Word Count

6. Training for Volunteer Activities

**Types of Training:** Hours may be awarded for time spent in substantive legal training to volunteer paralegal services.

**CLE Hours Calculation:** Certified Paralegals will be awarded one hour for each hour spent in a classroom, small group, or one-on-one training to learn how to provide volunteer paralegal services.
**Filing Requests for CLE Hours:** Requests for volunteer training must be supported by the following:

Certified Paralegal Contact Information
Name of Sponsor and Training
Date(s) and Time(s) of Completed Trainings
Total Number of Hours of Training and Instruction
Training Agenda or Syllabus
Sponsor Contact Information
Verification of Completion from Sponsor

**Reporting Hours in the Area of Legal Ethics**

To have reported hours satisfy the legal ethics CLE requirement, the sponsor’s program must state the seminar or workshop included a legal ethics component and state the specific number of hours of instruction in the area of legal ethics.

**Filing Procedures for All Types of CLE**

Certified Paralegals may enter their CLE hours, using the NALA online portal, anytime during their five-year certification period. Online submissions do not require supporting documentation listed above unless further information is requested or is required through the Certifying Board’s CLE audit procedure.

Special requests for CLE credit such as teaching courses or seminar presentations should be submitted to NALA Headquarters with documentation supporting the credit request.

**CLE Verification**

All CLE entries will be verified by certification staff for eligibility and may contact CPs for further information as needed. Ineligible requests will be declined. Certified Paralegals may view their CLE credit record at any time by logging into the online portal. The Certifying Board conducts random monthly audits of online CLE submissions. Certified Paralegals receiving notification of an audit must submit supporting documentation to NALA Headquarters within 60 days to verify CLE hours reported up to one year after the date the hours were reported. The supporting documents required for each type of CLE are listed above. Reported hours will be declined if the supporting documents requested are not provided within the timeframe given in the Certifying Board’s verification request.

Reported CLE hours are classified by the Certifying Board as either Approved or Declined. Hours that are pre-approved or verified by the Certifying Board, or were reported more than one year earlier, are no longer subject to verification by the Certifying Board.

Regardless of classification, Certified Paralegals who file fraudulent CLE claims or forms, falsely represent a course or program, or misrepresent hours of instruction may be subject to discipline as set forth in the Rules for Disciplinary Proceedings.
**Recertification Affidavit and Fee**

Certified Paralegals who have met the CLE hourly requirements to renew their credential are required to submit a Recertification Affidavit and recertification fee within thirty days of the expiration of their certification. The Recertification Affidavit verifies the Certified Paralegal:

- has met the CLE hours required to renew the credential;
- the hours reported are true and accurate;
- has not violated the NALA Code of Ethics has occurred;
- has not been convicted of a felony or the unauthorized practice of law;
- has not divulged the contents of any Examination Questions or violated Terms and Conditions of Testing.

Because of the importance of the Recertification Affidavit, all Recertification Affidavits are verified for accuracy and eligibility to renew the credential. Receipt of the affidavit and fee is required to complete the recertification requirements and a new certificate will be issued for the next five-year certification period upon receipt and verification. See Attachment G for the Recertification Affidavit.

Failure to return the complete affidavit with the recertification fee will result in lapse of the certification.

**Pre-Approval of CLE Events**

Certified Paralegals or seminar providers may seek pre-approval of an event for CLE hours.

**Pre-Approval of Requests by Certified Paralegals:** Certified Paralegals may contact NALA Headquarters in advance of a program to seek information about these requirements and to determine whether participation in a CLE program would meet the Certifying Board’s requirements.

**Pre-Approval of Programs by Seminar Providers:** Seminar providers may complete a “Request for Approval of Continuing Legal Education Programs for Certified Paralegals” form which is on the NALA website. Upon receipt of the form, and the approval fee, the Certifying Board will advise the program sponsor if the program is approved and the maximum number of CLE hours that may be awarded.

**Return of Documentation:** The Certifying Board does not return documentation submitted to substantiate requests for CLE hours.

**Retired Status of Certified Paralegals**

Retired status may be requested by any Certified Paralegal* who:

- has been certified for more than five years;
- is 55 years of age or older; and
- retires from employment.

The Certified Paralegal must provide an affidavit verifying age and employment status. Upon receipt of the completed affidavit, verifying all requirements, the Certified Paralegal will be permitted Retired status and will be relieved from meeting further requirements for continuing legal education.
Any Certified Paralegal who becomes permanently disabled and is no longer working as a paralegal, legal assistant, or in a law-related field, may submit an affidavit with medical proof of disability and, upon receipt of the required documentation, be permitted Retired status.

Certified Paralegals in Retired status must show their credential as CP Retired. The NALA web site includes a searchable directory of all Certified Paralegals available to employers and the general public in order to verify the current certified status of an individual. Certified Paralegals incorrectly using the Retired designation may be subject to disciplinary proceedings, including loss of the credential.

Any Certified Paralegal who returns to employment will no longer retain Retired status and will be required to meet the same requirements as all other Certified Paralegals. A reactivation fee of $125 will be required to reactivate the credential, with the five-year recertification period beginning on the date of reemployment. Should the Certified Paralegal have any hours of continuing legal education accrued to his/her benefit when Retired status is granted, those hours may be carried over, provided the continuing legal education hours were completed within two and one-half years prior to reactivation of the Certified Paralegal credential.

*Individuals using the Certified Legal Assistant (CLA) designation are eligible for Retired status under the same requirements as listed above.

**Revocation of Certified Paralegal Credential for Failure to Meet CLE Requirements**

When Certified Paralegals fail to comply with CLE requirements, a notice of expiration of the Certified Paralegal designation shall be provided by mail. Courtesy reminder notices also will be provided by e-mail prior to the certification expiration date.

Upon expiration of the five-year certification period, without submission of the required CLE hours, and return of the completed recertification affidavit and payment of the recertification fee, a notice of revocation will be mailed to the individual’s last known address advising that certification has been revoked and further use of the CP designation is prohibited.

**Appeal of Revocation of Certified Paralegal Credential for Failure to Meet CLE Requirements**

A Certified Paralegal may appeal in writing to the Certifying Board for review of the Board’s actions concerning the continuing legal education requests. Grounds for appeal include the following:

CLE documents were lost in transit (via mail or electronically); the CLE programs were attended but evidence of attendance was destroyed, lost or misplaced; CLE hours were rejected but are believed to be within the published guidelines.

An appeal must include all relevant documentation and must be received at NALA Headquarters 30 days prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Certifying Board. The appeal shall be reviewed by an Appeals Committee of the NALA Certifying Board, which shall be composed of the Chair plus two members of the Board. Each member of the Appeals Committee shall have previously completed a minimum of one year on the Certifying Board.
The Certified Paralegal shall be given notice of the time and place of the meeting of the Appeals Committee. The Certified Paralegal shall have the opportunity to appear in person or be represented by counsel and to present any defense or explanation to the Appeals Committee.

The Certified Paralegal will bear his or her own costs of attendance or representation. No adverse inference shall be drawn from the failure or inability of the Certified Paralegal to attend the meeting of the Appeals Committee.

After consideration of the matter under appeal, the Appeals Committee shall submit its recommendation for action to the Certifying Board. The recommendation of the Appeals Committee may include suggestions for the Board’s consideration such as those below. A majority vote of the Certifying Board members present shall be final in the matter under appellate review.

Hardship or Extreme Circumstances as Basis of Appeal

An appeal of the revocation of the Certified Paralegal credential based on hardship or extreme circumstances will be considered under the following conditions:

- The five-year certification period has expired; and
- The Certified Paralegal is on active military or active military reserve duty; or
- The Certified Paralegal has extenuating personal challenges, which could include long term unemployment or severe medical issues hampering one’s ability to work or engage in activities outside of work for a period of one year or more.

An appeal must be filed within 30 days after expiration of the certification. An appeal filed after the 12-month period will not be considered.

If such appeal is submitted, the Certifying Board Chair will investigate to verify (a) the existence of a hardship or extreme circumstance, and (b) documentation to substantiate the position.

If the Chair finds the claim meets the conditions above, a committee of the Chair plus two Certifying Board members will review the file. If the committee members are unanimous in their decision, the paralegal will be advised of the decision. If the committee members are unable to come to a unanimous agreement, the appeal will be forwarded to the whole Certifying Board for review and decision.

A response to the appeal will be provided to the paralegal no later than 10 business days after receipt of the Board’s decision by NALA Headquarters.

During the appeal, the Certified Paralegal credential will be designated inactive and may not be used or claimed by a paralegal. During the period the Certified Paralegal credential is considered inactive, the paralegal may list the credential on a resume or job application as long as the inactive status is clear. The names of inactive Certified Paralegals will not appear in the Certified Paralegal directory on the NALA website.

The following options will be available to the paralegal, based upon the hardship:

**Option 1**
The Certifying Board, or a committee thereof, may allow the paralegal to retake the Certified Paralegal examination as a new candidate for certification.

The Board or committee may waive the examination application fee if they deem it appropriate. However, the application fee waiver will be valid for a limited period of time to be determined by the committee or Board, and the paralegal must retake the Certified Paralegal examination within that time. The recertification fee may be waived only one time for a Certified Paralegal.

Option 2
The Certifying Board, or a committee thereof, may grant the paralegal up to an additional one year from the date of the decision to complete the CLE requirements needed.

With this option, the paralegal must comply with all recertification requirements as any other Certified Paralegal. The extension of up to one year will apply against the ensuing five-year renewal period. The expiration date of the Certified Paralegal credential will not be adjusted forward to accommodate the extended time.

The Certified Paralegal must enter CLE hours through their NALA online portal account and advise NALA headquarters when the hours have been entered. Certification staff will review the hours for accuracy.

The recertification fee may be waived only one time for a Certified Paralegal.

If the requirements are not met within the extended time period, the certification will be revoked consistent with Certifying Board policies.

Use of Certification Mark

The certification marks are a distinctive visual symbol that indicates an individual is qualified to provide paralegal services by virtue of having 1) completed the education, and examination requirements for certification by the National Association of Legal Assistants; 2) agreed to adhere to the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility of the National Association of Legal Assistants; and 3) agreed to continuing education requirements to maintain the national certification. The certification marks cannot be used by individuals who have not met these requirements and its use may be revoked for failure to comply with ethical standards and recertification requirements.

The marks may not be altered, modified, hand-drawn or typeset. The marks may not be reproduced electronically scanned in such poor quality as to distort or significantly alter their appearance. All reproduction of the certification marks must be made from original reproduction artwork provided by NALA Headquarters, and with these guidelines.

Always specify in a tag line at the end of an article, at the bottom of an advertisement, or at the bottom of the first page of a brochure or promotional literature that these certification marks belong to the National Association of Legal Assistants. “CP® (or CLA®) is a certification mark of the National Association of Legal Assistants.”
With the mark, CP® it is permissible to add (certified paralegal or certified legal assistant) after the mark itself so that your non-lawyer status is clearly indicated on firm promotional literature and other documents that may carry the mark. With the mark CLA® - it is permissible to add (certified legal assistant or certified paralegal). Any combination of the letters (CLA or CP) and titles (legal assistant or paralegal) may be used. However, your non-lawyer status must be clearly stated at the outset of any communications.

The certification marks may not be used as part of, incorporated in, the name of a firm or firm logo or imply that the firm is entitled to use the marks. This rule applies even in those cases where one or more firm members is authorized to use the marks in association with his or her own name. (This rule is most applicable to offices and businesses owned by paralegals that offer paralegal services to law firms.)

The marks must not be used on promotional items such as coffee mugs, t-shirts, jewelry, etc.

The marks cannot be used in a way that it appears to be part of an individual’s title or degree. They must always be used in connection with services provided by the individual who is entitled to use the marks.

Specific instructions and examples will be provided to new certificants upon passing the examination and are available on the NALA website.
APPENDIX
Certificate of Attendance

Certified Paralegals are required to submit evidence of 50 hours of continuing legal education hours to renew the CP credential every 5 years. Of the 50 hours, 5 hours must be in legal ethics, and no more than 10 hours may be recorded in non-substantive areas. If attending a non-NALA sponsored educational event, this certificate should be completed and submitted with relevant documentation for the event. Please be sure to obtain the required signatures for verification of attendance. The requirements to maintain the CP credential are available from NALA’s web site at https://www.nala.org/certification/certtest2view.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE SPACES BELOW AND ATTACH A PROGRAM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Hours (Description and Speakers)</th>
<th>Validation of Attendance</th>
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Name of CP (Please Print)  

Signature of CP

Address

Preferred e-mail address

NALA Account Number (On Mailing Label)

Name of Seminar/Program Sponsor

Authorized Signature of Sponsor Representative

Date of Educational Event:

Location:

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<th>For Office Use Only</th>
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<tr>
<td>Substantive hours</td>
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<td>Non-substantive hours</td>
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<td>Ethics</td>
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Certified Paralegal Recertification Affidavit

NOTE: This form should not be completed or submitted earlier than thirty days prior to the expiration date of your certification and should only be submitted once the 50 hours of CLE credit, including five hours of legal ethics, have been submitted to NALA Headquarters.

If the Recertification form is mailed, it must be accompanied by a check, money order, or credit card information (VISA, Master Card, Discover, or American Express are accepted).

I,______________________________________________________________, hereby swear or affirm that I have, since my last certification, earned a minimum of fifty hours of CLE hours necessary to maintain my NALA CLA or CP status; the hours reported to NALA are true and accurate; that I have not violated the NALA Code of Ethics, nor been convicted of a felony or the unauthorized practice of law; that I have not divulged the contents of any Examination Questions or violated any of the Terms and Conditions of Testing; that I understand that my failure to meet the continuing education requirements as required by the NALA Certifying Board or falsification of information provided to the NALA Certifying Board may result in my NALA CLA or CP designation being revoked.

Date

Account # (if known)

Signature

Print Name

Address

City, State, ZIP

Date Certified (mm/yy)

E-mail

Note: We rely on e-mail to communicate with you. If this is not acceptable, please check here □

Please complete the payment information below. $125 recertification fee paid by:

Company Check/Certified Check/Money Order#

□ MasterCard □ VISA □ Discover □ AmEx

Name on card: Acct. #: Exp. Date:

Billing Address:
Request for Certified Paralegal Retired Status

I, ____________________________,

(Name)

hereby swear or affirm that:

- I have been certified for more than five years;
- I am at least 55 years of age or older;
- I have retired from employment as of ____________________________.

(Date)

I understand that if the Retired status is permitted, my credential must be shown as CP Retired any time it is used.

I also understand that, should I return to work I will no longer retain Retired status and will be required to meet the same requirements as all other Certified Paralegals. A reactivation fee of $125 will be required to reactivate the credential, with the five-year recertification period beginning on the date of my reemployment. Any hours of continuing legal education accrued to my benefit when Retired status was permitted, may be carried over, provided the continuing legal education hours were completed within two and one-half years prior to reactivation of the Certified Paralegal credential.

Dated this __________ day of ____________________________, 20 ___.

Signature ____________________________

Name (please print) ____________________________

Address ___________________________________ City State ZIP

E-mail: _____________________________________

Note: We will communicate by e-mail regarding this form. If this is not acceptable check here: □
Request for Certified Paralegal Retired Status – Permanent Disability

I, ____________________________________________________________, hereby swear or affirm that:

• I am permanently disabled and no longer working as of ________________________________

                        (Date)

• Medical proof of permanent disability is included with this affidavit.

I understand that if the Retired status is permitted, my credential must be shown as CP Retired any time it is used.

I also understand that, should I return to work, I will no longer retain Retired status and will be required to meet the same requirements as all other Certified Paralegals. A reactivation fee of $125 will be required to reactivate the credential, with the five-year recertification period beginning on the date of my reemployment. Any hours of continuing legal education accrued to my benefit when Retired status was permitted, may be carried over, provided the continuing legal education hours were completed within two and one-half years prior to reactivation of the Certified Paralegal credential.

Dated this________ day of _________________________________, 20____.

_________________________________________________________  _________________________________
Signature                                                                                                 Name (please print)

_________________________________________________________  _________________________________
Address                                                                                                 City State ZIP

E-mail: __________________________________________________________

Note: We will communicate by e-mail regarding this form. If this is not acceptable check here: □
Certified Paralegal Reactivation Affidavit

I, ____________________________________________________________ (Name) hereby swear or affirm that:

- I have been in Retired status since _______________________________; (Date)
- I have returned to work as of ________________________________; (Date)
  and am no longer eligible for Retired status.

I also understand that since I have returned to work, I am required to meet the same requirements as all other Certified Paralegals. A reactivation fee of $125 is required to reactivate my credential, with my five-year recertification period beginning on the date of my reemployment. Any hours of continuing legal education accrued to my benefit when Retired status was permitted, may be carried over, provided the continuing legal education hours were completed within two and one-half years prior to reactivation of the Certified Paralegal credential.

Dated this ___________ day of _________________________________ , 20_____.

__________________________   _____________________________
Signature                  Name (please print)

__________________________   _____________________________
Address                     City State ZIP

NALA Account Number (if known)

E-mail: __________________________
Note: We will communicate by e-mail regarding this form. If this is not acceptable check here: ☐

$125 reactivation fee payment information. Please complete the payment information below:

Check #_____________________________  |  | Master Card  |  | VISA  |  | Discover  |  | AmEx

Account #_____________________________Exp. Date ________________
Name as it appears on card


Hardship Appeal of Revocation of Certified Paralegal Credential

NOTE: Appeal must be filed within 60 days prior to the expiration date of the certification. Appeals filed after the certification expiration date will not be considered.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date Certified:</th>
<th>Date CP Credential Expires:</th>
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<tr>
<td>NALA Account Number:</td>
<td>Date of Appeal:</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Grounds for Appeal (attach additional documentation, if needed):

Name of Appellant (Print or type):

Signature:

Address:

City, State, ZIP

Preferred E-mail:

THIS PORTION FOR STAFF USE ONLY:

CLE Credits as of Date CP Credential Revoked:

| Non-legal ethics CLE credit: | Legal ethics CLE credit: |

Action Taken:

☐ Appeal Denied

☐ Appeal Granted – Option 1 – Paralegal allowed to retake the CP exam as a new candidate for certification

☐ Appeal Granted – Option 2 – Paralegal has until [date] to complete CLE requirements