



**School of
Government**



CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT PURCHASING OFFICER (CLGPO)

PROGRAM POLICY

Sponsored by
North Carolina Association of Governmental Purchasing

Administered by
CLGPO Certification Committee
UNC School of Government

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PROGRAM POLICY

I. Introduction

A. CLGPO

Since 1986, the North Carolina Association of Governmental Purchasing (NCAGP) has provided a voluntary certification program designed to recognize North Carolina local government purchasing professionals who demonstrate a strong foundation in public procurement. Through this long-standing program, association members have had the opportunity to earn and maintain the designation of **Certified Local Government Purchasing Officer (CLGPO)**, a credential respected across the state for its emphasis on professionalism, ethical practice, and competency in local government procurement.

B. 2026 Revisions

In July of 2026, the CLGPO Committee enacted a comprehensive revision of the CLGPO certification program. This revision represents the most significant update in the program's history and reflects the evolving needs of the public procurement profession in North Carolina. The updated certification guidelines emphasize a rigorous and clearly defined educational pathway focused on the competencies required to successfully navigate the complex landscape of North Carolina General Statutes, federal laws, and administrative practices and procedures.

In summary, the following are key objectives of the certification program revisions:

- To place a specific emphasis on North Carolina Local Government Purchasing
- To provide education that directly relates to professional responsibilities
- To ensure that all applicants have equal access to quality educational materials focused on North Carolina practice
- To ensure that certified members are experts in North Carolina law, policies, and procedures
- To automate the application process

II. CLGPO Certification Committee

The Certified Local Government Purchasing Officer Certification Committee (hereinafter “the Committee”) is established in Article XII, Section II of the North Carolinas Association of Governmental Purchasing (NCAGP) bylaws. The Committee is responsible for administering the CLGPO program jointly with the UNC School of Government. The Committee is autonomous and operates independently of the general membership and NCAGP Board of Directors. The Committee is comprised of experienced purchasing professionals who have achieved and maintained CLGPO designation. The Chair of the Committee is elected from among the Committee members. Members of the Committee are appointed by the Chair in the Chair’s sole discretion. The School of Government faculty member working primarily in the field of public procurement serves as a permanent, non-voting member of the Certification Committee.

The Committee’s primary functions are to establish certification requirements and make certification award determinations. The Committee is authorized to promulgate any forms, guidelines, policies, or procedures it deems necessary to effectively administer the CLGPO Program.

The award of certification is made in the sole discretion of the Committee. All decisions by the Committee are final and not subject to appeal or review by any other entity, organization, or person. The Committee reserves the right to deny an application for certification, recertification, or examination for good cause, including but not limited to insufficient experience or incomplete application.

III. Eligibility Requirements for Certification and Recertification

A. Certification

To be eligible for CLGPO certification, an applicant must meet the following requirements:

1. Be a NCAGP member in good standing for the past three (3) consecutive years.
2. Have at least five (5) years of direct purchasing experience in a North Carolina local government.
3. Complete four (4) core courses offered by the UNC School of Government, as defined in Section III.C. of this Policy starting with Basic Principles of Local Government Purchasing.
4. Complete at least twelve (12) Level 100 Procurement Modules.
5. Complete at least twelve (12) Level 200 Procurement Modules.
6. Attend at least three (3) NCAGP Annual Conferences.
7. Attend (in-person or online) at least three (3) NCAGP Regional Sessions.
8. Pass all two (2) sections of the CLGPO certification exam.

B. Recertification

Recertification is required every seven (7) calendar years from the date of the original certification. To be eligible for recertification, an applicant must meet the following requirements during the seven (7) years from the applicant's last certification or recertification:

1. Be a NCAGP member in good standing at the time of application for recertification.
2. Attend at least three (3) NCAGP Annual Conferences.
3. Attend (online or in-person) at least three (3) NCAGP Regional Sessions.
4. Be employed in a position with direct purchasing experience in a North Carolina local government for at least five (5) years within the seven (7) year period and be employed in such a position at the time of application for recertification.
5. Complete at least five (5) Level 200 Procurement Modules.

C. Core Courses

1. Basic Principles of Local Government Purchasing
2. Intermediate Purchasing Seminar
3. Contracting for Construction and Design Services
4. Introduction to Local Government Finance

IV. Examination

A. Eligibility and Timing

To be eligible to take the CLGPO certification examination, an applicant must meet all other requirements for certification identified in Section III.A. of this Policy prior to submitting application to take the exam. The certification exam is administered by the School of Government and is offered once annually, typically in the last week of February.

B. Format, Content, and Passage

The examination consists of two (2) sections and includes fifty (50) multiple choice questions and six (6) short essay questions. All exam questions derive from the core courses at the School of Government and the Levels 100 and 200 Procurement Modules. Applicants must score 80% on each section to pass.

V. Application and Documentation Requirements

A. Application Submission

1. Accessing Applications. Applications for certification are available on the UNC School of Government's Local Government Purchasing and Contracting website (www.ncpurchasing.unc.edu) under the "[Organizations and Certifications](#)" link".
2. Submitting Applications. Applications must be submitted electronically as prescribed by the UNC School of Government. Failure to submit the application according to instructions may result in rejection of the application. The applicant bears the burden of demonstrating eligibility for meeting the requirements for certification by submitting an organized and complete application.

B. Application Deadlines

1. Applications for **Certification** must be received by November 1st of the calendar year for certification in the following calendar year. For example, an applicant who submits an application for certification by November 1, 2026 may become certified in the following calendar year.
2. Applications for **Recertification** must be submitted by November 1st in the calendar year in which the applicant's certification expires. For example, if an applicant's certification expires on December 31, 2026, the applicant must apply for recertification by November 1, 2026.

C. Documentation

1. Employment Verification. Verification of direct North Carolina local government purchasing experience can be provided by an immediate supervisor, human resources professional, senior manager, or similar individual that can certify the experience requirement.
2. Attendance Records for Core Courses. School of Government course transcripts can be requested on the UNC School of Government website [here](#). School of Government course completion certificates can be requested from the school registrar at registrar@sog.unc.edu.

D. Definitions

1. "*Direct purchasing experience in a North Carolina local government*" means hands-on procurement activities performed within a North Carolina county, municipality, school system, utility, or other local government entity, in accordance with applicable North Carolina General Statutes governing local government procurement (e.g., Chapter 143, Article 8). This experience may include, but is not limited to:

- i. Preparing, issuing, and managing formal and informal solicitation documents, including Requests for Proposals (RFP), Requests for Quotes (RFQ), Invitations to Bid (ITB), and similar solicitation processes.
- ii. Developing, writing, and reviewing specifications or statements of work.
- iii. Conducting bid analyses, evaluation vendor submissions, and documenting award recommendations.
- iv. Issuing, approving, or managing purchase orders.
- v. Administering, reconciling, evaluating, or documenting P-card activity or program.
- vi. Administering vendor relationships, contracts, amendments, and renewals.
- vii. Ensuring compliance with competitive bidding requirements under NC General Statutes.
- viii. Coordinating procurement activities with end user customers, suppliers, legal counsel, leadership, or governing board.
- ix. Performing any additional duties that demonstrate direct engagement in local governmental purchasing processes and decision-making.

Applicants who meet this requirement are expected to have **regular, ongoing, and substantial responsibility for performing or supervising these activities as a significant component of their position**, provided, in the latter case, that the applicant exercises professional oversight, decision-making authority, and accountability for the procurement function.

Experience limited to submitting requisitions, using a purchasing card, requesting purchase orders or contracts, approving invoices, managing contracts without procurement responsibilities, or other routine transactional activities does not satisfy this requirement.