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.

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March 2017

This information appears on the NALA website (www.nala.org) under “Certification.”
Please check the website frequently for updated information.
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Certification

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.

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/Certified Legal Assistant 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 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 legal assistant profession, attesting to and encouraging a high level of achievement.

As of March 2014 there are over 17,822 (active and inactive) Certified Paralegals and over 3200 Advanced Certified Paralegals in the United States. Over 26,000 paralegals have participated in this program. The appendix to this document includes tables of the numbers of Certified Paralegals and Advanced Certified Paralegals.

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.
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.

2013 Updates to Exam Specifications

In April of 2013, NALA Certifying Board announced new specifications for the Certified Paralegal examination effective with the September 2013 testing window. These modifications were based on a careful and detailed analysis of the findings of the 2012 Job Analysis study conducted by the Board in consultation with PSI Psychometric Consulting Services.
The examination modifications called for adjustments to the number of points per subjects within all sections of the examination. No new subjects were introduced in any examination area. The most significant modification to the examination was the elimination of several practice area tests under the Substantive Law section.

Effective with the September 2013 testing, the Substantive Law section consists of questions on the following subjects:

- American Legal System
- Civil Litigation
- Business Organizations
- Contracts

With these modifications, the Certifying Board listened to member and nonmember paralegals, and applied findings of the job analysis study to the exam specifications. The Certifying Board strives to link the Certified Paralegal examination directly to the day to day duties and responsibilities of paralegals in the workplace. The modifications demonstrate a continued effort to ensure the Certified Paralegal examination remains an accurate and relevant reflection of today’s paralegals.

Descriptions of Exam Sections. The Certified Paralegal examination is organized in five sections. Examinees are asked to demonstrate knowledge by responding to objective test questions requiring knowledge of the subject and reading comprehension skills. Analytical skills are further tested by an essay question on the Judgment and Analytical Ability section. Any form of test question (true/false, multiple choice, essay) may be used at any time on the Certified Paralegal examination. The current exam specifications appear on the next page.
# Certified Paralegal Exam Specifications – Effective September 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communications</th>
<th>% of points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammar, punctuation, and capitalization</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word usage, spelling, and vocabulary</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written correspondence and composition</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal communication</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonverbal communication</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client and witness interview preparation and techniques</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethics</th>
<th>% of points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethical responsibilities centering on performance of delegated work</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paralegal professional responsibility</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional relationships</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client and public contact</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorney code of ethics and discipline</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Research</th>
<th>% of points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sources of law</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research skills</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of research</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substantive Law</th>
<th>% of points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal terminology</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court system</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources and classifications of law</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branches of government</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal concepts and principles</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remedies and dispute resolution</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurisdiction and venue</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil litigation process and rules</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil discovery</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil pleadings</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil trial and appellate process and rules</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporations</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicly-held corporations</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships and limited liability companies (LLCs)</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other business entities</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial structure and management of business entities</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract classifications</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract formation</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract defenses</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract remedies</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judgment and Analytical Ability</th>
<th>% of points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification of relevant facts and main issues</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Examination Points and Passing Scores

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination Name</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment and Analytical Ability</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Research</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantive Law</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

The Certifying Board determines the passing score for each section 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 questions 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.

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.

By using this method to establish a passing score for each section of the Certified Paralegal examination, it is likely that minimum passing scores for each section will vary somewhat. The following are the passing rates for the 2015 testing sessions:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination Name</th>
<th>January 2015</th>
<th>May 2015</th>
<th>September 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Research</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substantive Law</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgment &amp; Analytical Ability</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedures are in place to ensure that scores are comparable across all versions of the examination sections. While a passing score on one version of an examination section may differ from the passing score on a different version of the same examination section, the standard established by the Certifying Board is the same for each test version.

**Before examination scores are released ...**

The performance of each test question is evaluated. On rare occasions, the Certifying Board may find that a particular test question did not perform as expected. The Board has the option to remove the question from scoring and re-score the examination. This review takes place before the Certifying Board releases results to examinees.

**Current numbers and research reports**

As of March 2015, there are 18,289 (active and inactive) Certified Paralegals and over 3400 Advanced Certified Paralegals in the United States. Current numbers of Certified Paralegals, Advanced Certified Paralegals may be found in Section 1.

**2012 Job Analysis Report**

A report summarizing results of a major job analysis for the paralegal profession was released June 15, 2012. 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 psychometric consultant Dr. Kurt Kraiger, Colorado State University, and Janice Moore, CEO, SeaCrest Consulting Company, LLC, Charlotte, North Carolina. In February of 2012, an updated survey was sent electronically to more than 10,000 NALA members and non-members. There were 1,484 respondents for a 14 percent response rate, typical of surveys of this nature.

The survey consisted of three sections:

1. Demographic information
2. List of general skills and knowledge of areas of the Certified Paralegal exam required of all examinees.
3. List of skills and knowledge specific to the practice areas tested as elective sections of the Certified Paralegal exam.

Overall the respondents are representative of the population of working paralegals. 95% of the respondents are female. Responses were received from 49 states. 71% identified themselves as being members of NALA and 75% reported being certified paralegals. The average years of certification were 11 and average years of work experience were 15. 84.7% reported being currently employed as a paralegal. 53% reported a bachelor’s degree or master’s degree as their highest level of education. With reference to paralegal training, 37% reported they completed an associate degree program; 9% reported completion of a bachelor degree paralegal program. Survey respondents were reminded that the knowledge expected for Certified Paralegals is that of recent graduates of paralegal programs who have little or no practice experience.

Respondents were instructed to complete the importance and frequency ratings only for those areas in which the respondent has worked or has knowledge. In addition to the ratings of each item, respondents were asked to include comments about the exam subjects and suggest additional skills/knowledge the board may consider including in the tests. The board compared the importance and frequency ratings with the number of questions on each section of the examination, and reviewed the comments from respondents.

Extensive analysis of the 2012 Job Task Analysis data continued through 2012 and early 2013 with the Certifying Board working in consultation with PSI Psychometric Consulting Services. As a result of this analysis, the Certifying Board modified the exam specifications, effective with the September 2013 examination.

The next detailed job tasks study is planned to be conducted in six years unless there are fundamental changes in the nature of the job that affect paralegal responsibilities.
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 an examination during the time the testing window is open. 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.”

Most 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 an upcoming Certified Paralegal exam testing window. Application forms may be submitted **at any time**, but no later than the application deadline date for the upcoming testing window.

• **Application Acknowledgement**

  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. Examinees must follow deadline dates established by NALA for receipt of additional information.

• **Examinee Test Packet – Notification sent via e-mail**

  Approximately 30 days prior to the opening of the testing window, 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, and the exam sections that need to be completed in the current testing window or 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 encouraged to review the web site information. 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 notification by e-mail 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 testing window. 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**

**Qualifications for the Exam**

To be eligible for the Certified Paralegal examination, a paralegal must meet one of the following alternate requirements:

1. Graduation from a paralegal program that is:
   - (a) Approved by the American Bar Association; or
   - (b) An associate degree program; or
   - (c) A post-baccalaureate certificate program in paralegal studies; or
   - (d) A bachelor's degree program in paralegal studies; or
   - (e) A paralegal program which consists of a minimum of 60 semester hours (900 clock hours or 90 quarter hours) of which at least 15 semester hours (225 clock hours or 22.5 quarter hours) are substantive legal courses.

   **NOTE:** Under Category 1(e), an applicant may combine college hours from more than one institution. The applicant must have graduated from a legal assistant/paralegal program consisting of a minimum of 15 semester hours (or 225 clock hours or 22½ quarter hours.) Evidence of the minimum hours required under Category 1(e) must be provided with the application form.

2. A bachelor's degree in any field plus one year's experience as a paralegal. Successful completion of at least 15 semester hours (or 22.5 quarter hours or 225 clock hours or equivalent CEU hours) of substantive paralegal courses will be considered equivalent to one year's experience as a paralegal.

3. A high school diploma or equivalent plus seven (7) years' experience as a paralegal under the supervision of a member of the Bar, plus evidence of a minimum of twenty (20) hours of continuing legal education credit to have been completed within a two (2) year period prior to the examination date.
Application Form Requirements

Deadline Dates - Applications May Be Submitted

The deadline date for applications is as follows. Filing deadline dates are strictly enforced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examination Date</th>
<th>Application Filing Deadline**</th>
<th>Late Application Filing Deadline (With $25 late filing fee)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 1-30</td>
<td>August 1</td>
<td>August 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1-31</td>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>December 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1-31</td>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>April 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional forms will be required of all candidates if filing applications prior to meeting the eligibility requirements. Contact NALA Headquarters for further information.

Eligibility of Students Awaiting Graduation

Student Waiver:
Paralegal students who are nearing graduation may take the Certified Paralegal examination under certain conditions.

Testing Window: Graduation Date No Later Than:
- January: March 15
- May: July 15
- September: November 15

This option requires:

- A statement signed by the paralegal program director confirming the student’s pending graduation date.
- A statement signed by the examinee acknowledging that if, for any reason, graduation requirements are not met and the examinee does not complete the program, the examination results will not be released and all fees forfeited.

Additional forms will be required of all candidates if filing applications prior to meeting the eligibility requirements. Contact NALA Headquarters for the required forms and further information about this requirement.

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

Applications must be received on or before the deadline date. Applications received after the published date for late filing will not be accepted for the upcoming test window, but may be accepted for the next available test window.

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 attestation and payment. Incomplete applications are subject to rejection.
• 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. Applicant must also include the requested information verifying high school graduation or equivalent work.

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.

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.”

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

The fee for the Certified Paralegal examination application is $250 for NALA members and $275 for non-members of NALA. Retake fees are $60 per section. 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.

Personal checks ARE NOT accepted for payment of examination fees. Payment may be made by cashier’s check, money order, firm check, VISA, Master Card, Discover, or American Express.

Withdrawal Fee: If an applicant must withdraw, or the application is incomplete or rejected, payment will be refunded less a $25 processing fee for each year the application is active and on file (a maximum of $50).

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

Application Transfers

Once an application is approved, an examinee will have two years to sit for any section of the examination. If the examinee does not sit for any section within two years, the application will be returned and the examination fee refunded less the $50 processing charge. Any refunds will be issued by check and sent to the individual or company originally paying the examination fee.

Application for Retake of Examination Sections

Applicants may attend a maximum of six testing windows (the first testing window + five retake windows) within a two-year period in order to successfully complete the CP examination. Again, an applicant may only attend a retake session five times within the two-year period. The examination must be successfully completed within five retake sessions in two years or credit for all passed sections will be forfeited and the entire examination must be retaken. A new, updated, application form will be required. The two-year period begins on the date any section of the examination is first taken.
Examinees who do not achieve a passing score on any sections(s) may retake the section(s) during any testing window within the two-year period. Retake applications are due on the dates listed above for all applications.

**Americans with Disability Act**
The Certified Paralegal examination is administered in compliance with requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act. All special requests must accompany the application form. Contact NALA Headquarters at nalanet@nala.org or 918-587-6828 to request the special accommodation form. Examinees qualifying for special accommodations under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act must attend an PSI testing center.

**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.

**Non-Discrimination**
NALA does not discriminate against applicants on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, age, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, military status, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status.

**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.

- Paralegal students who are nearing graduation may take the CP examination under certain conditions enumerated in the candidate handbook.

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

Cheating and misconduct are not tolerated in the Certified Paralegal 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: http://www.nala.org/Certification.aspx 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**
Results of the examination are provided via US mail to all examinees. The results will be released during the second week of the second month following the test window, i.e., the second week of March, July, and November. This allows time for essays to be graded, data validated, and scores recorded. Results are not available by e-mail, telephone or fax.

Grade reports provide failing scores only. In addition, examinees will receive a report of the subject areas that appeared to be most difficult. This information is provided to assist examinees in preparation for their retake.

Grade reports do not provide passing scores. Sections of the examination that are successfully completed are designated with “Pass.” The Certifying Board has determined “Pass” is sufficient to designate successful completion of the examinations section 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.
Testing Centers and Policies

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.

PSI Testing Center Network and Appointments

Examinees will receive an e-mail notification when PSI is ready to accept appointments and payment for the Certified Paralegal Examination.

**Examinees may NOT contact PSI until this notification is received.**

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 www.psiexams.com or by calling Candidate Service Center 1-800-733-9267.

When you schedule your appointment, you should be prepared to provide any of the following information:

- 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.
- Your sponsor issued I.D. Number.
- 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 online 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. The map below shows a distribution of PSI testing centers. Centers are also located in Alaska and Hawaii.
Further details may be found on the web at: PSI FAQ: https://candidate.psiexams.com/faqs/faqs.jsp

Overview of Testing Centers Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you are taking the exam at a 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</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>Certified Paralegal examination, subject to the center's hours of operation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● All NALA examinees will receive an e-mail with instructions on how to make an</td>
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<tr>
<td>appointment through PSI.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Do not contact PSI until you have received your Authorization to Test or</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>confirmation from PSI that they are ready to schedule your appointments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Do not create an account through the PSI website. In order to schedule your</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>appointments, you are required to use the login and PIN provided in your</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authorization to Test and confirmation e-mails from PSI. Assignments will only</td>
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<tr>
<td>be available to schedule using the ID and PIN provided to you by NALA.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Be sure to review the rules posted on the PSI website when making your</td>
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<tr>
<td>appointment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● PSI will charge an appointment fee payable by creditcard (VISA or MasterCard</td>
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<td>only) when the appointment is made.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● PSI advises NALA of appointments that are made and confirmed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● PSI has strict rules regarding cancellation or rescheduling. Charges or</td>
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<tr>
<td>cancellations received less than 72 hours prior to the appointment time will</td>
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<td>result in a forfeiture of payment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Cancellations more than 72 hours in advance of the appointment time are eligible</td>
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<td>for refund. Appointments are cancelled or rescheduled on-line using the same</td>
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<tr>
<td>link used to schedule appointments. Contact NALA Headquarters for questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>regarding refunds.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● You must arrange your own testing schedule through the school or your</td>
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<tr>
<td>employer. Be sure you know the time you will need for each exam section.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Fees vary by testing center. Some schools and employers do not charge. Inquire</td>
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<tr>
<td>about this in advance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Examinees must advise NALA of appointment times and dates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Testing center rules regarding fees vary by center. Consult the testing</td>
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<td>center for these details. Generally, if centers have charges for the proctors and</td>
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<td>testing facility, payment will be made upon entering the center as part of the</td>
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<tr>
<td>check-in process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Information for schools and employers about qualifying as a testing center may</td>
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<tr>
<td>be found on the NALA website under “Certification.”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

PSI Testing Center Policies and Recommendations

● 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**

Appointment fees, effective through 2014, 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.

- 1.5 hour session - $40  
  - 30 minutes for check-in and instructions + 1 hour for the Ethics, and Legal Research exams
- 2 hour session - $40  
  - 30 minutes for check-in and instructions + 1½ hour for the Communications exam
- 2.5 hour session - $47  
  - 30 minutes for check-in and instructions + 2 hours for the Substantive Law or Judgment & Analytical Ability exam

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 Certified Paralegal Examination are the months of January, May, and September. Any appointments made outside of the testing windows are subject to cancellation.
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/Examinee Handbook/ 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 NALA Account Number 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 sections of the Certified Paralegal examination, I understand the examination, including retakes, must be completed within two years, (a maximum of five additional consecutive testing windows).
If the examination is not completed within this time frame, credit for all 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.

**Policy Statement**

One of the terms is 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:

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Policy Statement

The Certified Paralegal Examination was developed by NALA-The Association of Legal Assistants-Paralegals 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 CLA/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.

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

Results of the examination are provided by mail notification to all examinees. The results will be released during the second week of the second month following the test window, i.e., the second week of March, July, and November. Results are not available by e-mail, telephone or fax.

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.

Retake Policy

Examinees in retake status must successfully complete the Certified Paralegal examination within two years (a maximum of five retake sessions) or credit for all passed sections will be forfeited. If the examination is not completed within this time frame, the examinees must re-submit a completed application form required of first-time examinees and begin the certification process again.

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 five sections of the Certified Paralegal exam with the time allowed as established by the NALA Certifying Board:

- Communications – 1 ½ hours
- Judgment and Analytical Ability – 2 hours (Essay required)
- Ethics – 1 hour
- Legal Research – 1 hour
- Substantive Law – 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 Judgment & Analytical Ability examination 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 seated to begin the Judgment & Analytical Ability exam section. 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.
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.
The examinee’s authorized examination sections will appear under “Assigned to me” area of the dashboard. The exam proctor is required to release all examination sections to release access to the examinations.
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 Judgment & Analytical Ability 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!
Review and Complete Screen

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 complete question needs to be seen.
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.
Once the examinee has completed reviewing the questions submitted the examination, the Results screen will display.

Scores are not presented to examinees for the Certified Paralegal Examination at the time of testing. Results of the examination are provided by mail to all examinees. The results will be released during the second week of the second month following the test window, i.e., the first week of March, July, and November. Results are not available at the testing center, or by e-mail, telephone or fax.

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.
Certification Maintenance

Certification Maintenance Policies and Procedures for Certified Paralegals

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.

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.

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 not available for reading articles or books.

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 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 hand written 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 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 10 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. Certified Paralegals will be awarded 12 CLE hours for an article of 1,500 or more words. 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 submit requests for CLE hours anytime during their five-year certification period. Certified Paralegals may submit requests on a “Certificate of Attendance Form” provided by the Certifying Board or complete the online CLE request form on the NALA website. Online requests are not required to provide the supporting documents listed above unless NALA requests them.

The Certifying Board may request supporting documents 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 rejected 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 Undocumented or Confirmed. Hours are classified as Undocumented when they are initially reported online by Certified Paralegals, unless the hours are pre-approved. Undocumented hours are subject to verification by the Certifying Board. Hours that are pre-approved or verified by the Certifying Board or were reported more than one year earlier are classified as Confirmed. Confirmed hours 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.

**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 website 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 and will include an automatic probationary period of one year for the paralegal to submit the required number of CLE hours.

Hours for CLE programs taken during a probationary period will be applied first to the previous period until the hours and course requirements are met. After satisfaction of past due CLE, hours will be applied to the subsequent five-year period.

Upon expiration of the one-year probation period, without submission of the required CLE hours, a notice of revocation will be mailed to the individual 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, plus the one-year extension 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 12 months after expiration of the one-year extension already provided to the Certified Paralegal. 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 web site.

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 one-year probation period plus 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 submit requests for CLE hours in writing and not via an on-line form.

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 will Certifying Board policies.
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**

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Name of CP (Please Print)  
Signature of CP

NALA Account Number (On Mailing Label)  
Name of Seminar/Program Sponsor

Address

Authorized Signature of Sponsor Representative

Date of Educational Event:

Preferred e-mail address

**For Office Use Only**

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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.

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.

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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#

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CERTIFIED PARALEGAL ROSTER UPDATE FORM

We are in the process of updating our records on all Certified Paralegals of record. We would appreciate your assistance in this effort, by taking a few minutes to provide us with the information requested below. When completed, please return this form to NALA Headquarters in the preaddressed envelope which is enclosed for your convenience. Thank you for your help.

Name: ________________________________  Account #: __________________

NOTE: If certified under a different name, please indicate name at time of certification:

________________________________________________________________________

Date Certified: __________________________

Home Address: __________________________

City: ___________________  State: _______  Zip: ______________

Home Phone: ____________________________

Please check preferred mailing address:  / / Home  / / Office

Employer: ________________________________

Office Address: __________________________

City: ___________________  State: _______  Zip: ______________

Office Phone: _______________  Fax: _______________________

E-mail address: __________________________

NOTE: NALA is focusing its efforts on e-mail communications. If you do not wish to receive e-mails from NALA please check the following:

☐ I do not wish to receive e-mails from NALA

Size of Firm: # of Lawyers: ________  # of Paralegals: ______________

Your area of specialty: ____________________________________________

/ / NALA Member  / / Nonmember

Comments: ________________________________
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 _________________________________.

- 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 ____________________________________________
Disciplinary Procedures

Rules for Disciplinary Complaints

1. Introduction

1.1 Scope and Purpose
These rules establish the procedures that the NALA Certifying Board (the "Board") will follow in investigating and taking action on any charge of violation of any attestation signed in connection with application for the Certified Paralegal designation, specifically including the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility. Their purpose is to assure that such charges are investigated fully and resolved fairly, consistent with the integrity of the Certified Paralegal program.

1.2 Disciplinary Complaints
The Certified Paralegal credential may be suspended or revoked if it is found the Certified Paralegal has:

1. Falsified information on application form.
2. Been convicted of the unauthorized practice of law since receiving the Certified Paralegal credential.
3. Failed to meet continuing legal education requirements as required by the Certifying Board.
4. Divulged the contents of any examination question.
5. Been convicted of a felony since receiving the Certified Paralegal credential.
7. Violated the “Terms and Conditions of Testing.”

2. Filing a Complaint
If a NALA member, Certified Paralegal, non-member paralegal, member of the public, an attorney or employer believes that a Certified Paralegal has been convicted of a felony or violated any of these standards, the individual should contact NALA Headquarters in writing. Such communication should be marked “Confidential.” The information provided should include documents which substantiate any claim of conviction or improper behavior.

3. Revocation based on Failure to Meet CLE Requirements
Procedures for appeal of revocation of the Certified Paralegal credential based on failure to meet the Continuing Legal Education requirements of the Certifying Board may be found in this manual in Policy #202.

4. Procedures for Investigating a Complaint
The Certifying Board’s Procedures for Disciplinary Proceedings are published in their entirety on the NALA web site at: http://www.nala.org/Certification.aspx and are found in the Certifying Board’s Policy Manual in Policy #305.
Procedures for Disciplinary Proceedings

1. Scope and Purpose
The Certifying Board will follow the following procedures in investigating and taking action on:

- any charge of violation of any attestation signed in connection with application or recertification for the Certified Paralegal designation
- a charge of violation of the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility
- violation of the “Terms and Conditions of Testing” during the examination

The purpose of these procedures is to assure that such charges are investigated fully and resolved fairly, consistent with the integrity of the Certified Paralegal program.

2. Response to a Complaint
Certification staff will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and, in response, provide a copy of the current Disciplinary Procedures which the Board will follow in investigating the complaint.

This acknowledgement will point out the rule which states that the Certified Paralegal or examination candidate is entitled to know the identity of the charging party, and to review the documents submitted in substantiation of the claim. The person may then have the option of withdrawing the complaint or requesting an exception to this rule if the person wishes to remain anonymous.

3. Threshold Inquiry
If any such charge comes to the attention of a member of the Board, the member will report the charge to the chair. The chair will promptly investigate to determine (a) whether the matter falls within the jurisdiction of the Board and (b) whether the charge, if true, would constitute grounds for discipline.

The chair will then notify the Board, either by mail or at its next regular meeting, of the charge and the results of the threshold inquiry. If the Board determines that the matter falls outside its jurisdiction or the charge, even if true, would not constitute grounds for discipline, the matter shall be closed.

4. Investigation
Otherwise, the Board shall investigate the charge as follows. The Board may act by committee, provided that the chairman shall be a member of the committee. The committee shall be composed of a minimum of three members of the Certifying Board, to include a paralegal educator, an attorney, and a Certified Paralegal. Each member of the Investigation Committee shall have served a minimum of one year on the Certifying Board.

4.1 Notice to Respondent
The Board will first notify each Certified Paralegal who might be subject to discipline if the charge proves to be true. The notice will be by regular mail to the last known address and will:

- describe the charge,
invite the Certified Paralegal to file a written response making full and complete disclosure of all information pertinent to the charge within the knowledge of the Certified Paralegal,

describe the time within which the response should be submitted, and

enclose a copy of these rules.

4.2 Method of Investigation
The Board will then conduct the investigation by such methods as it considers necessary or appropriate, including personal interviews and review of documents. It is the obligation of the Certified Paralegal to cooperate with such an investigation.

The Certified Paralegal is entitled to know the identity of the charging party, to see all evidence that is considered by the Board, and to submit written evidence and argument in response thereto.

4.3 Personal Appearance
If in its sole discretion the Board believes that a personal appearance would materially aid the investigation, it shall offer the Certified Paralegal an opportunity to appear and present evidence and argument in person. The Board shall determine the time and place and set such rules as it deems appropriate in the circumstances. The Certified Paralegal will bear his or her own costs of attendance.

4.4 Presumption of Innocence
No adverse inference shall be drawn from the failure or refusal of the Certified Paralegal to cooperate with the investigation.

5. Board Action
The Board will consider the results of the investigation. It may but need not schedule a special meeting for this purpose.

5.1 Findings of Fact
The Board will identify the material facts disclosed by the investigation, making such inferences and credibility determinations as are necessary.

5.2 Conclusions
Based on its findings, the Board will decide whether or not there has been a violation of any attestation signed in connection with application for the Certified Paralegal designation, specifically the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility, or the terms and conditions of testing.

5.3 Discipline
In determining discipline, the Board will take into account such factors as it deems appropriate, which may include:

• whether the offense was deliberate or inadvertent,

• what notice the Certified Paralegal had of the appropriate standard of conduct,
the effect of the offense on the integrity of the Certified Paralegal program,
the effect of the offense on the reputation of Certified Paralegal program, and
whether the Certified Paralegal is a repeat offender.

5.4 Notice to Respondent
The Board will notify the Certified Paralegal in writing of its findings, conclusions and the discipline imposed within 30 days of the date of the Board’s decision.

5.5 Recusal
No member of the Board will participate in the investigation or resolution of any charge in which he or she has a personal interest.

5.6 Emergency Action
In extraordinary circumstances which pose a threat of irreparable harm to the Certified Paralegal program, the chair of the Board may take such emergency action as is necessary to preserve the integrity of the Certified Paralegal program before the Board has an opportunity to consider the matter. Such action may include barring an applicant from sitting for the Certified Paralegal examination. The Board will consider the matter de novo at the earliest opportunity.

5.7 Confidentiality
Except as necessary to conduct the investigation, the Board will not reveal the existence of an investigation.

After concluding an investigation that results in disciplinary action, the Board will notify the NALA staff of the identity of the individual and the discipline imposed to the minimum extent necessary to implement the discipline.

After concluding an investigation that results in disciplinary action, the Board may also prepare a brief written summary of the conduct that resulted in discipline and the discipline imposed, without revealing the name of the Certified Paralegal, which summary may be published in an official publication of NALA for the guidance of the membership.

Except as otherwise set forth here, the Board will not disclose to anyone the identity of the Certified Paralegal, the charge, the results of the investigation, or the discipline imposed.

Appeals Process for Disciplinary Actions

1. Appeals
Within 30 days from receipt of notice of an adverse determination by the Certifying Board that a paralegal violated the certification program policies and/or rules as defined in the disciplinary policy, the paralegal may submit to the Certifying Board in writing a request for an appeal.
Upon receipt of a request for appeal, the Chair of the Certifying Board establishes a Disciplinary Appeal Committee consisting of at least three, but not more than five, individuals. This Disciplinary Appeal Committee may review one or more appeals, upon request of the Chair. No current members of the Certifying Board may serve on the Disciplinary Appeal Committee; further, no one with any personal involvement or conflict of interest may serve on the Disciplinary Appeal Committee. Members of the Disciplinary Appeal Committee may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the activities of the Committee.

The Disciplinary Appeal Committee may only review whether the determination by the Certifying Board of a violation was inappropriate because of:

1. material errors of fact, or
2. failure of the Certifying Board to conform to published criteria, policies, or procedures.

Only facts and conditions up to and including the time of the Certifying Board’s determination as represented by facts known to the Certifying Board are considered during an appeal. The appeal shall not include a hearing or any similar trial-type proceeding. Legal counsel is not expected to participate in the appeal process. The paralegal may consult legal counsel at the paralegal’s expense. The Certifying Board and Disciplinary Appeal Committee may consult legal counsel.

The Disciplinary Appeal Committee conducts and completes the appeal within 90 days after receipt of the request for an appeal. Written appellate submissions and any reply submissions may be made by authorized representatives of the paralegal and of the Certifying Board. Submissions are made according to whatever schedule is reasonably established by the Disciplinary Appeal Committee. The decision of the Disciplinary Appeal Committee either affirms or overrules the determination of the Certifying Board. The decision of the Disciplinary Appeal Committee, including a statement of the reasons for the decision, is reported to the Certifying Board.

The Disciplinary Appeal Committee decision is binding upon the Certifying Board and the Certified Paralegal who is subject to the disciplinary action, and all other persons.

2. Resignation
If a Certified Paralegal who is the subject of a complaint voluntarily surrenders his or her certification at any time during the pendency of a complaint under these Procedures, the complaint is dismissed without any further action by the Certifying Board or an Appeal Committee established after an appeal. The entire record is sealed.

3. Confidentiality
Except as otherwise set forth here, the appeal committee will not disclose to anyone the identity of the Certified Paralegal, the charge, the results of the investigation, or the discipline imposed.

-end-