

Requirements and Application for becoming a

Certified Local Government Purchasing Officer (CLGPO)

Sponsored by the Carolinas Association of Governmental Purchasing

Summary of requirements for certification:

- CAGP membership
- At least three years' experience in the governmental purchasing profession
- Completion of core courses
- 22 certification points (*in addition to the core courses*)
- Completion of certification examination

Complete information on eligibility, requirements for certification, recertification, and lifetime certification is provided inside.

Effective August 1, 2010.

Revised November 2011.

Certified Local Government Purchasing Officer

The Carolinas Association of Governmental Purchasing offers a voluntary certification program for government purchasing officers. Its purposes are to:

- Provide greater service to taxpayers through more efficient purchasing.
- Recognize achievement of an established level of competency and proficiency among purchasing officials.
- Provide continuing professional development of purchasing officials and enhance their professional image.

Application Forms

Applications to take the CLGPO Certification examination, and for certification, recertification, or lifetime certification may be obtained online at the School of Government's Local Government Purchasing and Contracting website at www.ncpurchasing.unc.edu under the "Organizations and Certifications" link.

Applications must be submitted electronically in pdf form to the CLGPO Certification Committee via email to Norma Houston, UNC School of Government, at nhouston@sog.unc.edu. Applicants should compile all application information into one pdf, with the application form appearing first, followed by all supporting documentation. Questions about the application process may be directed to the Committee Chairman or Norma Houston (nhouston@sog.unc.edu or 919.843.8930).

Requirements for Certification

A. Membership

Applicants must be a member in good standing of the Carolinas Association of Governmental Purchasing (CAGP).

B. Experience

Applicants must have been employed in the governmental purchasing profession for a minimum of three years within the eight-year period before the date of application for certification.

A statement from the applicant's employer(s) affirming that the applicant performed the duties of a buyer, regardless of job title, and verifying the dates of employment as a buyer, must accompany the application.

For purposes of this requirement, duties of a buyer consist of performing technical work in the procurement of a variety of supplies, materials, apparatus, equipment, and services.

Examples of work involved in the duties of a buyer include: preparing specifications; analyzing purchase order requests; conferring with requisitioning personnel regarding specifications, quantity, and quality of merchandise; conducting (or assisting with) bid openings; soliciting price quotations; evaluating bids and quotations and making recommendations for award; interviewing sales representatives; examining invoices; maintaining and updating files and information on sources of supply for various commodities including catalogues and price lists; coordinating (or assisting with) public auctions; preparing and receiving bids for sale of surplus property.

C. Core Courses

Applicants must successfully complete the following core courses:

1. Introduction to Local Government Finance (as of 8/1/2010)
2. Basic Principles of Local Government Purchasing
3. Intermediate Purchasing Seminar
4. Contracting for Construction and Design Services
5. One (1) CAGP Spring or Summer Conference
6. Management Training Course (6 hours of instruction; course to be selected by applicant; not required for candidates who take both Basic Principles of Local Government Purchasing and the Intermediate Purchasing Seminar after 8/1/2010)

The core courses DO NOT COUNT toward the required 22 certification points.

Each core course is offered one time per year at the School of Government, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A candidate may take the certification exam after completing all of the core courses even if the candidate has not earned the full 22 points required for certification. A candidate may submit an application to take the certification exam before completing all of the core courses as long as the applicant has successfully completed all of the core courses before actually taking the exam. Transcripts for core courses may be obtained from the School of Government by emailing the Registrar's Office at registration@sog.unc.edu.

The Basic Purchasing core course requirement may be waived for applicants who have sufficient experience and qualify to enroll in Intermediate Purchasing without taking the Basic Purchasing course.

D. Twenty-two (22) Certification Points

In addition to the core course requirements, the applicant must have earned at least 22 certification points in order to become certified. One point will be awarded for every seven hours of professional education instruction. Points will also be awarded for formal degrees and service to CAGP, as set forth below.

Formal Education

Four certification points will be awarded for a bachelor's degree. For community college, college, or university courses, up to 5 certification points will be awarded for purchasing-related courses which are not a part of a bachelor's degree program for which points are credited above. Applicants must submit a copy of the official institutional transcript with the application. These points will be granted at the discretion of the Certification Committee depending upon the degree of relevance to purchasing, and will not necessarily be awarded on a one course, one point basis.

Professional Education

Up to 21 points may be awarded for professional education courses. Courses sponsored by established professional purchasing organizations (such as CAGP, ISM, NPI, NASPO, NIGP), or by a public institution or public agency (local, state or federal) dealing with a purchasing-related subject will automatically be accepted.

No more than 3 of the 21 professional education points will be awarded for courses deemed by the Certification Committee to be indirectly relevant to public purchasing. Examples include courses in customer service, management training, supervisory skills training, money and banking, business communication, computer training, and risk management. Points awarded in this category will be at the discretion of the Certification Board and will not necessarily be awarded on a one course, one point basis. A maximum of 3 points will be awarded for completion of the Municipal and County Administration course sponsored by the School of Government.

Service

Points for service to the Association will be awarded as follows: 1 point for CAGP board membership; 1 point for chairing a standing committee; 1 point per course for being an instructor for any core course.

No more than 2 points per year will be awarded for service, and no more than 6 points total for service will count toward the required 22 points for certification.

E. Examination

Applicants for certification must successfully complete an examination administered by the School of Government. The examination consists of three parts: North Carolina purchasing law (including the Uniform Commercial Code); case problems involving application of proper purchasing law and practice; and questions regarding present and future issues facing the purchasing profession. Three hours are allowed for completing the examination. The examination is offered twice a year, once on the day before the first day of the CAGP Spring Conference, and once at least 90 days later.

An applicant must complete all of the core courses in order to take the exam, but is not required to have accumulated all 22 certification points before taking the exam. Applications to take the exam must be submitted no later than December 1 preceding the examination. Applications and supporting

documentation must be submitted via email in pdf form to Norma Houston, UNC School of Government, at nhouston@sog.unc.edu (see "Application Forms" above for further instructions). An application to take the examination will be accepted even if all of the core courses have not been completed, as long as the candidate completes the remaining required core courses before the applicant actually takes the examination.

A candidate who fails one or more parts of the examination may retake those parts no sooner than 90 days after the initial examination. If the candidate does not pass the part or parts on the second attempt, he or she must retake a core course that covers the subjects contained in the part or parts failed. After completing the appropriate core course, the candidate can retake the failed part or parts of the examination.

Recertification

Certification must be renewed every five years. To be recertified, the candidate must earn a minimum of 10 points during each five-year period. Points for recertification are earned in the same manner as for initial certification.

Lifetime Certification

Individuals who have obtained certification under the CLGPO program are eligible for lifetime certification in either of the following situations:

1. Aged 55 with 15 or more years of experience in public purchasing; or
2. Twenty or more years of experience in public purchasing, regardless of age.