

# CERTIFIED PAYROLL PROFESSIONAL

## Candidate Handbook



# QUICK REFERENCE

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## CERTIFICATION BOARD — CPP COMMITTEE AMERICAN PAYROLL ASSOCIATION

[www.americanpayroll.org](http://www.americanpayroll.org)  
660 North Main Avenue, Suite 100  
San Antonio, TX 78205-1217  
(210) 226-4600 ext. 3001  
[certification@americanpayroll.org](mailto:certification@americanpayroll.org)

Candidates may contact the APA with questions about certification, exam applications, and exam payments.

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## PEARSON VUE/APA

[www.pearsonvue.com/apa](http://www.pearsonvue.com/apa)  
5601 Green Valley Dr.  
Bloomington, MN 55437  
(800) 470-8757

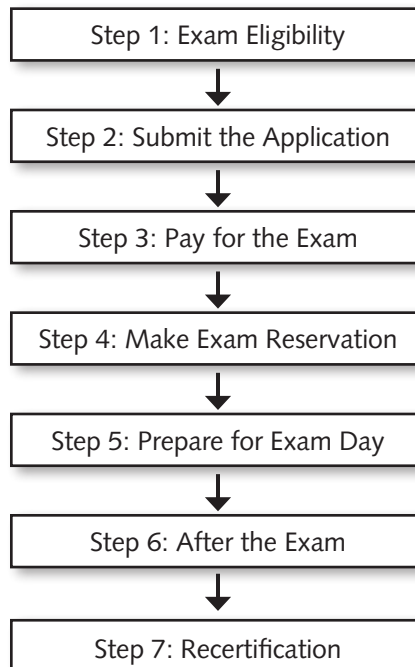
(Locate international phone numbers at <http://www.pearsonvue.com/apa/contact>)  
[pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com](mailto:pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com)

Monday–Friday 8am–11pm; Saturday 8am–5pm; Sunday 10am–4pm (Eastern Time Zone)

Candidates may contact Pearson VUE with questions about exam registration and scheduling.

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## THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS



**ALL CANDIDATES ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE READ THIS HANDBOOK BEFORE TAKING THE CERTIFIED PAYROLL PROFESSIONAL (CPP) EXAMINATION.**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>AFTER THE EXAM .....</b>	<b>12</b>
ABOUT THIS CERTIFICATION HANDBOOK .....	1	EXAM RESULTS .....	12
ABOUT THE AMERICAN PAYROLL ASSOCIATION .....	1	<b>RECERTIFICATION .....</b>	<b>13</b>
HISTORY AND PURPOSE OF CERTIFICATION .....	1	THE RECERTIFICATION PERIOD .....	13
USE OF CERTIFICATION .....	1	RECERTIFICATION BY CONTINUING EDUCATION .....	13
<b>ABOUT THE EXAM .....</b>	<b>2</b>	RECERTIFICATION CREDIT HOURS FOR APA PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP .....	14
ELIGIBILITY .....	2	DETERMINING IF CONTINUING EDUCATION MEETS APA REQUIREMENTS FOR RECERTIFICATION .....	14
THE CONTENT OF THE CPP EXAM .....	2	RECERTIFICATION PROCESS .....	14
EXAM PREPARATION .....	3	LATE RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSIONS .....	15
EXAM ADMINISTRATION.....	3	DESIGNATION REINSTATEMENTS .....	15
<b>THE APPLICATION .....</b>	<b>4</b>	RECERTIFICATION BY EXAMINATION.....	15
COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION BY EXAMINATION .....	4	<b>CPP EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>EXAM FEE AND RESERVATIONS .....</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY/CPP EXAM PREPARATION .....</b>	<b>17</b>
EXAM FEE .....	5	<b>SAMPLE CPP EXAM QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.....</b>	<b>18</b>
PEARSON VUE TESTING CENTER EXAM RESERVATIONS .....	5	<b>APA CODE OF ETHICS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
ONLINE RESERVATIONS .....	5	<b>AMERICAN PAYROLL ASSOCIATION APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION BY EXAMINATION .....</b>	<b>21</b>
PEARSON VUE TESTING CENTER PHONE RESERVATIONS .....	6	<b>APA MEMBERSHIP OFFER .....</b>	<b>23</b>
SPECIAL EXAM REQUESTS .....	6		
APA LEARNING CENTER EXAM REGISTRATION .....	7		
<b>ATTAINMENT OF CERTIFICATION .....</b>	<b>7</b>		
DENIAL OR REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION* .....	7		
APA MEMBERSHIP .....	7		
<b>EXAM DAY .....</b>	<b>8</b>		
WHAT TO BRING.....	8		
ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF CANDIDATE IDENTIFICATION.....	8		
SUGGESTED MATERIALS .....	8		
EXAM PROCEDURES .....	8		
WEATHER DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS .....	9		
TESTING CENTER POLICIES .....	9		
HELPFUL HINTS FOR REDUCING TESTING ANXIETY.....	10		
TEST TAKING TIPS .....	10		
<b>CANCELLATION AND RESCHEDULING .....</b>	<b>11</b>		
ABSENCE/LATENESS POLICY .....	11		
CHANGE/CANCEL POLICY .....	11		
RETAKING THE EXAM.....	11		

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# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT THIS CERTIFICATION HANDBOOK

This handbook explains the eligibility requirements that you must meet to take the examination and provides information about making an examination reservation, receiving examination results, what to expect on exam day, and recertification. In addition, this handbook provides a suggested bibliography, study references, sample questions, and a general content outline of the examination.

**Exceptions are not made for candidates who do not read this handbook.**

You may obtain additional copies of this handbook by downloading it from the APA website ([www.americanpayroll.org/certification/certification-CPPinfo](http://www.americanpayroll.org/certification/certification-CPPinfo)).

**Please read this handbook completely and carefully before contacting the American Payroll Association (APA) or Pearson VUE with questions.** It is critical that you adhere strictly to all procedures and deadlines in this handbook.

## ABOUT THE AMERICAN PAYROLL ASSOCIATION

The American Payroll Association (APA), founded in 1982, is an organization of payroll professionals in the U.S. and is committed to:

- enhancing the quality of the payroll profession by offering educational opportunities
- fostering the exchange of payroll expertise at the local level
- raising public awareness of payroll professionalism
- representing the payroll profession in Washington, D.C.
- offering certification programs to support the payroll profession

The steady growth of APA membership since its founding in 1982 indicates the acceptance of the Association's goals, by the U.S. business community in general and by the payroll profession in particular. The CPP certification program is sponsored by APA and developed by the CPP Committee of the APA Certification Board.

## HISTORY AND PURPOSE OF CERTIFICATION

The pressures of economic and legislative developments on the payroll function have broadened the scope of payroll beyond its basic function of paying employees. Today's payroll professional utilizes the latest technology for executing the payroll and, in many cases, interfaces with other systems within and outside the organization. Moreover, payroll has come under a wide array of governmental regulations and requirements.

Once considered a technical skill, payroll has become a professional discipline. Payroll professionals are knowledgeable in all aspects of payroll, stay abreast of changes in related technologies, and, through independent research, keep current with the legislative and regulatory environment. A payroll professional must be proficient in all aspects of taxation and tax reporting, MIS, human resources, and accounting as each of these relate to the payroll environment. Today's payroll professionals function as members of a management team. The APA offers the Certified Payroll Professional (CPP) Mastery Examination to recognize those who have achieved this level of professional proficiency.

Certification is the recognition of professional skills by one's peers. CPP recognition is given by the APA to those who:

1. meet the eligibility requirements for admission to the examination as set forth in this handbook;
2. successfully complete the examination; and
3. subscribe to the APA Code of Ethics.

Certification is granted for five (5) full calendar years, at which time recertification is required.

The goals of the APA's Certified Payroll Professional certification program are:

- to promote the standard for payroll professionals, which is accepted by the business community and the public at large;
- to encourage professional growth and individual study by the payroll professional;
- to provide the standard of requisite knowledge for the payroll professional;
- to measure by means of the certification examination the attainment and application of that standard; and
- to recognize formally those colleagues who continue to meet the requirements of the APA Certification Board's CPP Committee.

## USE OF CERTIFICATION

The CPP Examination is voluntary, and certification is conferred by the APA Certification Board's CPP Committee solely for the purposes stated in this certification handbook. Those persons or organizations who choose to incorporate the CPP Examination as a condition of employment or advancement do so of their own volition. Such persons or organizations must determine individually whether the use of such a certification process, including its eligibility and recertification requirements, meets their respective needs and complies with any laws applicable to them.

# ABOUT THE EXAM

## ELIGIBILITY

The Certification Board of the APA requires that payroll professionals fulfill **ONE** of the following criteria before they take the Certified Payroll Professional Examination. Only the courses listed below, delivered exclusively by APA, are eligible to fulfill the education options listed in Criteria 2 and 3. Courses outside of this list will not fulfill the requirements of Criteria 2 and 3. Click on course title(s) under Criterion 2 or 3 for more information.

### CRITERION 1

The payroll professional has been practicing a total of three (3) years out of the five (5) years preceding the date of the examination. The practice of payroll is defined as direct or related involvement in at least **ONE** of the following:

- Payroll Production, Payroll Reporting, Payroll Accounting, Payroll Systems, and Payroll Taxation
- Payroll Administration
- Payroll Education/Consulting

### CRITERION 2

Before a candidate takes the examination, the payroll professional has been employed in the practice of payroll as defined in Criterion 1 for at least the last 24 months, and has completed within the last 24 months, **ALL** of the following courses within **ONE** of the following three options offered by the APA:

#### Option 1

- Payroll Practice Essentials and
- Intermediate Payroll Concepts and
- Advanced Payroll Concepts and
- Strategic Payroll Practices

#### Option 2

- Payroll 101: Foundations of Payroll Certificate Program and
- Payroll 201: Payroll Administration Certificate Program

#### Option 3

- Certified Payroll Professional Boot Camp  
\*Note: This comprehensive 20-session **virtual course** is delivered exclusively by APA.

### CRITERION 3

Before a candidate takes the examination, the payroll professional has been employed in the practice of payroll as defined in Criterion 1 for at least the last 18 months, has **obtained the FPC designation**, and has completed, within the last 18 months, **ALL** of the APA courses listed within **ONE** of the following three options offered by the APA:

#### Option 1

- Intermediate Payroll Concepts and
- Advanced Payroll Concepts and
- Strategic Payroll Practices

#### Option 2

- Payroll 201: Payroll Administration Certificate Program

#### Option 3

- Certified Payroll Professional Boot Camp  
\*Note: This comprehensive 20-session virtual course is delivered exclusively by APA

Eligibility criteria should not be considered the only criteria for preparation for the CPP examination. Candidates qualifying through any of the criteria should be aware that a number of study aids are available as added preparation for the CPP Examination. *No one source should be considered the only basis for preparation.* Successful candidates indicate that they pursued at least a three-month minimum course of study and review based on the CPP examination content outline (see page 16).

Individuals meeting any **ONE** of the three (3) criteria are eligible to take the CPP Examination. The APA Certification Board's CPP Committee reserves the right to review an applicant's qualifications and eligibility.

**Note:** If you have been practicing payroll for less than three (3) years and have not met the education requirements for CPP exam eligibility, you may want to consider taking the FPC Examination. There are no eligibility requirements for taking the FPC Examination.

## ELIGIBILITY FOR RECERTIFICATION BY EXAM

Payroll professionals who are currently certified and are applying for recertification by examination are exempt from the above eligibility requirements.

## THE CONTENT OF THE CPP EXAM

The CPP Examination is weighted in approximately the following manner:

I. Core Payroll Concepts .....	27%
II. Compliance/Research and Resources .....	21%
III. Calculation of the Paycheck .....	20%
IV. Payroll Process and Supporting Systems and Administration.....	9%
V. Payroll Administration and Management .....	10%
VI. Audits .....	7%
VII. Accounting.....	6%

A complete content outline of the examination can be found on page 16.

Successful completion of the CPP examination requires demonstration of the knowledge of payroll practice and applicable regulations. Tables required to answer questions will be provided as an electronic examination supplement within the testing software. The exam's tutorial, completed before the exam begins, will explain how to use the examination supplement and other features of the exam software.

## THE FORMAT OF THE EXAM

The CPP Examination is administered electronically, and candidates have four (4) hours to complete it. The examination consists of 190 multiple-choice questions, including twenty-five (25) that are pre-test questions.

The pre-test questions are not counted in the scoring of the examination. They are distributed among the scorable questions and will be used for statistical purposes only. The 165 test/scorable questions are similar to the pre-test questions on the examination; therefore, candidates will not know which questions are test/scorable questions and which are pre-test questions. **Examinees are advised to answer all examination questions.**

The questions are designed to test the examinees' payroll knowledge and ability to apply that knowledge to the payroll environment. **An electronic Examination Supplement containing every table required to correctly answer some questions will be included in the computer software.** Each question has four (4) answer choices listed, only one (1) of which is correct. The answer to each question can be derived independently of the answer to any other question. (See *Sample CPP Questions and Answers* on page 18.)

## HOW THE EXAM IS DEVELOPED

Members of the APA Certification Board's CPP Committee and the Certification Item Development Task Force (CIDTF) write questions for possible inclusion in APA's bank of payroll examination questions. The questions are reviewed by editors at Pearson VUE to ensure compliance with accepted question-writing techniques. The edited questions are then reviewed by the APA Certification Board's CPP Committee for accuracy and relevancy to the activities of experienced payroll professionals as defined in the eligibility criteria (see page 2). Approved questions are then included in the examination bank from which questions are selected to create new examination forms.

## HOW THE PASSING SCORE WAS SET

The passing score (also known as the *cut score*) for the CPP Examination was recommended by a panel of payroll professionals using a method called *item-mapping*. The item-mapping process incorporates actual performance of the examination questions by graphically presenting the difficulty of questions in the test bank. This graphic presentation, or item map, displays questions along a scale based on their difficulty. The panel then judges the performance of a minimally qualified candidate with regard to the examination questions displayed on the item map.

The cut score study concludes when the panel reaches agreement on which questions have a high likelihood of being answered correctly, and which have a low probability of being answered correctly by a minimally qualified candidate. Using this process, the panel recommends the passing score to the APA Certification Board's CPP Committee, which sets the passing score. The passing score represents the minimum level of knowledge that must be demonstrated to pass the examination.

## RAW SCORES AND SCALED SCORES

The *raw score* on the CPP Examination is the number of questions answered correctly. When all examinees take exactly the same examination, their raw scores can be used to compare their performances. However, when there are different forms of an examination (different forms of an examination measure the same knowledge, but use different questions), some forms will be either slightly easier or more difficult than other forms. Because of this variation in difficulty, raw scores will not reliably relate the performances of examinees who take different forms of an examination.

To make it possible to compare the performances of examinees who are taking different forms of an examination, a statistical procedure called *equating* is used to compensate for any variations in difficulty between examination forms. After equating, the passing raw score for each form is converted to 300 on a common scale for all forms. Since all forms are equated and all results are converted to the same scale, all examinees who receive the same scaled score demonstrate equivalent ability, regardless of which examination form was completed.

## EXAM PREPARATION

No single source of information should be considered the sole basis of study for the CPP Examination. A bibliography of suggested materials can be found on page 17.

## EXAM ADMINISTRATION

The CPP Examination is administered worldwide during various times of the year. It is imperative that candidates identify the **Region** and corresponding **Exam Series** desired before making an examination reservation. To determine the correct Exam Series for your region, please see the *Pearson VUE Testing Center Exam Reservations* section on page 5.

## EXAM ADMINISTRATION DATES

### CPP-N America – Testing during two windows annually

September 16, 2017 - October 14, 2017

March 24, 2018 - April 21, 2018

Examinations are based on U.S. Federal Rules and Regulations that apply to payroll processing on January 1, 2017.

### CPP-LC – After Attending Payroll 201: The Payroll Administration Certificate Program, Fridays Only

September 17, 2016 - September 15, 2017

Examinations are based on U.S. Federal Rules and Regulations that apply to payroll processing on January 1, 2016.

September 16, 2017 - September 15, 2018

Examinations are based on U.S. Federal Rules and Regulations that apply to payroll processing on January 1, 2017.

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## CPP-INTL/Military – On Demand testing based on testing center schedules

September 17, 2016 - September 15, 2017

Examinations are based on U.S. Federal Rules and Regulations that apply to payroll processing on January 1, 2016.

September 16, 2017 - September 15, 2018

Examinations are based on U.S. Federal Rules and Regulations that apply to payroll processing on January 1, 2017.

**Note:** The year 2016 Form W-2 will be applicable for examinations beginning September 17, 2016, through September 15, 2017, and the year 2017 Form W-2 will be applicable for examinations beginning September 16, 2017 through September 15, 2018.

## EXAM SUPPLEMENTS

An examination supplement is accessible through the computer-based system candidates will use for testing. **This supplement is a reproduction of all necessary tables needed for the calculation of certain exam questions.**

# THE APPLICATION

## COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION BY EXAMINATION

Please note that you cannot make an exam reservation until after you have completed your application, paid your examination fee, and received notification from APA that you are authorized to take the exam. All candidates must complete the *Application for Certification by Examination* at [www.americanpayroll.org/applyforcpp](http://www.americanpayroll.org/applyforcpp) (also available on page 21.)

Candidates must use their full legal name (First and Last, middle names are not required) as it appears on their Primary ID that will be used for admittance at the testing center (see page 8, *Acceptable Forms of Candidate Identification*). The candidate's immediate supervisor must verify the work experience by signing the "Verification of Application" section of the examination application. If the candidate is not currently engaged in payroll practice, the experience must be verified by the signature of a prior payroll supervisor. **Applications must be submitted to the APA prior to paying and registering for the CPP exam.** Notification of the application's approval or denial will be sent to the candidate's email address provided on the application. Allow up to ten (10) business days from date of receipt for processing applications received via email and up to fourteen (14) business days for applications received via fax or U.S. Mail. A candidate has one (1) year from the date of approval of an exam application to schedule and complete testing. After one (1) year has passed or the candidate completes the exam, whichever occurs first, a new exam application must be submitted to take the exam. Choose one of the following submission options.

### 1. VIA EMAIL (preferred, faster)

apaexam@americanpayroll.org  
Subject Line: CPP Exam Application

### 2. ONLINE (coming soon)

[www.americanpayroll.org/applyforcpp](http://www.americanpayroll.org/applyforcpp)

### 3. VIA FAX

(210) 224-5814  
Attention: CPP Exam Application

### 4. VIA U.S. MAIL

American Payroll Association  
Attn: Certification Department  
660 North Main Avenue, Suite 100  
San Antonio, TX 78205

Receipt of applications will be verified. Please check your application status at [www.americanpayroll.org/certdashboard](http://www.americanpayroll.org/certdashboard) or call APA Membership Services at (210) 224-6406 if you have questions about your pending application.

By submitting your application, you authorize the APA Certification Board's CPP Committee to contact the supervisor who signed the "Verification of Application" section of your application to substantiate your eligibility. The APA Certification Board's CPP Committee reserves the right to audit applications to verify applicant eligibility.

# EXAM FEE AND RESERVATIONS

**Note:** All Candidates are responsible for knowing all regulations regarding the examination fee and reservations as presented in this handbook.

## EXAM FEE

Candidates must first pay the examination fee after the approval of the exam application application by credit card, debit card, or check. If you are unable to pay online or by check, please call Membership Services at (210) 224-6406 for assistance. All reservations are made on a first-come, first-serve basis and walk-in examinees are prohibited. **Payment will not be accepted at the Pearson VUE testing centers or APA Learning Centers. The examination fees for this exam year are as follows:**

REGION	EXAM SERIES	MEMBER FEE	NON-MEMBER FEE
Northern Americas	CPP-N America	\$380.00	\$550.00
APA Learning Centers	CPP-LC	\$380.00	\$550.00
Military	CPP-INTL/MILITARY	\$380.00	\$550.00
EMEA, APAC, and Southern Americas	CPP-INTL/MILITARY	\$435.00	\$595.00

*Examination related fees are subject to change without notice.*

If testing in the U.S. or U.S. territories, Canada, or Mexico during the testing window, please select **CPP-N America**. If you are taking your exam at an APA Learning Center, please select **CPP-LC**. If testing anywhere else, including military locations, please select **CPP-INTL/MILITARY**. Candidates are responsible for paying the examination fee once an application has been made.

**See Change/Cancel Policy for information on changing or canceling a reservation without penalty.** Fees are non-transferable and non-refundable except as noted in the *Change/Cancel Policy* (see page 11).

Exams taken at APA Learning Centers must be scheduled directly through APA, as described on page 7.

## PEARSON VUE TESTING CENTER EXAM RESERVATIONS

Please note that you cannot make an exam reservation until after you have completed your application, paid your examination fee, and received notification from APA that you are authorized to take the exam. Please check your application status at [www.americanpayroll.org/certdashboard](http://www.americanpayroll.org/certdashboard) or call APA Membership Services at (210) 224-6406 if you have questions about your pending application.

## NORTHERN AMERICAS REGION

Since each testing center maintains its own examination schedule (based on overall demand), it is recommended to **contact Pearson VUE early to ensure a reservation** during the preferred exam testing window. All reservations are made on a first-come, first-served basis, and **walk-in examinees are prohibited**. Reservations for both the Fall and Spring testing windows will be taken as detailed in the following chart:

TESTING SESSION	BEGINS TAKING RESERVATIONS	STOPS TAKING RESERVATIONS
Fall 2017	7/11/2017	10/13/2017
Spring 2018	1/16/2018	4/20/2018

*Testing center times and locations are subject to change.*

## SOUTHERN AMERICAS, EMEA, APAC, AND MILITARY REGIONS

Reservations are taken throughout the year. All reservations are made on a first-come, first served basis, and **walk-in examinees are prohibited**.

## ONLINE RESERVATIONS

### NORTHERN AMERICAS, SOUTHERN AMERICAS, EMEA, APAC, AND MILITARY (see page 7 to make APA Learning Center reservations)

Before going online to make a reservation, be prepared with the email approving your CPP Examination Application and confirmation of payment from the APA.

- To make an online reservation, click the "Schedule Online" link in the CPP Examination Application email approval from the APA (go to [www.americanpayroll.org/certdashboard](http://www.americanpayroll.org/certdashboard) to check your application status).
- You may be asked to verify your identity at the Pearson VUE site. Please log in with your APA ID or username and password.
  - Double-check that all contact information is current and accurate. If information must change, you must make those changes at the APA website or call APA Membership Services at (210) 224-6406.
  - When registering for an exam, candidates **MUST** verify that they are using their legal First and Last name as it appears on the primary ID that will be used for admittance to the examination area at the testing center. Candidates who do not register with their legal name, as it appears on the primary ID, will not be admitted to take the exam and they will forfeit all paid fees (see page 8, *Acceptable Forms of Candidate Identification*). To change your name, call APA Membership Services at (210) 224-6406.
  - To obtain your APA Identification Number, please contact APA Membership Services at (210) 224-6406 or email [apa@americanpayroll.org](mailto:apa@americanpayroll.org).
- After you have double-checked your contact info and legal name, please double-check that you are scheduled for the appropriate exam (CPP-N America or CPP-INTL/MILITARY). If you are scheduled for the wrong exam, please call APA

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Membership Services at (210) 224-6406.

4. You will then see a list of available testing center locations, from which you will be prompted to select a testing center location and the date and time of the examination you prefer.

You may cancel your online request at any time before you submit the request by selecting **Cancel**.

Once you have submitted your reservation, you will receive an email notification from Pearson VUE with confirmation of the examination date, time, and location. Print out this confirmation and retain it for your records. You may also print a copy of your registration as soon as you complete the online reservation.

Online reservations must be made no less than twenty-four (24) hours before the desired examination date. However, we suggest you make your reservation as soon as CPP exam testing registration is available (see page 5) to ensure your preferred testing date, time, and location are available. To check what test centers are near you, go to [www.pearsonvue.com/apa](http://www.pearsonvue.com/apa) and select "Locate a Testing Center."

### CHANGING/CANCELLING ONLINE RESERVATIONS

You may change or cancel an existing reservation by contacting Pearson VUE online or by phone. Log in at [www.pearsonvue.com/apa](http://www.pearsonvue.com/apa) and select "View Schedule," which will enable you to change or cancel it as needed. You will receive an email notification from Pearson VUE of all changes or cancellations. Please note that online reservations must be changed or cancelled at least 96 hours before the scheduled examination date, as detailed in *Change/Cancel Policy* (see page 11).

Do NOT contact Pearson VUE's local testing center if you need to cancel or reschedule an exam appointment. To change or cancel a reservation, at least 96 hours before the scheduled examination date, candidates should log in online or call Pearson VUE at the appropriate number found at [www.pearsonvue.com/apa](http://www.pearsonvue.com/apa). See *Change/Cancel Policy* on page 11.

### PEARSON VUE TESTING CENTER PHONE RESERVATIONS

Before calling to make a reservation, be prepared with the following information:

1. The email approving your CPP Exam Application and confirmation of payment
2. Your full legal First and Last name (**as listed on your primary ID**) and street address, email address, and daytime telephone number
3. Exam Series name (see page 5)
4. Preferred testing location
5. Preferred examination date

To find a testing center location, go to [www.pearsonvue.com/apa](http://www.pearsonvue.com/apa) and select "Locate a Testing Center." A Pearson VUE representative will help you select an examination date and location, provide directions to the

testing center you choose, and answer questions regarding the examination. If you provide an email address, your confirmation notice will be emailed to you within twenty-four (24) hours.

### PHONE NUMBERS FOR MAKING RESERVATIONS

#### Testing in the Northern and Southern Americas Regions

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. CT; closed on local holidays.

Call Pearson VUE at (800) 470-8757 at least twenty-four (24) hours before the desired examination date to make an examination reservation.

#### Testing in the Europe, Middle East, or Africa (EMEA) Regions

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. CET; closed on local holidays.

Call Pearson VUE at the appropriate number (found at: <http://www.pearsonvue.com/apa/contact>) (Press Option 2 to schedule an exam.) at least twenty-four (24) hours before the desired examination date to make an examination reservation.

#### Testing in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) Region

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. local time for each country; closed on local holidays.

Call Pearson VUE at the appropriate number (found at: <http://www.pearsonvue.com/apa/contact>) at least twenty-four (24) hours before the desired examination date to make an examination reservation.

### SPECIAL EXAM REQUESTS

#### NON-SATURDAY EXAMS

Candidates who for religious reasons cannot take the CPP examination that is offered at a testing center only on Saturdays may request a non-Saturday examination date. Requests must be made **at least ten (10) days before** the desired examination date. Such a request must be made in writing on official stationery by the candidate's religious advisor and faxed to (610) 617-9397 or mailed to:

**Pearson VUE**  
**Attention: Global Accessibility & Disability Services**  
**5601 Green Valley Drive**  
**Bloomington, MN 55437**

Non-Saturday examinations are available only on a pre-arranged basis.

#### ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

All accommodation requests must be submitted **at least ten (10) days PRIOR** to scheduling an examination (failure to do so may result in cancellation fees; see p.11).

Pearson VUE complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended. The purpose of accommodations is to provide candidates with full access to the test. Accommodations are not a guarantee of improved performance or test completion. Pearson VUE provides

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reasonable and appropriate accommodations to individuals with documented disabilities who demonstrate a need for accommodations.

Test accommodations may include things such as:

- A separate testing room
- Extra testing time
- A Reader or Recorder, for individuals with mobility or vision impairments and who cannot read or write on their own

Test accommodations are individualized and considered on a case-by-case basis. All candidates who are requesting accommodations because of a disability must provide appropriate documentation of their condition and how it is expected to affect their ability to take the test under standard conditions. This may include:

- Supporting documentation from the professional who diagnosed the condition, including the credentials that qualify the professional to make this diagnosis
- A description of past accommodations the candidate has received

The steps to follow when requesting test accommodations vary, depending on your test program sponsor. To begin, go to <http://pearsonvue.com/accommodations>, and then select your test program sponsor from the alphabetized list. Candidates who have additional questions concerning test accommodations may contact the ADA Coordinator by emailing [accommodationspearsonvue@pearson.com](mailto:accommodationspearsonvue@pearson.com).

## APA LEARNING CENTER EXAM REGISTRATION

Attendees of APA's Payroll 201: Payroll Administration Certificate Program held at APA's Learning Centers in Las Vegas and San Antonio will have the opportunity to take the CPP examination on Friday afternoon at the conclusion of the course. Only Payroll 201 course registrants will be allowed to take the CPP examination.

**The Payroll 201 course should not be considered the only method of study for the CPP exam.** Please see *Bibliography/ CPP Exam Preparation* on page 17 for additional study options. Successful candidates have indicated that they engaged in a minimum of three (3) months of preparation before taking the exam. APA's Learning Center testing opportunities are **recommended only for candidates who have already studied, are ready to take the exam, and are using the course for review purposes only.**

CANDIDATES WILL BE TESTED ON EFFECTIVE FEDERAL TAX LAWS AND REGULATIONS AS FOLLOWS	
Exam Dates	Tax Laws and Regulations that apply to payroll processing on
9/17/2016 - 9/15/2017	January 1, 2016
9/16/2017 - 9/15/2018	January 1, 2017

*Note: Changes made after the appropriate cut-off date are NOT included in the exam, even if they are retroactive to January 1st.*

Only registrants of the Payroll 201 Learning Center course

will be allowed to take the CPP exam at the conclusion of the course. Walk-in registrations for the exam are not allowed. The exam fee is separate from the Learning Center course fee. **Do NOT contact Pearson VUE to make a reservation for testing at an APA Learning Center.** The exam fee can be paid online with course registration or separately prior to the course. However, advance registration of at least one (1) week is required for all APA Learning Center exam registrations. Course registrants will be provided additional instructions via email at the time of purchase regarding registering for the exam.

All other candidate requirements remain the same. Candidates must submit their CPP examination application to the APA (see page 4).

## ATTAINMENT OF CERTIFICATION

If an examinee passes the CPP Examination and accepts the APA Code of Ethics (see page 19), they will be entitled to receive a certificate and lapel pin and use the designation "CPP" (Certified Payroll Professional) after their name.

**If a CPP previously attained the Fundamental Payroll Certification (FPC), only the CPP designation may be used and recertified.** New CPPs will receive email notification of how to obtain their complimentary CPP certificate and lapel pin.

## DENIAL OR REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION\*

Certification will be denied or revoked for any of the following reasons:

- Falsification of an application
- Misrepresentation
- Violation of testing procedures
- Failure to pass the examination
- Nonconformity to the APA Code of Ethics
- Failure to provide required documentation and/or fees for recertification

**\*Note:** Denials or revocations of certification may be appealed to the APA Certification Board's CPP Committee and the Certification Review Panel.

## APA MEMBERSHIP

**APA membership is not required to attain the FPC designation.** However, Recertification Credit Hours for APA Professional Membership are granted to certified members. See *Recertification Credit Hours for APA Professional Membership* on page 14.

# EXAM DAY

## WHAT TO BRING

### REQUIRED MATERIALS

All candidates are required to bring identification that is deemed acceptable, as listed under *Acceptable Forms of Candidate Identification*, to the testing center on the day of examination along with the following items listed below.

Candidates **must** bring to the testing center on examination day the following:

- Two forms of identification (as listed below)
- Proof of name change (if your name has changed since the time of reservation) in the form of a marriage certificate, etc.
- Military candidates must present their military ID to enter military testing locations

**Note:** If candidates do not bring the required items to the testing center, they will be denied admission to the examination, will be considered absent, and will forfeit the examination fee.

## ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF CANDIDATE IDENTIFICATION

Candidates must present **two (2)** forms of current signature identification. The primary identification must be government issued and photo bearing with a signature, and the secondary identification must contain a valid signature. Both the primary and the secondary ID's must be original documents; copies are not accepted. Any identification not in English is acceptable as long as the candidate is testing in the country where the identification was originally issued. The name on the reservation **must match** the name on the ID's provided (see chart below). **If the reservation and ID's do not match, the candidate will be turned away and will forfeit the examination fee.** (Middle names are not required, but legal first and last name must match the IDs provided.)

NAME ON REGISTRATION	NAME ON ID	ACCEPTABLE
Sally Smith-Sample	Sally Smith	Yes
Sally Smith	Sally Sample	No
J. P. Doe	John P. Doe	No
Jack Doe	John Doe	No
David T. Johnson	David Tyler Johnson	Yes
David Johnson	David Tyler Johnson	Yes

If your identification does not fall under any of these examples and you are unsure if it will be allowed, please contact Pearson VUE at:

<http://www.pearsonvue.com/apa/contact>

## PRIMARY ID (WITH PHOTOGRAPH AND SIGNATURE, NOT EXPIRED)

- Government-issued Driver's License
- U.S. Department of State Driver's License
- U.S. Learner's Permit (plastic card only with photo and signature)
- National/State/Country Identification Card
- Passport (from country of residence)
- Passport card (from country of residence)
- Military ID
- Military ID for spouses and dependents
- Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Card (Green Card)

## SECONDARY ID (WITH SIGNATURE, NOT EXPIRED)

- U.S. Social Security Card
- Debit (ATM) or Credit Card
- Any form of ID on the Primary ID list

If the ID presented has an embedded signature that is not visible (microchip), or is difficult or impossible to read, the candidate must present another form of identification from the primary or secondary list that contains a visible signature.

**Pearson VUE does not recognize grace periods.** For example, if a candidate's driver's license expired yesterday and the state allows a 30-day grace period for renewing the ID, the ID is considered to be expired.

## SUGGESTED MATERIALS

- It is recommended but not required to bring a battery-operated, silent calculator, as detailed under *Electronic Devices* (see page 9). A calculator may be available upon request at the test center.
- If needed, Direct Translation Only Dictionaries that do not include definitions are permitted in the testing centers.

## EXAM PROCEDURES

Candidates should report to the testing center at least **30 minutes before the scheduled examination time**. Please allow sufficient time to find the testing center. Upon arrival, check in with the testing center manager and present identification and other required items. For security purposes, Pearson VUE will capture each candidate's digital signature, photograph, and palm vein recognition upon check-in.

At the testing center, candidates are required to review and sign a *Candidate Rules Agreement* form. If a candidate does not comply with the *Candidate Rules Agreement* and/or is suspected of cheating or tampering with the examination, the candidate will be reported as such, and the appropriate action will be taken. The examination fee will not be refunded, the exam may be determined invalid, and/or the APA may take further action such as denial or revocation of certification.

Examinations are administered electronically, and include a brief tutorial on the examination computer, allowing time to become familiar with the electronic supplements containing the tables needed to complete the exam. The time spent

during check-in and on this tutorial will not reduce the four (4) hours allotted for the examination. The examination administrators will answer questions during check-in and tutorial, but be aware that they are not familiar with the content of the examination nor with APA's certification requirements, and therefore will not give advice regarding either one. **Pearson VUE administers numerous other exams so please be aware that other candidates testing may not be taking an APA examination and their exam time will vary.**

Candidates may begin the examination once familiar with the examination computer. The examination begins the moment the first question is displayed on the screen. Four (4) hours are allotted to take the examination, after which the computer will automatically turn off. Be sure to read all the text on the computer screen thoroughly so as not to end the exam prematurely. **Candidates who prematurely end their exam are not entitled to a refund or to retake the exam without paying the exam fee again.** Once the exam is finished, alert the administrator by raising your hand. The examination will be scored immediately, and candidates will leave the testing center with an official score report in hand.

## WEATHER DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS

If severe weather or other disaster causes the testing center to be inaccessible or unsafe, the examination may be delayed or cancelled. Candidates will be notified in the event of delays and cancellations during severe weather.

Candidates may reschedule an examination cancelled due to bad weather or other disaster as soon as the testing center becomes available and without additional charge by calling Pearson VUE at the appropriate Customer Service number.

## TESTING CENTER POLICIES

The following policies are observed at each testing center. **Candidates who violate any of these policies will not be permitted to finish the examination and will be dismissed from the testing center, forfeiting their examination fee.**

### STUDY AIDS

- Candidates may **not** take valuables or personal belongings such as wallets, purses, firearms or other weapons, hats, bags, coats, books, electronic devices, or notes or other reference materials, other than calculators (see *Electronic Devices* below), into the examination room. Most, but not all, testing centers have a secured storage area. **However, Pearson VUE and the APA are not responsible for lost, stolen, or misplaced personal items.**
- Candidates may **not** bring a pen or writing tool to the examination. An erasable booklet and marker will be provided at the testing center and will be collected at the end of the examination.
- Candidates must store all personal items in a secure area as indicated by the administrator, or another secure area outside the testing area preferred by the candidate. All electronic devices must be turned off before storing them in a locker. **The testing center is not responsible for lost,**

**stolen, or misplaced personal items.**

- An electronic Examination Supplement needed for completing some exam questions will be in the examination computer, including:
  - Table for Annual Lease Value
  - Table for Figuring Amount Exempt from Levy on Wages, Salary and Other Income
  - Uniform Premium Table 1
  - Tables for Wage Bracket Method of Withholding — Semimonthly & Monthly
  - Tables for Wage Bracket Method of Withholding — Weekly & Biweekly
  - Percentage Method Amount for One Withholding Allowance
  - Tables for Percentage Method Withholding
  - Amount to Add to Nonresident Alien Employee's Wages
- Earplugs are available at each testing center. Please ask for them before the examination begins.

### ELECTRONIC DEVICES

- Candidates are encouraged, but not required, to use a calculator during the examination. Candidates may bring their own calculator or request one from the Test Center Administrator. The calculator must be a silent, non-printing, battery- or solar-powered calculator. **Programmable calculators or calculators with alphabetic key pads from A-Z are not acceptable and will be confiscated.** Calculators may not be shared with other candidates. Calculator malfunctions are not grounds for requesting extra time or challenging examination results. Battery-operated calculators are recommended, since lighting at the testing centers may not be bright enough to activate solar calculators. (If needed, extra batteries may be stored in the lockers.)
- Candidates may **not** bring smartphones, tablets, iPods, or any other electronic or communication devices into the examination room. If you observe an examinee using any of these during the examination, immediately inform the administrator.

### INDIVIDUAL BREAKS

- No group breaks are scheduled during the examination. Candidates will be permitted to take individual breaks at the administrator's discretion, but **no additional time will be allotted to complete the examination** (the clock will not stop during a break).
- If candidates are permitted by the administrator to leave the examination room for a break, they will be escorted while outside of the examination room. Candidates may not take any examination materials with them, and must not speak with anyone while on break. If a candidate fails to follow this policy, they will be denied re-admittance and will forfeit all fees paid, and the candidate's examination will not be scored.

### CHEATING AND SECURITY

- If candidates give help to or receive help from anyone

*continues next page*

during the examination, they will be asked to return all examination materials and leave the room immediately. Their examination will not be scored, fees will not be refunded, and candidates will be required to re-apply and re-submit all applicable fees before they may retake the examination.

- Candidates may **not** write on examination materials (such as the white board provided) until **after** the computer tutorial has been completed **and** the first question on the exam is displayed. If you write on your examination materials (such as the white board provided) before the examination begins, raise your hand and the administrator will bring you a new one.
- Please note that all examination questions and materials are copyrighted by and are the property of the APA. Consequently, any distribution of the examination content or materials through any form of reproduction, or through oral or written communication, is strictly prohibited.
- Pearson VUE and/or APA reserves the right not to score an examination if there is an incident that involves a breach in security or cheating. **Candidates violating these policies may not retake the exam within the same testing window.**

#### PROPER ATTIRE

- While every attempt is made to provide a comfortable testing location, the heating and cooling systems may sometimes not function properly. Consider taking a sweater (Note: Hooded sweaters, coats, and other garments are not allowed) on the day of the scheduled examination. Only in extreme cases will examinations be cancelled as a result of heating or cooling problems.
- Be prepared to remove any and/or all jewelry upon request by the Test Administrator prior to admittance into the examination area.
- Wear comfortable clothing to the examination. Business attire is not required. Tight clothing is not comfortable and restricts the ability to be relaxed.

#### EATING/DRINKING/SMOKING

- Eating, drinking, chewing gum, smoking, and/or making noise that creates a disturbance for other candidates is prohibited during the exam.

#### GUESTS/VISITORS

- No guests, visitors, pets, or children are allowed in the testing center.

## HELPFUL HINTS FOR REDUCING TESTING ANXIETY

The most difficult aspect of taking the Certified Payroll Professional Examination is dealing with the anxiety associated with test-taking. The key to success when taking an examination is relaxation. Below are some helpful hints for reducing anxiety and creating a relaxed testing atmosphere.

- **Know the location of the testing center**, and, if possible, locate the testing center no later than the day before the scheduled examination.
- **Candidates should be well rested** on the day of the examination. Do not stay up late studying the night before the examination. Last-minute cramming will only increase anxiety and result in confusion. If possible, limit the amount of time spent studying the night before the examination.
- **Practice with your calculator** before the examination. Use it at work and while studying. Your calculator should be battery-powered, so make sure it has fresh batteries.

## TEST TAKING TIPS

- **Before beginning the examination**, be sure you are comfortable with using the computer for an electronic examination. Feel free to ask the administrator any questions before the examination begins.
- **Read each examination question carefully.** Be careful of questions that use words such as BEST, NOT, ALWAYS, NEVER, MUST, and EXCEPT.
- **Answer all questions.** Passing or failing the examination is based on the number of questions answered correctly, so it is to your benefit to answer all questions. It is better to provide an answer that you think is correct than to leave a question blank. If a question(s) stumps you, answer the question to the best of your ability and then mark it for review and go to the next question. After completing the remaining questions, go back and review the marked question(s). The online tutorial will explain how to use the mark for review feature.
- **Manage your time.** Be aware of the time remaining while taking the examination and do not spend an excessive amount of time on any single question. The testing software will display the time remaining.
- **If there is time, re-check your calculations.** Each question requiring calculation will have incorrect answers that can be derived by using an incorrect method. Write the steps you have taken in deriving the calculations using the white board and marker provided by the testing center for your review.
- **Verify all answers to gross-up questions.**

# CANCELLATION AND RESCHEDULING

## ABSENCE/LATENESS POLICY

Candidates unable to attend a scheduled examination may be excused for one of the following reasons:

- Illness (yours, or that of an immediate family member)
- Death in the immediate family
- Disabling traffic accident
- Court appearance or jury duty
- Military duty
- Weather emergency (see page 9)

Candidates must submit written verification and supporting documentation for excused absences to Pearson VUE **within fourteen (14) calendar days** of the original examination date. If candidates are otherwise absent from or late to an examination, and have not provided proper notice (see *Change/Cancel Policy*), candidates will forfeit the **entire examination fee**. Written verification and supporting documentation can be sent by one of three ways:

1. Email to [pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com](mailto:pearsonvuecustomerservice@pearson.com)
2. Fax to (952) 516-5557
3. U.S. Mail to the following address:

**Pearson VUE/Certification Examination for Payroll  
Professionals**  
Attn: Event Program Coordinator  
5601 Green Valley Dr.  
Bloomington, MN 55437

## CHANGE/CANCEL POLICY

Do NOT contact Pearson VUE's local testing center. All candidates must telephone Pearson VUE (see page 6) or go to [www.pearsonvue.com/apa](http://www.pearsonvue.com/apa) at least **96 hours** before the scheduled examination date to change or cancel a reservation. Changed reservations with proper notice may be transferred to a new reservation (within the current testing window for the Northern Americas region). **Candidates will forfeit the entire examination fee and be considered a no-show if the change or cancel request is received less than 96 hours from the exam reservation date and time.**

Candidates who **cancel** an exam less than 96 hours and up to 30 days before their exam reservation will incur a non-refundable cancellation fee of \$50 USD, paid to Pearson VUE. Cancellations that occur more than thirty (30) calendar days prior to an exam reservation are not subject to additional fees. Please note that there is no fee to change a reservation during this same period.

Note: The Pearson VUE chat option on the Pearson VUE website cannot be used to reschedule or cancel an exam.

## REFUNDS

Examination fees are fully refundable only if the candidate cancels the reservation with proper notice (96 hours or more before the date of the scheduled exam). Note: The cancellation fee will apply to exams cancelled at least 96 hours and up to 30 days before the exam reservation and is a separate transaction from the refund.

To request a refund, submit the request in writing to:

**[certification@americanpayroll.org](mailto:certification@americanpayroll.org)**

Include in the refund request:

- Full Name
- Mailing address
- Email address
- Phone number
- Pearson VUE appointment cancellation confirmation, if applicable
- The reason for the request for a refund.

Requests will be verified and submitted to accounting for processing. Refunds from the APA are made back to the original method of payment. Please allow six (6) to eight (8) weeks to receive a refund.

## RETAKE THE EXAM

### NORTHERN AMERICAS REGION

Candidates may retake the CPP Examination as often as necessary, but only once in each testing window at a Pearson VUE testing center. For example, those who fail an examination in Spring 2017 must wait until Fall 2017 to retest.

To retake the examination, you must pay for a new exam at **[www.americanpayroll.org/applyforcpp](http://www.americanpayroll.org/applyforcpp)** before making a new exam reservation (see also page 5).

Candidates have the option to obtain additional training at one of APA's Learning Centers by completing APA's Payroll 201: Payroll Administration Certificate Program and then retake the exam **before** the next testing window. To register for this course and retake the exam, see *APA Learning Center Exam Registration* (page 7). Candidates who have failed the CPP examination at an APA Learning Center are eligible to retake the examination at a Pearson Vue Testing Center during the current or a future testing window. A candidate may only take the CPP exam twice during an exam year (see dates on page 3).

### EMEA, APAC, SOUTHERN AMERICAS, AND MILITARY

Candidates may retake the CPP Examination six (6) months following the date of the most recent exam date. This restriction is in place to allow candidates ample time to pursue additional study/training in preparation to retake the examination. To retake the examination you must pay for a new exam at **[www.americanpayroll.org/applyforcpp](http://www.americanpayroll.org/applyforcpp)** before making a new exam reservation (see also page 5), in addition to meeting all eligibility requirements.

# AFTER THE EXAM

## EXAM RESULTS

Examination results are strictly confidential. All candidates will receive their score report (see below for details) upon completion of the exam at the testing center. Unless examinees request an official transcript (see *Transcript Service* on page 12), examination results will be reported only to the examinee and the APA. Examinees should direct all questions about examination results in writing to APA's Certification Department. To maintain examination security, **examination questions and answers cannot be made available for review**. Neither Pearson VUE nor the APA will provide a list of the questions answered incorrectly or correctly. The only information available regarding performance is provided on the examinee's score report.

## UNDERSTANDING THE SCORE REPORT

Our exam vendor, Pearson VUE, follows careful procedures to ensure score reports are correct.

The score report informs you whether you passed or failed, and a failing score report will highlight the proficiency level on each of the content areas (domains) covered on the exam. A scaled score of 300 is required to pass. If you receive a scaled score of 300 or higher the score report will indicate that you have passed; otherwise it will indicate that you failed. If you pass, you will be told how to login to APA's website to share your accomplishment with others in your organization. If you fail, your performance by content area will show which area(s) your performance indicates that you are less than proficient, which area(s) you are moderately proficient, and which area(s) you are proficient. This information combined with the number of items in each domain can be used to help you prepare to retake the exam.

## NOTIFICATION OF CERTIFICATION

Within a week after the exam date, the APA will notify via email examinees who successfully completed the examination and will inform them how to order their complimentary CPP certificate and lapel pin.

To order your complimentary certificate and lapel pin, follow the instructions below.

1. Log on to your APA profile at [www.americanpayroll.org](http://www.americanpayroll.org)
2. **Click on the Certification tab** in the left panel (this is necessary for validation of your designation).
3. Scroll down to the bottom of the certification page and click on the **Order CPP Certificate/Lapel Pin link**. You will then be redirected to the ordering page, where you can make your selections and place your order. If a certificate is ordered with the wrong name, APA will not be responsible for the cost of a corrected certificate. **Please allow 24 hours after receiving the recertification approval prior to ordering the complimentary certificate.**

4. **Verify the spelling of your name on your profile**; this is how it will appear on your certificate. If your name appears correctly on your profile, proceed to order your certificate.

- To make corrections to your name or any legal name changes, email your request to [apa@americanpayroll.org](mailto:apa@americanpayroll.org) (along with any necessary legal documentation)
- Allow 3 to 5 business days for the update to be completed. **Make sure your name change is effective before ordering your certificate.**
- Once your corrected name is visible on your profile, wait 48 hours before proceeding to order your certificate.

## CONSENT TO PUBLISH

By applying to take the Certified Payroll Professional (CPP) Examination, you acknowledge that APA reserves the right to publish the name, city, and state of residence of candidates passing the CPP examination in APA publications, on the APA website, and elsewhere, and APA reserves the right to use the examination results for its use and purposes as may be determined.

If you have questions or concerns with regard to this notice, contact the APA's Certification Department.

## COLLEGE CREDIT FOR PASSING YOUR EXAMINATION

Upon successful completion of the CPP Examination, CPPs may be eligible to receive up to ten (10) undergraduate college credits as recommended by the American Council on Education's Credit-by-Examination Program. CPPs wishing to determine their eligibility for college credit should contact the American Council on Education at (866) 205-6267 or [www.acenet.edu/transcripts](http://www.acenet.edu/transcripts).

## TRANSCRIPT SERVICE

### Pearson VUE

Upon request, Pearson VUE will provide official transcripts that include the examinee's name and address, the date the examination was taken, and the examination results. These transcripts may be requested up to five (5) years after the examination date. **Pearson VUE will send official transcripts directly to an educational institution or organization but not to an examinee's home address.**

To request a copy of your transcripts, please contact Pearson VUE at (800) 470-8757 (or the appropriate Customer Service number for your region, see page 6). Please have the following available:

- The date the examination was taken
- The name and social security number (optional) of the requestor at the time the examination was taken
- The requestor's current address
- The complete name and address of the institution to which the transcript should be sent, *including the name of a contact person* at that institution

## APA

Transcripts for all APA national courses, seminars, and conferences attended within the current recertification period (5 years for CPP), will be provided upon submission of \$20 online payment. More information can be found at [www.americanpayroll.org/certification](http://www.americanpayroll.org/certification) or by contacting APA Membership Services at (210) 224-6406.

Please allow two (2) weeks for processing. APA will provide transcripts via email. If you need to update your contact information, please call Membership Services at (210) 224-6406 or email [apa@americanpayroll.org](mailto:apa@americanpayroll.org).

## DUPLICATE SCORE REPORTS

To order a duplicate score report, please contact Pearson VUE at (800) 470-8757 (or the appropriate number for your region, see page 6).

# RECERTIFICATION

## THE RECERTIFICATION PERIOD

The CPP Certification is valid for five (5) full calendar years following the year in which certification was most recently obtained. For example, certifications awarded in 2017 will expire on December 31, 2022. In order to maintain certification, current CPPs may recertify by meeting the Continuing Education requirements or by retaking and passing the CPP examination during the fifth year of their certification period. CPPs that retake and pass the examination will retain their original certification date in APA's records. Allow 10-12 weeks for processing before contacting APA's Certification Department.

## RECERTIFICATION BY CONTINUING EDUCATION

CPP continuing education credits are tracked as Recertification Credit Hours (RCHs). To recertify via continuing education, a CPP must accrue, over the five-year recertification period, a minimum of 120 qualifying and approved RCHs.

RCHs can be earned by participating as an attendee or facilitator in most of the seminars or programs designed and administered by the APA or its affiliates. The APA awards RCHs, continuing education units (CEUs) and continuing professional education (CPE) credits for most of its live and web-based seminars and programs. CEUs and CPE credits are awarded to those holding other certifications and/or licenses.

A CPP may attend **pre-approved** in-person educational activities or live webinars offered by local APA chapters or organizations other than the APA or its affiliates, such as educational events, seminars, and courses.

Continuing Education may qualify as payroll-related in one (1) of two (2) ways:

- The educational subject is covered in the content outline for the CPP Examination; or
- The educational subject is encompassed in any one (1) of five (5) categories: Payroll Management, Payroll Accounting, Payroll Systems/Human Resource Systems, Payroll Taxation (training or update programs), and Human Resource Training.

Attendance as a participant and/or facilitator in an approved payroll-related course qualifies only once per applicable year corresponding to the tax year tested.

All programs presented by organizations other than APA national must be pre-approved by APA prior to submission toward recertification. To request approval of an educational event, email the content outline and agenda to [certification@americanpayroll.org](mailto:certification@americanpayroll.org) and in the subject line include the text "RCHs Approval Request."

## RECERTIFICATION CREDIT HOUR CALCULATION

One (1) CEU is defined as ten (10) RCHs. One (1) RCH is defined as 60 minutes of educational time.

*continues next page*



One (1) CPE credit is defined as 50 minutes of educational time. Both CEUs and CPE credits must be converted to RCHs.

RECERTIFICATION CREDIT HOUR CONVERSION CHART	
One (1) Continuing Education Unit (CEU)	10 RCHs
One (1) Semester Credit	10 RCHs
One (1) Quarter Credit	5 RCHs

The conversion of CPE credits to RCHs is the number of CPE credits, multiplied by 50, divided by 60, rounded down to the nearest 30 minute increment. Example: 7 CPE credits x 50 = 350; 350/60 = 5.83; rounded down to 5.5 RCHs. Using the same calculation method, 8 CPE credits equate to 6.5 RCHs.

## RECERTIFICATION CREDIT HOURS FOR APA PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Effective January 1, 2014, all national-level APA members will be granted three (3) Recertification Credit Hours (RCHs) per year for being a member in good standing. RCHs will be awarded at the end of the APA member's membership year based on anniversary date and will be applied in-full to the year awarded. Partial credit(s) will not be awarded for a membership term of less than one full year. Please contact Membership Services at (210) 224-6406 or [apa@americanpayroll.org](mailto:apa@americanpayroll.org) for further information regarding this member benefit.

## DETERMINING IF CONTINUING EDUCATION MEETS APA REQUIREMENTS FOR RECERTIFICATION

The following checklist will assist in determining if continuing education programs meet APA's standards in qualifying for CPP recertification. For a program to qualify toward recertification, you must be able to answer YES to all of the following questions:

- Does the content of the program fall within the Content Outline for the Certified Payroll Professional (CPP) Examination?

OR

- Does the content of the program fall within the definition of payroll industry: production, reporting, accounting, systems, taxation, administration, education/consulting?
- Is the program geared toward professionals in the field of payroll? For example, a program entitled "Stress Management" would need further evaluation to determine if the subject matter specifically targets the types of stress payroll professionals encounter on the job (e.g., tackling year-end, dealing with tax protestors or angry employees)
- Was the program attended during the applicable recertification period?
- Is the program provider an APA Approved Provider?

AND

- Does the proof of attendance or program agenda display the APA Approved Provider Logo?

## RECERTIFICATION PROCESS

Download an electronic Recertification log with detailed instructions from the APA website at:

[www.americanpayroll.org/recertification](http://www.americanpayroll.org/recertification). This is the document used to report Recertification Credit Hours (RCHs).

An Excel spreadsheet is acceptable if it includes all of the certificant and log information included in the recertification log.

- The printable version of the Excel recertification log **must** fit an 8½ x 11 sheet of paper (Portrait or Landscape) and the font size should be at least ten (10).
- One recertification log is to be maintained for each recertification period.
- The CPP is responsible for maintaining an accurate record of each program attended along with the required documentation as outlined above that qualifies for CPP recertification.

Each program attended must be entered on the recertification log listing:

- Date(s) Training Attended
- Title of Training Event (2015 Congress, Preparing for Year End and 2016, etc.)
- APA Course Code or Approved Provider Course Code or Content Code (15805, 15BNA008, 1B)
- Training Company's Name (APA Local Chapter, Approved Provider, etc.)
- Type of Proof of Attendance (Certificate/Transcript)
- Number of RCHs earned (If credits earned are in CEU or CPE units, they must be converted to RCHs before submitting to the APA.)

The recertification log must be forwarded to APA's Certification Department at the end of the recertification period to [recert@americanpayroll.org](mailto:recert@americanpayroll.org). Do **not** include proof of attendance with your original submission. Only those selected for Audit (see page 15) are required to submit proof of attendance. In the event of an audit, the CPP will be notified and required to produce all supporting documentation.

As a courtesy, the APA will send all CPPs an advance notice, via email, of their renewal due date during the month of March of the year in which they are scheduled to recertify. A second email notice, including payment information and instructions, will be sent no later than mid-November of the year in which CPPs are scheduled to recertify. **It is the CPP's responsibility to know when their certification expires.** Therefore, CPPs do not have to wait for the email notification to submit their recertification log timely.

**To ensure accurate and timely delivery of recertification information, via email, it is the responsibility of each CPP to update their profile (except for name changes) on the APA website before notification deadlines. To obtain login information or to change your name, contact APA's Membership Services Department at [apa@americanpayroll.org](mailto:apa@americanpayroll.org) or by phone at (210) 224-6406.**

## RECERTIFICATION FEE

A recertification fee of \$150 is required. The recertification fee can be paid online at [www.americanpayroll.org/recertification](http://www.americanpayroll.org/recertification) or by contacting APA's Membership Services department at (210) 224-6406. If both the recertification log and fee are not received, the APA cannot process the recertification request. All recertification fees are **non-refundable**. In the event of an audit, the CPP will be required to produce all supporting documentation.

## VERIFICATION STATEMENT FOR RECERTIFICATION THROUGH CONTINUING EDUCATION

CPPs recertifying through continuing education must read and include with their recertification log submission the following statement signed and dated (this statement is included in the online recertification process):

I, the undersigned CPP, do attest that I have attended the courses listed in this Recertification Log. I understand that the American Payroll Association has the authority to audit any documents upon request. I am aware that any falsification of information will lead to the revocation of my CPP designation. I understand that non-qualifying courses will be deleted causing my RCHs to decrease. Upon verification of my program log and having met the minimum required number of qualifying RCHs, I will receive an email to order my new CPP certificate. I understand that it is my responsibility to download the new recertification log to begin recording training that has been approved for RCHs for the next recertification period. I understand that the recertification and applicable late and reinstatement fees are non-refundable.

## MANDATORY AUDIT

Ten percent of recertifying CPPs are randomly selected for an audit. All selected CPPs will receive official notice from APA with detailed instructions for the audit process. If selected for audit, in addition to the program log and recertification fee, **all copies of supporting documentation proving program attendance must** be submitted to APA's Certification Department for review. Failure to submit adequate proof of attendance will result in denial of CPP recertification.

The following do **not** prove attendance and therefore should not be submitted with your audit materials. In addition, educational activities for which only these materials are submitted will not be counted towards total Recertification Credit Hours:

1. Proof of paid or unpaid registration for training
2. Email confirmation of registration
3. PowerPoint presentations or course materials of any kind
4. Course agendas
5. Course outlines
6. Brochure covers

## LATE RECERTIFICATION SUBMISSIONS

Recertification logs and/or fees received on or after February 15 and any time prior to June 1 of the same year recertification submissions are due will be assessed a late fee of \$25. This fee is in addition to the regular recertification fee of \$150 and is **non-refundable**.

## DESIGNATION REINSTATEMENTS

CPPs whose recertification logs and/or fees are received more than five (5) months late (between June 1 and December 31 of the year following your "valid through" date) will need to request that their designation be reinstated. Recertification logs sent by those seeking reinstatement must be accompanied by **proof of attendance** at educational offerings listed on the recertification log and a \$60 reinstatement fee. The reinstatement fee is in addition to both the late fee and the regular recertification fee and is **non-refundable**. After the reinstatement period has passed, candidates must retake the exam.

**Recertification related fees are subject to change without notice.**

## RECERTIFICATION BY EXAMINATION

CPPs choosing to recertify by examination must pass the CPP Examination during the fifth year of their most recent certification (e.g., those with an expiration date of December 31, 2017 must pass the CPP exam in 2017). The employment and training eligibility requirements (see page 2 for information concerning establishing eligibility) do not apply to candidates for recertification by exam. If a CPP's certification has expired, the recertification policies are not applicable, and the former CPP must meet all eligibility requirements before retaking the examination. Recertifying by examination ensures the retention of the CPP's original certification date. The certification status of applicants taking the examination for recertification will be verified by the APA. After successfully completing the exam, recertifying CPPs will receive, via email, instructions for downloading an electronic recertification log and ordering their replacement certificate.

# CPP EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

This informational outline reflects the subject matter tested on the CPP Examination.

For a complete list of the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) tested on the CPP examination, visit [www.americanpayroll.org/certification](http://www.americanpayroll.org/certification).

## CPP CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION OUTLINE

- I. CORE PAYROLL CONCEPTS.....27%**
  - A. Worker Status
  - B. Fair Labor Standards Act
  - C. Employment Taxes
  - D. Employee Benefits
  - E. Employee/Employer Forms
  - F. Professional Responsibility
  - G. Methods and Timing of Pay
- II. COMPLIANCE/RESEARCH AND RESOURCES ....21%**
  - A. Escheatment
  - B. Regulatory - Maintain compliance and accuracy of payroll processing
  - C. Reporting
  - D. Record Retention
  - E. Penalties
  - F. Global
- III. CALCULATION OF THE PAYCHECK .....20%**
  - A. Compensation/Benefits
  - B. Involuntary Deductions/Taxes
  - C. Voluntary Deductions (Pretax and Post Tax)
  - D. Employer Taxes and Contributions
  - E. Net Pay
- IV. PAYROLL PROCESS AND SUPPORTING SYSTEMS AND ADMINISTRATION .....9%**
  - A. Maintain Master File Components
  - B. Concepts and Functionalities
  - C. Disaster Recovery Plan
  - D. Selection
  - E. Implementation/Upgrades
  - F. Maintenance/Updates
  - G. Project Management
- V. PAYROLL ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT .....10%**
  - A. Policies and Procedures (e.g., overtime, benefits, leave)
  - B. Staffing, Employee Development, and Core Competencies
  - C. Management Skills and Practices
  - D. Communication/Customer Service
- VI. AUDITS.....7%**
  - A. Internal Controls
  - B. Payroll System Controls
  - C. Accounting System Controls
  - D. Third Party Controls
  - E. Audit Policies and Procedures
- VII. ACCOUNTING .....6%**
  - A. Accounting Principles
  - B. General Ledger Account Classification
  - C. Payroll Journal Entry
  - D. Account Reconciliation

# BIBLIOGRAPHY/CPP EXAM PREPARATION

APA's Learning Paths provide a plan for the successful preparation for the CPP exam. The CPP Learning Path can be accessed at: <http://www.americanpayroll.org/course-conf/learning-paths>

A number of study aids are available for candidates of the CPP Examination. **No one source should be considered the only basis for preparation.** All candidates should use a number of references to ensure a wide diversity of information. The following list is not to be considered a complete list of all materials or courses available for use in preparing for the CPP Examination.

## APA COURSES

### (Instructor-led and/or electronic)

- Information found on the education page of APA's website at [www.americanpayroll.org/course-conf-2](http://www.americanpayroll.org/course-conf-2)
- PayTrain® (self-study or instructor-led)
- Payroll Practice Essentials
- Intermediate Payroll Concepts
- Advanced Payroll Concepts
- Implementing Payroll Best Practices
- Payroll Systems Selection and Implementation
- Strategic Leadership Certificate Program
- Strategic Payroll Practices
- Payroll 101: Foundations of Payroll Certificate Program
- Payroll 201: Payroll Administration Certificate Program
- Pay Train® College and University Program
- APA's Knowledge Assessment Calculator ([www.payrollkac.com](http://www.payrollkac.com))
- Certified Payroll Professional Boot Camp: Virtual Classroom

## APA PUBLICATIONS

- Information found on the publications page of the APA's website at [www.americanpayroll.org/publication-2](http://www.americanpayroll.org/publication-2)
- The Payroll Source®
- Basic Guide to Payroll
- The Guide to Successful Electronic Payments

## OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- BNA's Payroll Administration Guide
- RIA's Payroll Guide
- RIA's Principles of Payroll Administration
- Customer Service for Dummies
- Human Resources Kit for Dummies
- Accounting for Dummies
- The Complete Idiot's Guide to Managing People
- CCH's Payroll Management Guide

## DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION PUBLICATIONS:

To obtain these publications, call (866) 487-9243 or go to [www.dol.gov/whd](http://www.dol.gov/whd)

- Fact Sheet #23: Overtime Pay Requirements of the FLSA - <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs23.pdf>
- Fact Sheet #22: Hours Worked Under the FLSA - <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs22.pdf>
- Fact Sheet #21: Recordkeeping Requirements Under the FLSA - <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs21.pdf>
- Fact Sheet #17A: Exemption for Executive, Administrative, Professional, Computer & Outside Sales Employees Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) - [www.dol.gov/whd/overtime/fsa\\_overview.htm](http://www.dol.gov/whd/overtime/fsa_overview.htm)

## INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE PUBLICATIONS:

(You may download these publications from [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov))

- Circular E, Employer's Tax Guide (#15)
- Employer's Supplemental Tax Guide (#15-A)
- Employer's Tax Guide to Fringe Benefits (#15-B)
- Exemptions, Standard Deductions and Filing Information (#501)
- Moving Expenses (#521)
- Reporting Tip Income (#531)
- Taxable and Nontaxable Income (#525)

You can download an additional copy of the CPP Handbook and the Application for Certification by Examination for Payroll Professionals at [www.americanpayroll.org/certification](http://www.americanpayroll.org/certification).

# SAMPLE CPP EXAM QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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1. An employee is provided a parking space on the employer's premises. The FMV of the space is \$200. This is referred to as a:

- A. De minimis fringe benefit.
- B. Qualified transportation fringe benefit.
- C. No-additional-cost fringe benefit.
- D. Qualified employee discount.

2. A nonexempt employee is paid \$9.50 per hour and recorded the following hours:

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
0	(sick)	10	8	8	8	0

Company policy allows pay for sick days at 8 hours per day. Under the FLSA, calculate the employee's gross weekly pay.

- A. \$323.00
- B. \$399.00
- C. \$408.50
- D. \$418.00

3. What types of wages are excluded when calculating the regular rate?

- A. Production bonus.
- B. Shift differential.
- C. Paid time not worked.
- D. Premium pay less than one and one-half times the base rate.

4. When setting up a new payroll system, testing is part of:

- A. RFP preparation.
- B. Needs analysis.
- C. Implementation.
- D. Evaluation.

5. Pre-tax contributions to a cafeteria plan for medical insurance are exempt from:

- A. Social security, Medicare, FIT, and FUTA only.
- B. Social security, Medicare, and FIT only.
- C. Social security, Medicare, and FUTA only.
- D. FIT and FUTA only.

6. In a state that is not credit reduction, an employee's current pay is \$1,300.00. YTD wages are \$5,895.00. Calculate the FUTA tax the employer must accrue if all taxes are paid timely and in full.

- A. \$6.63
- B. \$7.80
- C. \$66.30
- D. \$78.00

7. Payments to non-corporate independent contractors for services rendered MUST be reported to the IRS if payments exceed:

- A. \$600.00 in the calendar year.
- B. \$600.00 in any 12-month period.
- C. \$1,000.00 in the calendar year.
- D. \$1,000.00 in any 12-month period.

8. All of the following duties should be included in the job description of a payroll department employee EXCEPT:

- A. Data entry of payroll input.
- B. Reviewing source documents for proper authorization.
- C. Reconciliation of payroll bank accounts.
- D. Distribution of payroll-related reports.

9. Taxes advanced by an employer on behalf of employees must be recovered from employees by no later than:

- A. January 1 of the following year.
- B. January 31 of the following year.
- C. March 31 of the following year.
- D. April 1 of the following year.

10. All of the following accounts are asset accounts EXCEPT:

- A. Cash.
- B. Accounts receivable.
- C. Inventory.
- D. Accounts payable.

**Answers:**

1-B	2-B	3-C	4-C	5-A
6-A	7-A	8-C	9-D	10-D

## **APA CODE OF ETHICS**

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1. To be mindful of the personal aspect of the payroll relationship between employer and employee, and to ensure that harmony is maintained through constant concern for the Payroll Professional's fellow employees.
2. To strive for perfect compliance, accuracy, and timeliness of all payroll activities.
3. To keep abreast of the state of the payroll art with regard to developments in payroll technologies.
4. To be current with legislative developments and actions on the part of regulatory bodies, insofar as they affect payroll.
5. To maintain the absolute confidentiality of the payroll within the procedures of the employer.
6. To refrain from using Association activities for one's personal self-interest or financial gain.
7. To take as one's commitment the enhancement of one's professional abilities through the resources of the American Payroll Association.
8. To support one's fellow Payroll Professionals, both within and outside one's organization.



# AMERICAN PAYROLL ASSOCIATION

## APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION BY EXAMINATION

**Applications will not be accepted at the testing center.** Candidates are required to submit this completed form to the APA via Online, U.S. mail, email (apaexam@americanpayroll.org) or fax (210-224-5814) **BEFORE** making exam reservations. To obtain your APA Identification Number, please contact APA Membership Services at (210) 224-6406 or email apa@americanpayroll.org. If paying for exam by credit card, please pay online at [www.americanpayroll.org/applyforcpp](http://www.americanpayroll.org/applyforcpp) after submitting this application. If paying by check, make check payable to APA and mail to:

American Payroll Association  
Attn: Certification Department  
660 North Main Avenue, Suite 100  
San Antonio, TX 78205

### SECTION A: EXAM SELECTION

SELECT ONE	REGION	EXAM SERIES	MEMBER FEE	NON-MEMBER FEE
<input type="checkbox"/>	Northern Americas	CPP-N America	\$380.00	\$550.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	APA Learning Centers	CPP-LC	\$380.00	\$550.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Military	CPP-INTL/MILITARY	\$380.00	\$550.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	EMEA, APAC, and Southern Americas	CPP-INTL/MILITARY	\$435.00	\$595.00

### SECTION B: PERSONAL INFORMATION

**First and Last Legal Name (as listed on your primary ID):**

First/Given \_\_\_\_\_

Last/Surname \_\_\_\_\_

#### Home Address:

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal \_\_\_\_\_

Country/Area Code \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ APA Identification Number \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy) \_\_\_\_\_ Company \_\_\_\_\_

Country/Area Code \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Business Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

**If recertifying by examination, please check here, and continue to Section D.** (Note: CPPs choosing to recertify by examination must pass the CPP Examination during the fifth year of their most recent certification or recertification.)

*application continues next page*

### SECTION C: EMPLOYER VERIFICATION

**Note:** This section is to be signed by the applicant's immediate supervisor within payroll or a former payroll supervisor if not currently working in payroll.

*I certify that to the best of my knowledge the information presented herein by the applicant is correct and that this applicant for Payroll Professional Certification is of high professional caliber. I agree to respond should the APA's CPP Committee audit this application.*

*I also certify that this applicant has been practicing payroll: (please check one)*

- Criterion 1  for a minimum of three (3) years out of the preceding five (5) years from the date of this application
- Criterion 2  has completed the required APA courses as listed in the CPP Candidate Handbook all within the past 24 months
- Criterion 3  has obtained the FPC designation **AND** completed the required APA courses as listed in the CPP Candidate Handbook all within the past 18 months

If applying under Criterion 2 or Criterion 3, electronic scans of course attendance documents (such as APA thank you letters, certificates of completion, transcripts) and FPC designation (if applicable) must accompany this application.

Supervisor Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Title \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Email \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION D: APPLICANT STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

**Note:** This section is to be signed by the applicant.

*I certify that I have read and understand the instructions and that the information given by me is correct. I agree to be bound by the procedures and policies set forth in the CPP Candidate Handbook. I further certify that I have read the APA Code of Ethics and I understand and accept it. I understand that any knowingly false statement herein or lack of compliance with the APA Code of Ethics is grounds for rejection of this Application. If certification is granted, I understand the liability of the American Payroll Association and its agents is limited to examination fees only.*

Applicant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Unsigned and incomplete applications will not be accepted. Only hand signatures and secure digital signatures are accepted.*



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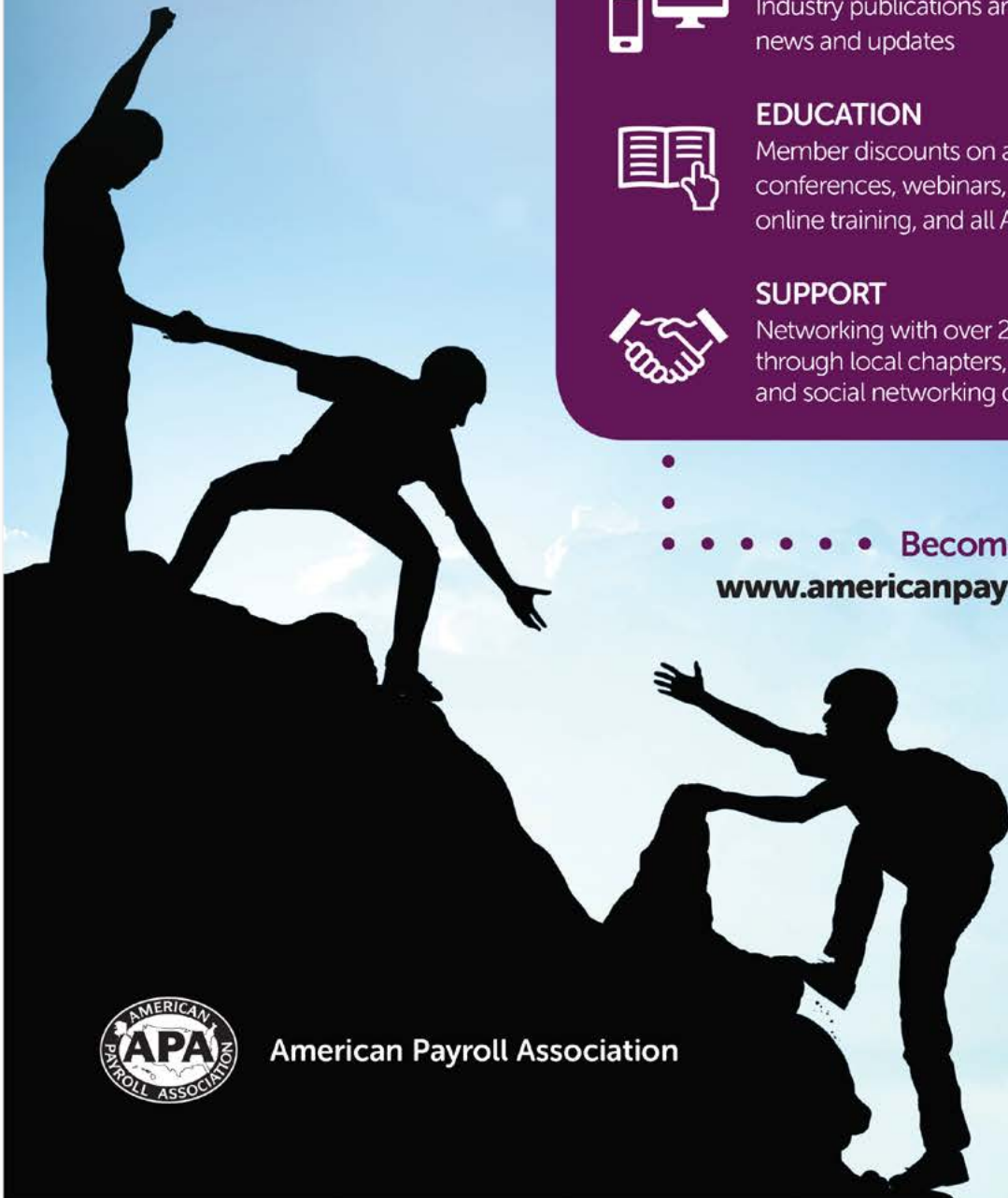


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APA members are granted three Recertification Credit Hours (RCHs) per year for being a member in good standing.



American Payroll Association



## North America Pearson VUE Testing Center Exam Dates

### **Fall 2017**

Registration: July 11 - October 13

Exam Window: September 16 - October 14

### **Spring 2018**

Registration: January 16 - April 20, 2018

Exam Window: March 24 to April 21, 2018

For Learning Center, International,  
and Military Exam Dates, see page 3.

## APA Learning Center Exam Dates

APA Learning Center exam dates are limited  
and coincide with the Payroll 201 course.

Check the course schedule at  
[www.americanpayroll.org/course-conf](http://www.americanpayroll.org/course-conf)  
for the latest information.

**Certification Board  
CPP Committee  
American Payroll Association**

660 North Main Avenue, Ste. 100  
San Antonio, TX 78205 -1217

Check for the updated CPP Handbook on the website  
at [www.americanpayroll.org/certification](http://www.americanpayroll.org/certification)

