



*Certified Grants Management Specialist (CGMS)*

*Candidate Handbook*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The National Grants Management Association (NGMA) is the premier association for grants professionals. NGMA provides its membership the training, professional development and community they need to elevate their grants management careers. NGMA offers virtual and in-person trainings; the opportunity to obtain the esteemed Certified Grants Management Specialist (CGMS) designation; an online community forum for members to come together to pose questions and share information; a grants management job board; and additional growth opportunities.

NGMA developed the Certified Grants Management Specialist (CGMS) certification program to provide an industry credential that elevates professional standards, enhances individual performance, and designates professionals who demonstrate the knowledge essential to the practice of grants management. Having the CGMS credential confers formal recognition of professional competency in the full lifecycle of grants management. Individuals who earn the CGMS have demonstrated knowledge of the professional domains that encompass the tasks and knowledge required of a grants management professional in various practice settings.

The CGMS certification program is intended for grants management professionals in a wide variety of professional settings including government settings, nonprofits, higher education, tribal governments, and private industries, primarily in the United States, but also in international settings.

All individuals must meet the established eligibility requirements and pass the CGMS exam to become certified. NGMA does not award the credential to individuals who have not passed the examination. The Certification Council does not offer reciprocal certification for individuals certified from another organization.

### **The Certification Council**

The Certification Council is a division of NGMA formed to independently govern, oversee, and manage the certification program. The Certification Council is solely responsible for all essential certification program decisions related to the core aspects of a certification program including decisions related to eligibility standards; standards for initial certification and maintaining certification; disciplinary determinations; the development, administration and score of examination; and the selection of subject-matter experts.

### **Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct**

By registering for the CGMS exam, candidates agree to the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct published and posted on the NGMA website ([www.ngma.org/cgms](http://www.ngma.org/cgms)).

### **Use of Handbook**

Please use this Candidate Handbook to understand the CGMS application, testing, and recertifying processes. If you have questions about this information, please contact NGMA at [cgms@ngma.org](mailto:cgms@ngma.org) or (202) 308-9443.

## ELIGIBILITY

Each eligibility requirement has been established to ensure that certified individuals have an acceptable level of knowledge, as evidenced by the examination and education requirements, and skill, as evidenced by the experience requirement, needed for certification.

All individuals who seek certification must meet the established eligibility requirements. To be eligible to sit for the CGMS exam, candidates must attest to having one of the following:

- a) **A minimum of a bachelor's degree** from an accredited institution of higher education or equivalent foreign degree that would allow you to qualify for a master's or doctoral degree program at an accredited U.S. college or university **AND a minimum of three years** full-time\* grants management experience in the last 10 years\*\*; or
- b) **No college degree BUT a minimum of five years** full-time\* grants management experience within the last 10 years\*\*.

\*Full-time is defined as 32 hours per week or more. Candidates can calculate their experience to determine if they meet the requirement by calculating the percent of time spent on grants (years of experience x percent of time spent on grants).

\*\*Grants management experience includes any and all activities covered by the Grants Management Body of Knowledge.

NGMA membership is not a requirement for CGMS certification.

### Eligibility Audits

A percentage of candidate applications will be audited to ensure compliance with the eligibility criteria. Applications for audit will be selected randomly. If your application is selected for audit, you will be provided with instructions on how to supply satisfactory documentation that supports your compliance with the eligibility criteria before your certificate is released.

### Reconsideration of an Eligibility Decision

Applicants who are notified that they do not meet the eligibility requirements may request a reconsideration of this decision by sending a written notice to the NGMA Certification Staff ([cgms@ngma.org](mailto:cgms@ngma.org)) within 30 days of communication of the adverse eligibility decision. The Certification Staff will forward the notice to the Council for review. The Chair will then forward the appeal request to the Appeal Committee.

The Appeal Committee will review the information and will make a final decision regarding eligibility. No new or additional information may be submitted with the appeal request. The Appeal Committee conducts and completes the appeal within 45 days after receipt of the request for an appeal. Written notice from the NGMA staff of the final decision will be sent to the applicant within 30 days of the review.

The Appeal Committee decision is binding upon the Council, the candidate/certificant, and all other persons.

## THE CGMS EXAM

Prometric, NGMA's testing vendor, provides technical assistance to NGMA in the delivery of the computer-based testing center and remote proctored CGMS exam.

The computer-based CGMS exam is offered at proctored testing centers across the United States and as a live remote proctored assessment available 24/7. The exam is offered in English.

The CGMS exam contains 150 multiple-choice questions. Candidates will be given three (3) hours to complete the exam. A score of 112 is required to pass the CGMS exam.

## FEE SCHEDULE

### CGMS Exam Fee

Initial certification application/examination non-refundable fee (member): \$500

Initial certification application/examination non-refundable fee (non-member): \$674 (includes an optional one-year complimentary NGMA membership)

**CGMS Retesting Fee** (for those who do not pass the exam on the first try and wish to retest after a 90-day waiting period)

Initial certification application/examination non-refundable re-test fee (member): \$175

Initial certification application/examination non-refundable re-test fee (non-member): \$250

Retakes are initiated through NGMA and **NOT** the Candidate Management System (CMS). Retake fees must be paid in U.S. funds to NGMA by Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Check, or ACH. Contact [cgms@ngma.org](mailto:cgms@ngma.org) for more information on scheduling a retake exam.

**CGMS Renewal Fee** (required every three years with renewal application and documentation of at least 60 CPE credits)

Recertification non-refundable fee (due every three years with recertification application, in USD) (member): \$299

Recertification non-refundable fee (due every three years with recertification application, in USD) (non-member): \$473 (includes an optional one-year complimentary NGMA membership)

### Payments

Payments must be submitted directly to Prometric in the Candidate Management System (CMS) at the time you complete your Initial CGMS exam application or Renewal application. Fees must be paid in U.S. funds to Prometric by Visa, MasterCard, or American Express. If paying by check or ACH, contact NGMA at [cgms@ngma.org](mailto:cgms@ngma.org) for procedure. The check must be received and cleared before the exam can be scheduled. All fees must be paid prior to scheduling the exam.

## **CGMS APPLICATION**

### **Initial Certification Application**

NGMA accepts applications through the CMS on a rolling basis. Upon application and payment completion, candidates will receive information about scheduling a testing appointment.

Complete applications with all required documentation and fees must be submitted for the candidate to test. Accepted applicants must take the exam within 365 days (one year) of submitting application and paying certification application/examination fee.

If a candidate does not take the exam for which they applied and paid for within 365 days of payment, the application will be closed, payment forfeited, and the candidate must submit a new application and application fee.

Candidates must apply with their legal name as it appears on their current government-issued photo identification that will be used to enter the proctored testing center or take the live remoted proctored exam. Accepted forms of identification include a valid driver's license, passports, and government-issued identification cards. Unacceptable forms of identification include gym memberships, warehouse memberships, school identification cards, credit cards, employment ID badges, and identification with signature only (no photo).

The online application can be linked through the [NGMA website](#). Candidates will be required to create a username and ID in the Candidate Management System (CMS). After application approval and payment, you will receive an email with instructions on scheduling your exam at a testing center or for the live remote proctoring assessment. Please record your username, password, and email address as used on the application for future reference and/or access.

The certification staff will randomly audit at least 10% of the applications submitted for certification to verify the eligibility requirements are met. For complete eligibility requirements, please visit the [NGMA website](#). Note that NGMA reserves the right to verify any information provided on the application and/or as part of the application process. Failure of an applicant to provide complete and/or accurate information may result in consequences, including but not limited to revocation of the candidate's certification.

### **Reasonable Accommodations**

Reasonable accommodations provide candidates with disabilities a fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skill in the essential functions being measured by the CGMS exam. Reasonable accommodations are decided based on the individual's specific request, disability, documentation submitted, and appropriateness of the request. Reasonable accommodations do not include steps that fundamentally alter the purpose or nature of the exam.

Reasonable accommodations generally are provided for candidates who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits that person in one or more major life activities (e.g., walking, talking, hearing, and performing manual tasks); have a record of such physical or mental impairment; or are regarded as having a physical or mental impairment.

To apply for reasonable accommodations, the candidate must complete the accommodations section

in the application and provide documentation that supports reasonable accommodations provided by an appropriate licensed professional on the professional's letterhead. The documentation must include a diagnosis of the disability and specific recommendations for accommodations. The CGMS exam application with requested accommodations must be submitted at least one (1) month before desired test date.

For retests, special accommodations must be requested prior to scheduling an exam and must be submitted at least one (1) month before desired retest date by submitting the "Requests for Accommodations Form" located in the Candidate Handbook.

### **Scheduling the CGMS Exam**

Applications are accepted on a continuing basis. Upon approval of an application and a processed payment, an email notification of eligibility to sit for the exam and a Notice to Schedule on how to schedule a testing session will be sent to the email address set up on the test administrator's system. Testing appointments must be made at least 48 hours in advance and are subject to availability. Candidates are strongly encouraged to submit a completed application at least seven days prior to their desired testing date.

Candidates will receive a confirmation email that includes the exact testing location, date, and time. **The candidate must present this document at the test site.**

### **CGMS EXAM DAY INFORMATION**

#### **Cancellations, Rescheduling, and No-Shows**

Candidates may cancel or reschedule a testing session up to 30 days before the testing appointment through the online scheduling system without paying a fee. A \$35 non-refundable fee will apply if a testing appointment is cancelled or rescheduled prior to five (5) business days before the testing appointment.

<b>Day of Testing Appointment:</b>	<b>Must Reschedule/Cancel By:</b>
Monday	Monday of the previous week
Tuesday	Tuesday of the previous week
Wednesday	Wednesday of the previous week
Thursday	Thursday of the previous week
Friday	Friday of the current week
Saturday	Monday of the current week

A candidate who does not appear for a testing appointment, does not have proper identification, does not have the admissions document, or reschedules/cancels the exam less than five business days before a testing appointment will be marked as a "no show" and exam fees will be forfeited. Refunds of exam fees are not provided for "no shows" under any circumstance.

Candidates may reschedule or cancel their testing appointment within five (5) business days for one of the following reasons:

- Jury Duty
- Death in Immediate Family



- Military Deployment
- Illness/Medical Condition.

The immediate family is defined as a person's grandparents, parents, spouses, siblings and children.

Candidates must provide Prometric with proper documentation of one of the above reasons before they will be allowed to reschedule or cancel the testing appointment. Documentation must be submitted within 10 calendar days of your missed examination or it will not be considered for a reschedule.

If none of the above are the reason for wanting to reschedule or cancel your exam less than five (5) business days prior to your scheduled exam date, you will not be allowed to reschedule or cancel your exam, and if you do not show up, you will be considered a "no show", your examination fees will be forfeited, and you will be required to reregister and pay all fees prior to sitting for the exam.

### **CGMS Exam Rules**

To provide a fair and consistent environment for all candidates, the exam is delivered using standardized procedures following strict security protocols.

### **Testing Sites**

NGMA contracts with Prometric to administer the CGMS exam at computer-based testing sites across the United States and via live, remote proctoring. All testing sites are required to meet criteria to provide a standardized and secure test administration across all delivery modalities.

### **Proctors**

All exam administrations will be monitored by qualified proctors who are trained by the testing agency according to its standardized procedures for test delivery. Test Center Administrators receive directions and are accountable for checking candidate identification, seating candidates, security of test materials, proctoring, and handling candidate misconduct.

### **Testing Center Rules**

Candidates are required to follow all testing site rules at all times. NGMA and Prometric follow industry standard testing rules as follows:

### ***Arriving for Appointment***

Candidates should arrive at the testing center at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time. Candidates **MUST** present the Admissions Letter and a **VALID GOVERNMENT ISSUED PHOTO ID WITH SIGNATURE** in order to be admitted to the examination. The Candidate UserID and Passcode printed on the letter are required to login and start the examination.

No food or drink will be permitted in the examination room for any reason. Cellular phones and beepers are prohibited in the testing area.

The use of headphones inside the testing area is prohibited. Earplugs for sound suppression are allowed.

Electrical outlets will not be available for any reason.

No smoking or use of tobacco products will be allowed inside the testing area.

Find more information regarding test center policies in the Admissions Letter.

### ***Examination Security***

Failure to follow candidate instructions will result in the candidate's application being voided and forfeiture of the application fee. Conduct that results in violation of security or disrupts the administration of the examination could result in cancellation of the examination and dismissal from the testing center. In addition, the examination will be considered void and will not be scored. Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following: writing on anything other than the testing center authorized scratch paper provided to the candidate, looking at another candidate's computer monitor, or talking with other candidates anytime during the entire examination period. Candidates are particularly cautioned not to do so after they have completed the examination, as other candidates in the area might be taking a break and still not have completed the examination. Candidates may not attend the examination only to review or audit test materials. Candidates may not copy any portion of the examination for any reason. No examination information may leave the test room under any circumstances. No unauthorized persons will be admitted into the testing area. All examination content is strictly confidential. Candidates may only communicate about the test, or questions on the test, using the appropriate forms provided within the examination delivery system. At no other time, before, during or after the examination, may candidates communicate orally, electronically or in writing with any person or entity about the content of the examination or individual examination questions.

### ***Inclement Weather***

It is the candidate's responsibility to contact the testing center to confirm if it is closed or delayed in opening due to inclement weather. Most likely there will be a voice message on the testing center's phone system to notify candidates of any change in business hours during the inclement weather. Test Center location and contact information can be found in the Admissions Letter.

### ***Breaks***

There is no break scheduled during the exam. Candidates taking the exam at a testing site are permitted to take an unscheduled break, but the amount of time to complete the exam will not be paused.

### ***Live Remote Proctored Exams***

The CGMS exam may be taken via a Live Remote Proctor platform. This option allows flexibility in when and where a candidate may take the exam. However, candidates are responsible for establishing a standardized and secure test environment within their home or office.

### ***Environmental Requirements***

Candidate's home or office setting must meet the following requirements:

- Testing location must be indoors (walled), well lit, free from background noise and disruptions.
- No third party may be present in the room or enter the room for the duration of the exam. If this occurs, the exam will be terminated and/or your results invalidated.
- The workstation and surrounding area must be free of pens, paper, electronic devices, etc. No content

that could potentially provide an unfair advantage during your exam, including that posted on walls or within your immediate area, should be present during your exam.

- Two tissues are permitted at workstation but must be inspected by the Proctor prior to start of exam.

### **System Requirements**

- Candidates must be using only a laptop or desktop computer for your exam. No dual-monitor configurations are permitted for testing (i.e. a desktop with two monitors or a laptop with a separate monitor).
- Device must be directly plugged into a power source, unattached from a docking station.
- Candidates must have a moveable webcam to facilitate check-in procedures.
- Place the device where it can receive the strongest Wi-Fi signal. For the best experience, use an Ethernet cable to connect directly to the router.
- Working speakers and microphone required, wired headphone and microphone allowed. Bluetooth headsets are not supported.

### **Virtual Test Center Procedures**

- Launch the test platform and log in using the information provided in the Admissions Letter at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- Original, valid (unexpired), government issued photo and signature bearing identification is required to take an exam.
- Candidates are required to show their workstation and a 360° view of the surrounding area using a webcam.
- Candidates will be required to empty and turn all pockets inside-out and raise shirt sleeves above your wrists prior to every entry into the online test. If a candidate is wearing eyeglasses, they will be required to remove them for visual inspection to ensure they don't contain a recording device. In addition, large jewelry items must be removed.
- If a candidate has long hair that covers the ears, they will be asked to pull the hair back to ensure nothing is attached to the ear that could provide an unfair advantage (such as a Bluetooth earpiece).
- Leaving the camera view while the exam is in progress is strictly prohibited.

Please review the [ProProctor user guide](#) for additional information related to system requirements , information on how to conduct a system readiness, and procedures for checking and conducting the environmental check.

### **Breaks**

Candidates taking the exam via live, remote proctoring are permitted to take an unscheduled break. Time will not be paused, and a full security scan will be conducted upon return. If a break lasts longer than 30 minutes, the exam will be terminated.

## **PREPARE FOR THE EXAM**

### **How to Study**

NGMA encourages candidates to prepare for the CGMS exam by using a variety of resources. NGMA does not endorse or require exam preparation materials developed by third parties.

Plan your review methods well in advance of the exam. Think about the study method that is best for you (e.g., individual review, study group, class) and the types of materials that are most helpful (e.g., textbooks, audio or video programs, outlines, memory aids). It may also be helpful to use materials given to you during training activities related to your work.

### **Other Resources**

Review references and other resources on the [NGMA website](#). The Exam Content Outline is also available for review on the [NGMA website](#).

### **Practice Test**

Taking the practice test is optional. It includes 40 questions. Candidates can register for the free one-time use practice exam once they complete the CGMS application and pay the exam fee.

## **AFTER THE EXAM**

### **Retaking the Exam**

Candidates are permitted to retake the exam 90 days after test dates and are allowed up to three attempts within 365 days of the initial exam. Exam retakes are scheduled through NGMA and not through the Candidate Management System (CMS). To schedule a retake, contact [cgms@ngma.org](mailto:cgms@ngma.org). Each candidate must pay the retesting fee as listed on the fee schedule on page 3 of this Candidate Handbook.

The rationale for this waiting period includes:

- Ensuring candidates have adequate time to prepare for the examination;
- Increasing the security of the exam administration process by limiting candidate exposure to items; and
- Ensuring candidates will retest on a different examination form.

### **Exam Appeals**

Candidates who fail the exam and believe irregular testing conditions were a contributing factor may file an appeal to the Council. All appeal requests must be made in writing and postmarked or emailed no later than seven (7) days after the receipt of the exam score report. All appeals must describe the suspected error or problem and the requested remedy. The Council will review the information and make a final decision within 30 days of receipt. The decision of the Council shall be final.

### **Candidate Feedback**

Exam candidates may provide feedback at the testing center through a post-exam candidate survey or by contacting NGMA ([cgms@ngma.org](mailto:cgms@ngma.org)). Feedback received from candidates will be reviewed by NGMA as part of the overall examination review and quality assurance process for the program.

Candidates will not receive direct feedback regarding specific item decisions.

### **Testing Irregularities**

Irregularities observed during the testing period, including but not limited to creating a disturbance, giving or receiving unauthorized information or aid to or from other persons, or attempting to remove test materials or notes from the testing room, may be sufficient cause to terminate candidate participation in the examination administration or to invalidate scores. Irregularities may also be evidenced by subsequent statistical analysis of testing materials.

## **EXAM RESULTS**

Score reports will be presented to candidates at the testing site immediately following the exam administration. Candidates who take the exam via Live Remote Proctoring will be emailed their score report following the exam. Passing score reports include a decision outcome (“pass”), information about official notification of certification (e.g., certificate) and recertification requirements.

Failing score reports include a decision outcome (“fail”), the candidate total score, the passing score, the type of score reported (e.g., raw), appropriate uses and potential misuses of reported score information and reexamination information.

## Interpretation

The CGMS examination is designed to measure a candidate's overall performance. Examination content area scores are not used to determine pass/fail status but are provided to offer a general indication of a candidate's performance and may be used to assist in evaluating relative areas of strengths and weakness in each content area.

Scores are reported as raw scores. Each item is worth one point, so the sum of correct responses is a raw score. A candidate's total score determines whether they have passed or failed the examination after a comparison to the cut score. The cut score for a multiple-choice examination is the result of a study that is intended to define the minimum acceptable performance level and link this level to an examination score by relying on data collected from a panel of grants managers.

## Verification of Exam Results

Due to the secure nature of the examination, neither the Council nor its psychometric vendor will disclose examination questions or a candidate's response to individual questions. Examinees who question or dispute their test score can request to have their score verified, in writing, to the Council no later than seven days after receipt of the exam score report. Candidates who request to verify their scores will incur a fee of \$50 (non-refundable).

## CGMS CREDENTIAL DESIGNATION

Candidates will be awarded the title of Certified Grants Management Specialist (CGMS) upon passing the exam and documenting required experience. Candidates who have successfully completed all the requirements may use the credential once they have received official notification of CGMS certification. Candidates who have passed the CGMS exam may use the awarded designation as long as their certification remains current (three years per renewal cycle).

Except as permitted by this policy, any use or display of NGMA certification marks and/or logos without the prior written permission of the NGMA is prohibited. Any candidate or certificant who manufacturers, modifies, reproduces, distributes or uses a fraudulent or otherwise unauthorized NGMA certificate, NGMA designation or other credential may be subject to disciplinary action, including denial or revocation of eligibility for certification.

Any individual who engages in such behavior also may be subject to legal action.

Education and training providers may not use the NGMA name, logos, or certification marks to state or imply any approval or endorsement by NGMA or any affiliation with NGMA.

Individuals who have met the certification standards established by the Council are authorized to use the following certification mark in communications and marketing materials:

- The credential may be used as CGMS or Certified Grants Management Specialist.
- The credential is typically used after the certificant's name following any academic degrees and licensure (e.g., John Smith, MBA, CGMS).
- The mark must be clearly associated with the individual(s) certified by NGMA

## Certificates

After passing the CGMS exam, candidates will receive a PDF certificate in the [Candidate Management System \(CMS\)](#) within 24 hours of your passed exam. The certificate may only be

displayed during the time period for which the credential is valid. Certificates remain the property of NGMA and must be returned to NGMA upon request.

### **National Registry**

NGMA will maintain a registry of current CGMS credential holders for public access on the NGMA website. The benefit of including your name on the registry is that your credential can be verified by your customer or employer. If you do not want your name listed, you must inform NGMA in writing a [cgms@ngma.org](mailto:cgms@ngma.org).

## **CGMS EXAM INFORMATION**

The CGMS exam is based on the major areas of the full lifecycle of grants management. See the <https://www.ngma.org/cgms> for a more detailed exam content outline.

### **How the Exam is Developed**

The Council participates in and provides oversight for the development and ongoing maintenance of the certification examination(s). The Council and NGMA Certification Staff work in partnership with its selected vendors and/or consultants to ensure the examination is developed and maintained in a manner consistent with generally accepted psychometric, education testing practices, and national accreditation standards for certification programs.

### **Job Analysis and Content Outline**

The job analysis study includes a survey developed by a group of subject matter experts and validated by a national survey. Results of the analysis define the content and provide the foundation for the exam. A job analysis study is conducted every five years.

### **Item Development and Form Assembly**

Test items are written and approved by trained and qualified practitioners under the guidance of a psychometrician. All test items undergo multiple levels of review and editing. Test items are assembled into a test form using the content outline specifications.

### **The Passing Score**

The passing point for each exam is established using a criterion-reference technique. The passing score is based on the difficulty rating for each item established by a panel of subject matter experts under the guidance of a psychometrician. A statistical analysis is performed by the psychometrician following each administration of the examination.

### **Ongoing Development and Maintenance**

Content of the examination is reviewed regularly to ensure that items remain accurate and relevant. New forms of the exam will be developed to ensure exam integrity and security. A job analysis study is typically performed every five (5) years to ensure the exam specifications reflect the current scope of practice.

## **RECERTIFICATION**

Candidates passing the CGMS exam are certified for a period of three years. CGMS recertification assures employers and peers that the CGMS holder remains knowledgeable about the most current processes and practices in the field of grants management. Recertification promotes professional development for professionals and ensures that individuals who hold the CGMS credential maintain an ongoing commitment to learning in their area(s) of practice to strengthen their knowledge and skills. Recertification also provides encouragement to, and acknowledgement for, participation in ongoing professional development activities. To support this purpose, the recertification requirements require continuing education and professional development activities that enhance ongoing professional development, encourage opportunities for new learning, and provide a process for both planning and recording professional development achievements.

The recertification cycle begins the day a candidate passes the CGMS exam and ends at the end of



the same month, three years later. The three-year time period established for recertification is based on both the scope of issues that face the field and the NGMA's acknowledgement that new practices, research, and information are introduced in the field with enough frequency that professional development activities should be conducted routinely so that certificants remain up to date with both current best practices and emerging knowledge.

To qualify for recertification/renewal, the CGMS holder must submit a minimum of 60 Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits and a renewal fee as listed on the fee schedule on page 3 of this Candidate Handbook prior to the certification expiration. If the recertification application is received after the credential expiration date, there is a one-month grace period. Certificants may request an additional 60-day grace period with an additional fee of \$100. Contact [cgms@ngma.org](mailto:cgms@ngma.org) for more information on how to request an additional grace period.

The continuing education credits must be valid (accredited) CPE credits that deal with subjects related to grants, financial management, audit control and the grant making process. According to generally accepted standards, 50 minutes of training equals one CPE. General knowledge and ethics-related CPE credits that are not related to grants will not be accepted.

CPEs are not interchangeable with other units of continued education (ex. CEUs, CLEs, etc.).

## **Sources of CPEs**

### **NGMA**

NGMA members may receive free CPEs from the [monthly webinars](#), which equal to a minimum of 10 CPEs a year. Participants of the [Annual Grants Training](#) (AGT) may also earn CPEs. A full list of NGMA trainings can be found at: <https://www.ngma.org/events-trainings>. Certificants will need to submit a CPE certificate/documentation at the time of renewal.

### **Other Organizations**

Certificants may earn CPEs through other organizations. Certificants should ensure that organizations offering CPEs are on the [NASBA list of CPE sponsors](#). Certificants will need to submit a CPE certificate/documentation at the time of renewal.

### **CPEs for Authorship**

NGMA can only award writing/research CPEs for materials that are written in conjunction with program development for programs which NGMA is approved to award CPE credits.

### **CPEs for Trainers**

Certificants can earn CPEs for presenting a learning activity for the **first time**. For repeat presentations, CPE credit can be claimed only if it can be demonstrated that the learning activity content was substantially changed, and such change required significant additional study or research. Also, presenting/preparation CPEs can only be earned for presentations where attendees/participants earn CPEs (and not another unit of professional education). The sponsoring organization will need to be on the National Association of State Board of Accountancy (NASBA) [list of CPE sponsors](#). Instructors, discussion leaders, or speakers may receive CPE credit for actual preparation time up to two (2) times the number of CPE credits to which participants would be entitled, in addition to the time for presentation, subject to regulations and maximums established by the boards of accountancy. For example, for learning activities in which participants could receive 8 CPE credits,

instructors may receive up to 24 CPE credits (16 for preparation plus 8 for presentation).

### **Recertification Audit**

A percentage of recertification applications will be audited to ensure compliance with the recertification criteria. Applications for audit will be selected randomly. If your application is selected for audit, you will be provided with instructions on how to supply satisfactory documentation that supports your compliance with the recertification criteria before the certification is renewed. Satisfactory documentation of CPEs earned during the recertification cycle may include a CPE Certificate, a certificate of completion listing the number of CPE credits earned, etc.

### **Recertification Appeal**

Individuals who are notified that they do not meet the recertification requirements may appeal this decision by sending a written notice of the appeal to NGMA Certification Staff within 30 days of receipt of the adverse recertification decision. NGMA Certification Staff will forward the notice to the Council for review. The Chair will then forward the appeal request to the Appeal Committee.

The Appeal Committee will review the information and will make a final decision regarding recertification. No new or additional information may be submitted with the appeal request. The Appeal Committee conducts and completes the appeal within forty-five days after receipt of the request for an appeal. Written notice from the NGMA staff of the final decision will be sent to the applicant within 30 days of the review. The Appeal Committee decision is binding upon the Council, the candidate/certificant, and all other persons.

## **OTHER POLICIES**

### **Fairness and Nondiscrimination**

NGMA adheres to principles of fairness and due process. NGMA endorses the principles of equal opportunity. In administering the certification program, NGMA does not discriminate or deny opportunity to anyone on the basis of race, color, creed, age, gender, national origin, religion, disability, marital status, parental status, ancestry, sexual orientation, military discharge status, source of income, or any other status protected by applicable law. All candidates for certification will be judged solely on the published eligibility and recertification criteria determined by the Council.

### **Confidentiality**

NGMA is committed to protecting confidential and/or proprietary information related to applicants; candidates; certifiants; and the examination development, maintenance, and administration process.

Confidential information includes but is not limited to an individual's application status, personal applicant/certificant information, exam development documentation (including job analysis study reports, technical reports, and cut score studies), exam items and answers, exam forms, item banks, and individual exam scores.

The NGMA will not disclose confidential applicant/certificant information unless authorized in writing by the individual or as required by law. If information is released due to a legal matter, NGMA will inform the individual.

Personal information submitted by applicants/certifiants with an application or recertification application is considered confidential. Personal information retained within the applicant/

certificant database will be kept confidential.

All application information, including the status of an application, is confidential and will not be shared with any party other than NGMA's examination development or administration vendors, as needed, for certification processing purposes.

Information about applicants/certificants and their examination results is considered confidential.

Exam results will be released only to the individual candidate unless a signed release is provided. The NGMA can disclose that a certificant is certified in responding to an inquiry from an outside party.

Aggregate examination statistics for a minimum of three years (including the number of examination candidates, pass rates and the current total number of certificants) will be made publicly available. Aggregate examination statistics, studies and reports concerning applicants /candidates/certificants will contain no information identifiable with any applicant/candidates/certificants, unless authorized in writing by the individual.

## **Appendix A: Disciplinary Policy**

To maintain and enhance the credibility of the CGMS certification program the NGMA has adopted the following procedures to allow individuals to bring complaints concerning the conduct of individuals who are candidates or certificants of the NGMA.

In the event an individual candidate or certificant violates the CGMS Code of Conduct, certification rules, or NGMA policies, the Council may reprimand or suspend the individual or may revoke certification.

The grounds for sanctions under these procedures may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Violation of the CGMS Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.
- Violation of established NGMA policies, rules and requirements.
- Fraud or misrepresentation in an initial application or renewal application for certification.

Information regarding the complaint process will be available to the public via the NGMA website or other published documents. A complete copy of this policy will be publicly available.

Actions taken under this policy do not constitute enforcement of the law, although referral to appropriate federal, state/provincial, or local government agencies may be made about the conduct of the candidate or certificant in appropriate situations. Individuals initially bringing complaints are not entitled to any relief or damages by virtue of this process, although they will receive notice of the actions taken.

### **Complaints**

Complaints may be submitted by any individual or entity. Complaints should be reported to NGMA in writing and should include the name of the person submitting the complaint, the name of the person the complaint is regarding along with other relevant identifying information, a detailed description of factual allegations supporting the suspected violations, citation to the policy or rule involved, and any relevant supporting documentation.

Information submitted during the complaint and investigation process is considered confidential and will be handled in accordance with NGMA's Confidentiality Policy. Inquiries or submissions other than complaints may be reviewed and handled by the NGMA or its staff members at its discretion.

Upon receipt and preliminary review of a complaint involving the certification program, the NGMA Certification Staff in consultation with the NGMA Executive Director and Chair of the Council may conclude, in their sole discretion, that the submission:

- contains unreliable or insufficient information, or
- is patently frivolous or inconsequential.

In such cases, the NGMA Certification Staff and Chair may determine that the submission does not constitute a valid and actionable complaint that would justify bringing it before the Council for investigation and a determination of whether there has been a violation of substantive requirements of the certification process. If so, the submission is disposed of by notice from the Certification Staff and Chair to the submitter, if the submitter is identified. All such preliminary dispositions by the Chair are reported to the Council at its next meeting.

Preliminary review will be conducted within 30 calendar days of receipt of the complaint.

If a submission is deemed by the Chair or Certification Staff to be a valid and actionable complaint, the Council shall see that written notice is provided to the candidate/certificant whose conduct has been called into question. The candidate/certificant whose conduct is at issue shall also be given the opportunity to respond to the complaint. The Council also shall ensure that the individual submitting the complaint receives notice within 30 days of receipt that the complaint is being reviewed by the Council.

### **Complaint Review**

For each complaint that the Chair of the Council concludes is a valid and actionable complaint, the NGMA authorizes an investigation into its specific facts or circumstances to whatever extent is necessary in order to clarify, expand, or corroborate the information provided by the submitter.

The Chair of the Council appoints a Review Committee of three or more individuals, who may or may not be members of the Council to investigate and make an appropriate determination with respect to each such valid and actionable complaint; the Review Committee may review one or more such complaints as determined by the Chair. The Review Committee initially determines whether it is appropriate to review the complaint under these procedures or whether the matter should be referred to another entity engaged in the administration of law. The timeline for responses and for providing any additional information shall be established by the Review Committee. The review and investigation will be completed in an appropriate amount of time, not to exceed six months, unless there are extenuating circumstances that require an extended time period. The Review Committee may be assisted in the conduct of its investigation by other members of the NGMA or by NGMA staff or legal counsel. The Chair exercises general supervision over all investigations.

Both the individual submitting the complaint and the candidate/certificant who is the subject of the investigation (or their employer) may be contacted for additional information with respect to the complaint. The Review Committee, or the Council on its behalf, may at its discretion contact such other individuals who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances surrounding the complaint.

All investigations and deliberations of the Review Committee and the Council are conducted in confidence, with all written communications sealed and marked "Personal and Confidential," and they are conducted objectively, without any indication of prejudice. An investigation may be directed toward any aspect of a complaint which is relevant or potentially relevant. Formal hearings are not held and the parties are not expected to be represented by counsel, although the Review Committee and Council may consult their own counsel.

Members of the Review Committee shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the activities of the Committee.

### **Determination of Violation**

Upon completion of an investigation, the Review Committee recommends whether the Council should make a determination that there has been a violation of NGMA policies and rules. When the Review Committee recommends that the Council find a violation, the Review Committee recommends imposition of an appropriate sanction. If the Review Committee so recommends, a proposed determination with a proposed sanction is prepared under the supervision of the Chair and is presented by a representative of the Review Committee to the Council along with the record of the Review Committee's investigation.

If the Review Committee recommends against a determination that a violation has occurred, the complaint is dismissed with notice to the candidate/certificant, the candidate/certificant's employer, and the individual or entity who submitted the complaint; a summary report is also made to the Council.

If the Review Committee recommends for a determination that a violation has occurred, The Council reviews the recommendation of the Review Committee based upon the record of the investigation. The Council may accept, reject, or modify the Review Committee's recommendation, either with respect to the determination of a violation or the recommended sanction to be imposed. If the Council makes a determination that a violation has occurred, this determination and the imposition of a sanction are promulgated by written notice to the candidate/certificant.

In certain circumstances, the Council may consider a recommendation from the Review Committee that the candidate/certificant who has violated the certification program policies or rules should be offered an opportunity to submit a written assurance that the conduct in question has been terminated and will not recur. The decision of the Review Committee to make such a recommendation and of the Council to accept it are within their respective discretionary powers. If such an offer is extended, the candidate/certificant at issue must submit the required written assurance within thirty days of receipt of the offer, and the assurance must be submitted in terms that are acceptable to the Council.

### **Sanctions**

Any of the following sanctions may be imposed by the Council upon a candidate/certificant whom the Council has determined to have violated the policies and rules of its certification program(s), although the sanction applied must reasonably relate to the nature and severity of the violation, focusing on reformation of the conduct of the member and deterrence of similar conduct by others:

- written reprimand to the candidate/certificant;
- suspension of the certificant for a designated period; or
- suspension of the candidate's application eligibility for a designated period; or
- termination of the certificant's certification from the Council; or
- termination of the candidate's application eligibility for a designated period.

For sanctions that include suspension or termination, a summary of the final determination and the sanction with the candidate/certificant's name and date is published by the Council and NGMA.

Certificants who have been terminated shall have their certification revoked and may not be considered for certification in the future. If certification is revoked, any and all certificates or other materials requested by the Council must be returned promptly to the Council.

### **Appeal**

Within thirty (30) days from receipt of notice of a determination by the Council that a candidate/certificant violated the certification program policies and/or rules, the affected candidate/certificant may submit in writing a request for an appeal to the NGMA Director, Operations and Certification. The Director, Operations and Certification will forward the notice to the Council for review. The Chair will then forward the appeal request to the Appeal Committee.

The Appeal Committee may only review whether the determination by the Council of a violation of the certification program policies and/or rules was inappropriate because of material errors of fact, or failure of the Review Committee or the Council to conform to published criteria, policies, or procedures.

Only facts and conditions up to and including the time of the Council's determination as represented by facts known to the Council are considered during an appeal. The appeal shall not include a hearing or any similar trial-type proceeding. The Council and Appeal Committee may consult legal counsel.

The Appeal Committee conducts and completes the appeal within forty-five days after receipt of the request for an appeal. Written appellate submissions and any reply submissions may be made by authorized representatives of the member and of the Council. Written notice from the NGMA staff of the final decision will be sent to the applicant within 30 days of the review.

The decision of the Appeal Committee either affirms or overrules the determination of the Council but does not address a sanction imposed by the Council. The Appeal Committee decision is binding upon the Council, the candidate/certificant who is subject to the termination, and all other persons.

The Appeal Committee decision is binding upon the Council, the candidate/certificant who is subject to the termination, and all other persons.

### **Resignation**

If a certificant who is the subject of a complaint voluntarily surrenders their certification at any time during the pendency of a complaint under these Procedures, the complaint is dismissed without any further action by the Review Committee, the Council, or an Appeal Committee established after an appeal. The entire record is sealed, and the individual may not reapply for certification by the NGMA. However, the Council may authorize the Chair to communicate the fact and date of resignation, and the fact and general nature of the complaint, which was pending at the time of the resignation, if requested by a government entity engaged in the administration of law. '

## APPENDIX B: Accommodations Request Form

### Request for Testing Accommodations Form

_____ First Name	_____ Last Name	_____ Credentials
_____ Name exactly as you would like it to appear on your certificate		
_____		
_____		
_____ Address		
_____ City	_____ State/Province	_____ Zip/Postal Code
_____ Country	_____ Mobile Phone	_____ Work Phone
_____		
_____ Email		

#### *Special Testing Accommodations*

I request special accommodations as follows (check all that apply):

- Special seating or other physical accommodation
- Extended exam time
- Separate exam room
- Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

_____ Candidate's Name	_____ Signature	_____ Date
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#### *Professional Documentation*

Attached documentation that supports reasonable accommodations provided by an appropriate licensed professional. The documentation must include a diagnosis of the disability and specific recommendations for accommodations.