The Certified Paralegal Program
Candidate Handbook

EFFECTIVE 2018

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.

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

This information appears on the NALA website (www.nala.org) under “Certification.”
# Contents

Certification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of program</th>
<th>...............................................................</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>........................................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation of Certified Paralegal Program</td>
<td>...............................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background and Numbers.</td>
<td>........................................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Certified Paralegal Credential</td>
<td>........................................................................</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it CLA or CP?</td>
<td>........................................................................</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am I a Certified Paralegal?</td>
<td>........................................................................</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Certified Paralegal Exam Description

| How the Certified Paralegal Exam is Developed | ........................................................................ | 3 |
| 2018 Exam Specifications | ........................................................................ | 3 |

Examination Format

| Knowledge Exam | ........................................................................ | 4 |
| Skills Exam    | ........................................................................ | 4 |
| Certified Paralegal Exam Specifications Effective 2018 | ........................................................................ | 4 |

Examination Points and Passing Scores

| Passing Score for Each Section | ........................................................................ | 5 |
| 2016 Job Analysis Report | ........................................................................ | 6 |

Examinee Application and Policies

| Steps - Application Procedure and Testing Appointments | ........................................................................ | 8 |
| Applying for the Exam | ........................................................................ | 9 |
| Qualifications for the Exam | ........................................................................ | 9 |
| Ineligibility | ........................................................................ | 10 |

Application Form Requirements

| Documentation Required to Complete the Application Form | ........................................................................ | 10 |
| Examinee Attestation | ........................................................................ | 10 |
| Fees | ........................................................................ | 11 |

General Policies

| Knowledge Exam | ........................................................................ | 11 |
| Skills Exam    | ........................................................................ | 11 |
| New Applicants for the May 2017 and September 2017 Testing Windows | ........................................................................ | 12 |
| Application for Retake of Examination Sections | ........................................................................ | 12 |
| Incomplete/Pending Applications | ........................................................................ | 13 |
| Americans with Disability Act | ........................................................................ | 13 |
| Confidentiality | ........................................................................ | 13 |
| Non-Discrimination | ........................................................................ | 13 |
| Appeal Process for Applicants who Receive an Adverse Eligibility Decision | ........................................................................ | 13 |
| Cheating and Misconduct in the Certified Paralegal Examination Program | ........................................................................ | 14 |

Examination Results

| Grade Reports | ........................................................................ | 15 |
| How Passing Score is Established | ........................................................................ | 15 |

Appeal of examination results

| ........................................................................ | 15 |

Testing Centers and Policies

| PSI Testing Center Network | ........................................................................ | 17 |

Examinees Participating in Non-PSI Testing Centers

<p>| ........................................................................ | 17 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Testing Centers Options</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI Testing Center Network and Appointments</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing Center Locations</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI Testing Center Policies and Recommendations</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI Cost Information</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-PSI Testing Centers</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing Center Rules-All Centers Terms and Conditions of Testing</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Statement</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinee Attestation</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Delivery</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal of Results</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retake Policy</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Certified Paralegal Program Requirements</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing of Exam Sections</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions from Proctors</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of Computer-Based Exam Questions</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective Questions</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay Questions</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX - SCREEN SHOTS OF THE LOGIN AND TEST WINDOWS</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification Maintenance Policies and Procedures for Certified Paralegals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Standards</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLE Hours Required</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable CLE</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of CLE Programs and Calculation of Hours</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Seminars, Workshops, and Conferences</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. College Courses</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Advanced Paralegal Certifications and State Specialty Certifications</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Presenting or Teaching</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Published Articles</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Training for Volunteer Activities</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting Hours in the Area of Legal Ethics</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filing Procedures for All Types of CLE</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Approval of CLE Events</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return of Documentation</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired Status of Certified Paralegals</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revocation of Certified Paralegal Credential for Failure to Meet CLE Requirements</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal of Revocation of Certified Paralegal Credential for Failure to Meet CLE Requirements</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardship or Extreme Circumstances as Basis of Appeal</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate of Attendance</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 program establishes and serves as a:

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

There are over 19,000 (active and inactive) Certified Paralegals and over 3900 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.

2018 Exam Specifications

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

- Validate and update the Certified Paralegal examination content; and
- Ensure that NALA has current information about the roles and responsibilities of paralegals.
NALA contracted with PSI Services LLC, a leader in developing, delivering, and maintaining licensure and certification examinations, to conduct the Study. As part of the Study, NALA sent an electronic survey to more than 9,500 active Certified Paralegals. 1,839 Certified Paralegals responded, for a 19.2% response rate, which is typical for surveys of this nature. NALA included in the results responses only from those currently working in the paralegal field.

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

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

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

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

**Examination Format**

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

- **Knowledge Exam**
  - The Knowledge Exam will consist of multiple choice questions covering the topic areas listed in Appendix A.
  - The Knowledge Exam will be administered on-demand, year-round at testing centers with preliminary result reporting upon completion.
  - Candidates must successfully complete the Knowledge Exam in order to be eligible to take the Skills Exam.

- **Skills Exam**
  - The Skills Exam will consist of a written assignment; specifications are set forth in Appendix A.
  - The Skills Exam will be administered during four testing windows each year: February, April, July, and October.

- Successful completion of both the Knowledge and Skills Exams is required to obtain the Certified Paralegal credential.
## Certified Paralegal Exam Specifications – Effective 2018

### Knowledge Exam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Exam</th>
<th>100 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 United States Legal System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.A Sources of Law</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.B Judicial System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.C Remedies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.D Administrative Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Civil Litigation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.A Jurisdiction</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.B Federal Rules of Civil Procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Contracts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.A Formation, Rights, and Duties</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.B Enforcement and Defenses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Corporate/Commercial Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.A Business Organizations</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.B Rights and Responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.C Transactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Criminal Law and Procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.A Criminal Law</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.B Criminal Procedure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Estate Planning and Probate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.A Estate and Trusts</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.B Wills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Real Estate and Property</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.A Property Rights and Ownership</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.B Transactions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Torts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.A Intentional Torts</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.B Negligence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.C Strict Liability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Professional and Ethical Responsibility</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.A American Bar Association (ABA) Model Rules of Professional Conduct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.B Unauthorized Practice of Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Skills Exam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills Exam</th>
<th>30 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.A Grammar, Spelling, and Punctuation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.B Clarity of Expression</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Critical Thinking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.A Reading Comprehension</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.B Analysis of Information</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.C Decision Making</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examination Points and Passing Scores

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

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

Passing Score for Each Section of the Certified Paralegal Examination

The Certifying Board determines the passing score based on the Angoff method, a method that is widely used by certification programs to set passing standards. This process requires that a passing score is established by a panel of content experts based on their review of each examination question and the assignment of an expectation of the percentage of minimally-competent examinees that would answer each question correctly. Panel members include paralegals, attorneys, and paralegal educators.

The question-by-question review conducted by the content expert panel is also useful as a final quality review of the examination questions for other corrections that need to be made such as a misspelled word, an outdated process, or a question that may be culturally biased. If a question is not acceptable to the panel, it may be edited, deleted, or substituted by another question with a similar difficulty rating.

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

2016 Job Analysis Report

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

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

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

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

Steps - Application Procedure and Testing Appointments

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

E-mail Notification Regarding Scheduling Appointments Through PSI
Examinees will receive an e-mail notification from PSI advising that PSI is ready to accept appointments from NALA examinees. The e-mail message will provide a web address for examinees to use to schedule the appointment(s), and the examinee ID number, and PIN. These numbers should be identical to the information provided by NALA. If they are not, examinees should contact NALA Headquarters immediately.
This mailing is sent to **ALL** examinees registered for the examination. Examinees taking the exam through non-
PSI testing centers may disregard the PSI scheduling e-mails.

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

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

**Applying for the Exam**

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

Applications may be submitted:

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

Documentation Required to Complete the Application Form

- All pages of the application form must be complete. All documentation required to complete the Certified Paralegal application form must be submitted at the time of filing the application.
- Documentation includes official school transcripts, attorney attestations and payment. Incomplete applications are subject to rejection and the payment is nonrefundable.
- Categories 1 and 2 require an official transcript submitted with the application. A transcript is considered “official” if it bears the official seal and authorizing signature of the issuing institution and is sent directly by the school to NALA or sealed by the school and mailed or delivered to NALA by the applicant. The official transcript must indicate all courses taken and date of graduation.
- Category 3 requires a minimum of seven (7) years paralegal experience under the supervision of a member of the bar, along with a minimum of twenty (20) clock hours of continuing education, as verified by one or more attorney attestations.
- Attorney Employer Attestations
- For those qualifying under Category 1, an attorney/employer attestation is not required
- For those qualifying under Category 2 the attestation section is required only if applying with one year or more of paralegal experience in lieu of the 15 semester hours of paralegal courses.
- The attestation section must be completed by all applicants for Category 3.

Examinee Attestation

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

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

I further understand that the CP designation may be suspended or revoked and that I may be prohibited from taking any further NALA exams, including but not limited to any specialty practice area exams or retaking the general certification exam for the following reasons:
1. Falsification of information on application form.
2. Subsequent conviction of the unauthorized practice of law.
3. Failure to meet continuing legal education requirements as required by the Certifying Board.
4. Divulging the contents of any Examination Questions.
5. Subsequent conviction of a felony.
7. Violation of the “Terms and Conditions of Testing.”
8. Engages in any other conduct determined by a majority vote of the Certifying Board that (a) such conduct actually and substantially injures NALA’s good name, or (b) failed to maintain a high standard of professional ethics or personal conduct which in either case would have been deemed sufficient for a rejection of an examination application, or (c) any substantial neglect of duty, or (d) any physical or mental disability or illness to such an extent as will prospectively render such member unable to promptly resume the performance of his or her duties within a reasonable time, or (e) such unethical or immoral conduct by such member which together with publicity or anticipated publicity will reflect unfavorably upon NALA.

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

Fees are nonrefundable

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

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

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, Incomplete, or Rejected Applications.
If an applicant must withdraw the application, or the application is incomplete or rejected, the application will not be returned and payment is nonrefundable.

Testing Center Fees: PSI testing center fees are discussed on the PSI Testing Center Information Details page. Non-PSI centers may also charge a fee. This is included with the information describing the Non-PSI centers (Non-PSI Testing Center Details).
General Policies

Knowledge Exam

- Candidates must first pass the Knowledge Exam
- Candidates are eligible to take the Knowledge Exam only after they have graduated from an educational program, if they use that eligibility pathway, or have the required minimum experience if applying under the experience category. The new system of on-demand testing will remove deadlines to apply for the examination. Candidates will be able to apply when they are eligible.
- Once applications for the Certified Paralegal examination have been approved, candidates will have 365 days from the approval date to sit for the Knowledge Exam. If the Knowledge Exam is not taken within 365 days of the initial approval date, the application and fee will be returned less a $50 processing charge.
- Candidates must wait 90 days before re-taking the Knowledge Exam.
- Candidates must pass the Knowledge Exam within the first three attempts and are barred from taking the exam again for 365 days if they do not pass within the first three attempts.

Skills Exam

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

New applicants for the May 2017 and September 2017 testing windows

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

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

Application for Retake of Examination Sections

- Candidates in retake status
  - Candidates who first sat for any section in September 2015 through January 2016 will have the full two years provided in their original application to take and pass all sections of the exam since the applications will expire after the September 2017 testing window closes.
  - Candidates who first sat for any section in the testing windows beginning May 2016 through January 2017 will need to successfully complete any remaining sections of the examination by
the September 2017 testing window.

- Any candidates who do not successfully complete all sections by the September 2017 examination will retake the entire exam in its new format starting in 2018. Candidates in this situation have a reduction in time to complete the examination from the time allowed in the initial application. These candidates will be permitted to re-take the new exam once at half cost since the time period to complete the examination has been reduced. Any subsequent re-takes will be at full price.

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

**Americans with Disability Act**
The Certified Paralegal examination is administered in compliance with requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act. All special requests must accompany the application form. Contact NALA Headquarters at testing@nala.org or 918-587-6828 to request the special accommodation form. The form is also listed on our website at www.nala.org/certification/certtest3. 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.

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: https://www.nala.org/Certification/applying-exam-general-policies and are found in the Certifying Board’s Policy Manual in Policy #304.

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

• all examination sections will be voided with no refund of fees and no scores reported; the candidate may be prohibited from taking the Certified Paralegal examination indefinitely.

• the candidate will be prohibited from taking the Certified Paralegal examination (or any section) for a period of not less than two years from the date of the violation;

• all sections must be taken or retaken if the examinee is permitted to re-test and, as a condition for re-testing, the Certifying Board shall require the candidate to complete a specific number of hours of
Legal Ethics, approved for CLE credit, to be completed within a specific period of time prior to eligibility for re-testing; documentation of completion of the ethics CLE hours is required. The program may be approved by a paralegal professional association, bar association, or offered for college credit or continuing education units.

**Examination Results**

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

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

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

**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
Options of Testing Centers

PSI Testing Center Network

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

Examinees Participating in Non-PSI Testing Centers

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

Overview of Testing Centers Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you are taking the exam at an PSI center:</th>
<th>If you are taking the exam at a non-PSI center:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• All centers through the PSI testing center network are available for the Certified Paralegal examination, subject to the center’s hours of operation.</td>
<td>• The center must be approved by NALA in advance of the testing window. An examinee’s employer may qualify or most community colleges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• All NALA examinees will receive an e-mail with instructions on how to make an appointment through PSI.</td>
<td>• If you receive a communication from PSI, disregard the PSI communication and its instructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do not contact PSI until you have received your Authorization to Test or confirmation from PSI that they are ready to schedule your appointments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do not create an account through the PSI website. In order to schedule your appointments, you are required to use the login and PIN provided in your Authorization to Test and confirmation e-mails from PSI. Assignments will only be available to schedule using the ID and PIN provided to you by NALA.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Be sure to review the rules posted on the PSI web site when making your appointment.

• PSI will charge an appointment fee payable by credit card (VISA or MasterCard only) when the appointment is made.

• PSI advises NALA of appointments that are made and confirmed.

• PSI has strict rules regarding cancellation or rescheduling. Changes or cancellations received less than 72 hours prior to the appointment time will result in a forfeiture of payment.

• Cancellations more than 72 hours in advance of the appointment time 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.

• You must arrange your own testing schedule through the school or your employer. Be sure you know the time you will need for each exam section.

• Fees vary by testing center. Some schools and employers do not charge. Inquire about this in advance.

• Examinees must advise NALA of appointment times and dates.

• Testing center rules regarding fees vary by center. Consult the testing center for these details. Generally, if centers have charges for the proctors and testing facility, payment will be made upon entering the center as part of the check-in process.

• Information for schools and employers about qualifying as a testing center may be found on the NALA web site under “Certification.”

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](http://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 on-line using the same link used to schedule appointments. Contact NALA Headquarters for questions regarding refunds. In rare cases weather or an emergency forces a test center closure. If this happens you will be contacted by the PSI rescheduling department within 24-48 hours to reschedule your appointment. Examinees may also call 800-733-9267 for information. Real time site information is posted at psiexams.com.

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

Testing Center Locations

PSI Premier PLUS™ - National Test Center Network

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

PSI Authorized - Test Center Network

PSI Authorized test center network sites are independently-owned and have been carefully selected for their quality, service, amenities and passion to deliver the best candidate test experience possible.
The map below shows a distribution of PSI testing centers. Centers are also located in Alaska and Hawaii.

PSI Testing Center Policies and Recommendations

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

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

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

**PSI Cost Information**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Non-PSI Testing Centers**

In addition to the testing centers utilized by NALA through the PSI testing network, NALA will approve testing centers at schools, corporations, and law firms which meet standard facility and equipment
requirements for computer-based testing. Schools and employers participate to provide an added service to students and employees, and, in some instances, to lower the cost of testing for examinees.

Non-PSI testing centers and contact details may be found on the NALA web site at www.nala.org under Certification/For Examinees/Non-PSI Testing Centers.

Testing Center Rules – All Centers

Terms and Conditions of Testing

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

Terms and Conditions

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

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

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

- I have read the “Policy Statement” and I am familiar with its provisions.
- I will be continuously monitored during my appointment.
- I consent to video and audio recording of my test session and to the examination of the video and/or audio recording of my test session in the event 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 of 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 am approved to take the Knowledge Exam, I understand the Knowledge Exam, including a maximum of two additional attempts, must be taken and passed within 365 days of the approval date.
- I understand the Knowledge Exam must be successfully completed before I am eligible to sit for the Skills Exam. If I do not successfully complete the Knowledge Exam after three attempts within the 365-day period, I understand I will be ineligible to reapply for the Knowledge Exam for a 365-day period.
- Once I am approved to take the Skills Exam, I understand the Skills Exam, including a maximum of two additional attempts, must be taken and passed within 365 days of the approval date. If I do not successfully complete the Skills Exam after three attempts within the 365-day period, I understand I will start over by re-applying for the Knowledge Exam.
- If the examination is not completed within the above-listed time frames, credit for passed sections will be forfeited and a new application form will be required.
- Abuse of this site, or non-compliance of these terms and conditions will not be tolerated. Should information concerning abuse or non-compliance come to NALA’s attention, the candidate’s ID number and PIN will be terminated and NALA may take further disciplinary action.
- Confirm your intent to be bound by the terms and conditions of this Agreement by checking the box below. By not checking the box, you will decline the Agreement and your exam session will be terminated.

Policy Statement
One of the terms requires that the examinee is aware of the Policy Statement. This consists of a review of the attestation each examinee signed on the application form, and other policies related to the exam program. The statement is as follows:

The Certified Paralegal examination was developed by NALA – The Paralegal Association and has been provided to the paralegal profession since 1976. The program is administered by the Certifying Board for Paralegals.
Examinee Attestation
All examinees are required to sign the following attestation on the application for the Certified Paralegal examination. This statement serves a reminder of your pledge of confidentiality, and reasons for suspension of authorization to use the Certified Paralegal credential:

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

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

1. Falsification of information on application form.
2. Subsequent conviction of the unauthorized practice of law.
3. Failure to meet continuing legal education requirements as required by the Certifying Board.
4. Divulging the contents of any Examination Question.
5. Subsequent conviction of a felony.
7. Violation of the Terms and Conditions of Testing.
8. Engages in any other conduct determined by a majority vote of the Certifying Board that (a) such conduct actually and substantially injures NALA’s good name, or (b) failed to maintain a high standard of professional ethics or personal conduct which in either case would have been deemed sufficient for a rejection of an examination application, or (c) any substantial neglect of duty, or (d) any physical or mental disability or illness to such an extent as will prospectively render such member unable to promptly resume the performance of his or her duties within a reasonable time, or (e) such unethical or immoral conduct by such member which together with publicity or anticipated publicity will reflect unfavorably upon NALA.

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.

Terms and Conditions – Exam Delivery
Prior to allowing examinees to sign in to the testing site, all examinees are required to review the terms and conditions related to taking the CP examination via computer-based testing. The information contained in the terms and conditions are also provided to examinees with the testing PIN and ID number, the NALA account number, and other instructions. Each examinee will be required to check “I accept these terms and conditions” prior to starting an examination.

Results
Preliminary results of the Knowledge Exam will be provided to each examinee at the testing center once year-round testing has opened. The Skills Exam requires grading by the Certifying Board and results will not be available at the testing center. Results for the Skills Exam will be released by the end of the month following the testing window, i.e., March, May, August, and November. Results are not available by telephone or fax.
Examinees are provided with failing scores only. Examinees who need to re-test will receive feedback regarding their performance on the exam. This information is provided to assist examinees in preparation for re-testing.

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

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

**Exam Administration Policies and Procedures**

**Knowledge Exam**
- Candidates must first pass the Knowledge Exam.
- Candidates are eligible to take the Knowledge Exam only after they have graduated from an educational program, if using that eligibility pathway, or have the required minimum experience, if using the experience category. The new system of on-demand testing will remove deadlines to apply for the examination. Candidates will be able to apply when they are eligible.
- Once NALA approves an application for the Certified Paralegal examination, candidates will have 365 days from the approval date to sit for the Knowledge Exam. If the candidate does not take the Knowledge Exam within 365 days of the initial approval date, NALA will return the application to the candidate. The examination fee is nonrefundable.
- Candidates who do not pass the Knowledge Exam must wait 90 days before re-taking it.
- Candidates must pass the Knowledge Exam within the first three attempts during the 365-day period or wait 365 days before trying again.

**Skills Exam**
- Candidates who pass the Knowledge Exam are then eligible to take the Skills Exam and must complete the Skills Exam within the next 365 days after receiving notice of eligibility from NALA.
- Candidates must wait at least 2 weeks after passing the Knowledge Exam before receiving eligibility to take the Skills Exam.
- Candidates who do not pass the Skills Exam must wait 90 days before re-taking it.
- Candidates must pass the Skills Exam within the first three attempts in a 365-day period or start over by re-taking the Knowledge Exam.

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

**Other Certified Paralegal Program Requirements**
This policy statement refers strictly to the delivery of the Certified Paralegal examination. It is the responsibility of each examinee to be familiar with the other policies and requirements of the Certified Paralegal Program, including but not limited to, the continuing education requirements to maintain the Certified Paralegal credential as well as examination and testing center fees.
Timing of Exam Sections
The following are the required sections of the Certified Paralegal exam with the time allowed as established by the NALA Certifying Board:

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

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

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

Instructions from Proctors
Testing center proctors are responsible for the delivery of the Certified Paralegal examination, including providing printed copies of the essay questions as needed. Questions regarding facilities or equipment should be directed to the testing center proctor.

The NALA Certifying Board is responsible for the Certified Paralegal examination. Questions regarding the examination content or format should be directed to NALA Headquarters at 7666 E. 61st Street, Suite 315, Tulsa, OK 74133, 918-587-6828, FAX 918-582-6772, or testing@nala.org.

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

Objective Questions

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

- Each question may be flagged by placing a check mark in the box entitled “Mark for Review” which appears below the answer options. The selected answer may be changed on review.
• When all questions are completed, the entire list of questions appears. Examinees may review this list before submitting the test for scoring, provided time remains on the examination clock. Questions marked for review by the examinee will be easily identified. Examinees may also scroll over the text of any question on the list and open it to review the question and selected answer.

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

**Essay Questions**

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

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

The printed copy of the essay may also be used to make notes and for ease in reading the question. However, space is provided on the computer to input the answer and the answer **MUST** be typed in the text box provided on the computer screen in order to be graded. The Grading Committee may only consider answers typewritten on the computer window. Examinees will be required to return to the proctor the printed pages prior to leaving the testing center.

The text box provided for the essay question answer will allow examinees to move around within the box, delete and add sentences and characters as needed. Examinees may use cut and paste; however, spell-check, and other word processing functions are disabled for the Certified Paralegal examination.

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

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

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

Examinees again have to agree to the Terms and Conditions before proceeding. At the bottom of this screen, you will be required to click the box "I accept these terms and conditions" to continue with the exam.
Examinee Dashboard

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Hours</th>
<th>Session Topics (Description and Speakers)</th>
<th>Validation of Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name of CP (Please Print) _____________________________________________ NALA Account Number (On Mailing Label) ____________________________

Signature of CP ______________________________________________________

Address ____________________________________________________________

Preferred e-mail address ____________________________________________

For Office Use Only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substantive hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-substantive hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Certified Paralegal Recertification Affidavit

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

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

Date Account # (if known)

Signature

Print Name

Address

City, State, ZIP

Date Certified (mm/yy)

E-mail

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

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

Company Check/Certified Check/Money Order#

□ MasterCard □ VISA □ Discover □ AmEx

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

Billing Address:
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

__________________________________________________________

(Date)

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

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

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

Dated this________day of_______________________________, 20____.

_____________________________________________  _______________________________________________
Signature                                                                                           Name (please print)

_____________________________________________  _______________________________________________
Address                                                                                             City State ZIP

E-mail:____________________________________________________________________________________

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

I, __________________________________________ (Name),

hereby swear or affirm that:

- I have been in Retired status since ___________________________;  
  (Date)

- I have returned to work as of ___________________________;  
  (Date)

and am no longer eligible for Retired status.

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

Dated this ______ day of _________________________________, 20___.

________________________________________  __________________________
Signature  Name (please print)

Address  City State ZIP

NALA Account Number (if known)

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

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

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

Account # ____________________________  Exp. Date ___________

Name as it appears on card ____________________________
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 #210.

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: https://www.nala.org/certification/certified-paralegals/disciplinary-rules 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 acknowledgment 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-