

includes new

- **Exam content**
- **Requirements**



CPA Exam in
Pennsylvania
Get the facts you need to pass

CPA Exam in **Pennsylvania** *Get the facts you need to pass*

Education, work experience, testing windows, simulations. These are covered by Pennsylvania Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA) on its complete list of what CPA examinees can expect and need to know before taking the Uniform CPA Exam.

who's who

The State Board of Accountancy (SBOA)

State Boards of Accountancy are the state/territory (or jurisdiction) entities that have statutory authority to issue CPA licenses. They set the requirements for CPA licensure for every jurisdiction. All jurisdictions require candidates pass the Uniform CPA Examination for CPA licensure. The Pennsylvania State Board of Accountancy issues Pennsylvania CPA licenses once all examination and work requirements have been met. Visit the Pennsylvania State Board of Accountancy's website at www.dos.state.pa.us/account for licensing inquiries.

The National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA)

For the Uniform CPA Examination, NASBA acts as the central clearinghouse in the CPA Examination process, collecting information about eligible candidates, distributing advisory scores and other data, and maintaining a central database of candidate records. In addition, NASBA acts as the designated agent for a number of boards of accountancy. Visit NASBA's website at www.nasba.org for Exam information and application.

Prometric, Inc.

Once you apply for the Exam at NASBA and receive the Notice To Schedule (NTS), candidates are required to contact Prometric, Inc. to schedule the examination. For the Uniform CPA Examination, Prometric provides data communication, registration, scheduling, testing systems, software, and test centers. Visit www.Prometric.com to schedule one or all four parts of the CPA exam. The Exam is offered at authorized Prometric test centers in the US during two months of every quarter.

valuable Links:





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chapter 1  Requirements

chapter 1 :: requirements

**Important: If you graduate before 2012 –
You must pass at least one part of the CPA Exam before
Dec. 31, 2011 for the current requirements to apply.**

current requirements - up to dec. 31, 2011

Education

Candidates must have graduated with a bachelor's or master's degree from an accredited college or university approved by the Pennsylvania State Board of Accountancy (SBOA), to include twenty four (24) semester hours in accounting which must include the following:

- 3 semester hours in general accounting, and
- 3 semester hours in either: auditing, business law, finance or taxation.
- the remaining eighteen (18) semester hours may include any combination of accounting, audit, tax, business law and finance.

Course Requirements:

- Commercial CPA review courses are not acceptable.
- Education earned at a regionally accredited community college or 2-year degree granting institution is acceptable.
- Finance courses titled money and banking are not acceptable to meet the accounting course requirement.
- Correspondence, on-line courses, pass/fail grades and CLEP credit are acceptable when an applicant receives credit for the courses at a regionally accredited university. These courses must appear on an official transcript.
- One quarter unit or hour of credit is equivalent to two thirds of a semester unit or hour.

Candidates who have completed an optional 150 semester-credits must have 24 semester-credits in the accounting subjects noted above, plus an additional 12 semester-credits in accounting, auditing, and tax subjects.



Experience

In addition to passing the CPA Exam, CPA candidates need to satisfy work experience requirements before becoming licensed.

Work experience must be in the following areas:

- Public accounting
- As an internal auditor if the internal audit function reports to an independent board or similar body
- Or as an auditor with a unit of federal, state, or local government.

All positions must be supervised by an individual who is currently licensed to practice public accounting as a CPA in Pennsylvania or another state.

Until Dec. 31, 2011, CPA candidates who passed the exam have two options to meet the experience requirement. An individual with a bachelor's degree must complete two years (3,200 hours) of experience, including 800 hours of attest activity. An individual with 150 hours of education needs one year (1,600 hours) of experience, including 400 hours of attest activity.

The amount of education completed at the time of application for the certificate is directly related to the amount of work experience necessary to obtain licensure. The number of credit hours must be submitted with your first examination application. Individuals taking the CPA Exam for the first time before Dec. 31, 2011, must complete their work experience within 10 years (120 months) of application for the CPA certificate.

Requirements to Sit for the CPA Exam Up to Dec. 31, 2011

Before applying to sit for the CPA Exam, candidates must have graduated with a bachelor's or master's degree and completed at least 24 semester credits in accounting subjects – see above. Candidates have 18 months to pass all four parts, beginning when the first section is passed. Individuals who pass one or more parts of the CPA Exam prior to Jan. 1, 2012, can be licensed under the 120-hour education requirement and two years of public accounting experience if they successfully pass all four parts of the exam within the 18-month eligibility window.

new requirements - effective Jan. 1, 2012

Education Requirements - Effective Jan. 1, 2012

On Jan. 1, 2012, candidates will need to have graduated with a bachelor's or master's degree and completed at least 150 credit hours, with 36 semester-credits in accounting subjects acceptable to the Pennsylvania State Board of Accountancy (SBOA) to become certified. These credits must include 24 semester hours in accounting and auditing, business law, finance, or tax subjects. An additional twelve semester credits in accounting, auditing, and tax



subjects are required. NOTE: The 24 semester hours must include a minimum of 3 semester hours in accounting AND 3 semester hours in either: auditing, business law, finance, or tax subject. Accounting-related credits can be accomplished through undergraduate, graduate, or a combination of both levels of study.

Course Requirements:

- Commercial CPA review courses are not acceptable.
- Education earned at a regionally accredited community college or 2-year degree granting institution is acceptable.
- Finance courses titled money and banking are not acceptable to meet the accounting course requirement.
- Correspondence, on-line courses, pass/fail grades and CLEP credit are acceptable when an applicant receives credit for the courses at a regionally accredited university. These courses must appear on an official transcript.
- One quarter unit or hour of credit is equivalent to two thirds of a semester unit or hour.

Experience Requirements - Effective Jan. 1, 2012

On Jan. 1, 2012, in addition to passing the CPA Exam, CPA candidates need to satisfy work experience requirements to become licensed. Candidates will have to complete one year (1,600 hours) of experience, including 400 hours of attest activity, to qualify for the CPA certificate. CPA candidates must complete the experience requirement within five years (60 months) of the date of application.

Work experience must be in the following areas:

- Public accounting
- As an internal auditor if the internal audit function reports to an independent board or similar body
- Or as an auditor with a unit of federal, state, or local government.

All positions must be supervised by an individual who is currently licensed to practice public accounting as a CPA in Pennsylvania or another state.

Requirements to Sit for the Exam - Effective Jan. 1, 2012

Candidates may sit for the CPA Exam after they have graduated and completed 120 hours of education, including 24 semester-credit hours in accounting subjects approved by SBOA. Candidates, however, will be required to obtain 150 credit hours of education, including 36 semester-credit hours in accounting subjects before a license is granted.

Chapter 2 :: Costs

Plan ahead and apply early to take the CPA Exam. Below is information on costs and the application process.

Exam Costs and Fee Structure

CPA Exam Fees in Pennsylvania

Initial Application Fee	\$95.00
Audit & Attestation	\$218.18
Financial Accounting & Reporting	\$207.15
Regulation	\$185.10
Business Environment & Concepts	\$174.08

Exam fees as of Dec. 2010.

Check www.nasba.org for the most up to date costs and guidelines.

All fees are nonrefundable and subject to change.

See p.11 for details about PICPA's Exam Scholarships.

Application Fee

An application fee of \$95 is required, regardless of the number of sections for which the application is made. This fee is not refundable. Applicants can apply for one or more sections of the examination at a time.

Note: It is recommended that you DO NOT apply for an exam section unless you are ready to take it within six months.

All fees must be paid at the time of application and must be in U.S. dollars. Certified checks or money orders must be drawn on a U.S. bank and made payable to CPA Examination Services.

A \$35 fee will be charged each time a check is returned by the bank.

All re-exam candidates are required to pay both an application fee and an examination fee.

View additional details on the application process in Chapter 3.



chapter 3  Taking the Exam

Chapter 3 :: Taking the Exam

Follow these step-by-step instructions to ensure you don't miss anything in the application process.

How to Apply

All **first time applicants** are advised to read the Information for FT Applicants and the Candidate Bulletin documents on www.nasba.org before applying for the CPA exam.

Reexamination candidates are advised to read the Information for RE Candidates and the Candidate Bulletin documents on www.nasba.org for scheduling information before submitting their registration.

Applications can be obtained by going to www.nasba.org or by calling CPA Examination Services at 800-272-3926. Examination Services will contact you once the application has been received. Allow eight weeks from the date your application is postmarked for processing.

If you have questions about your eligibility, please contact the Pennsylvania Coordinator at cpaes-pa@nasba.org or 800-CPA-EXAM (615-880-4250).

Note: All applications must be complete and accurate. Failure to submit appropriate documentation, forms, and fees will delay processing and will result in denial of your application.

Schedule a Test Appointment

After you apply to take the CPA Exam and are deemed eligible, you will receive a Notice to Schedule (NTS) for each exam section you have been approved to take. Once you receive an NTS, schedule your test appointment as soon as possible. Each NTS is valid for a finite period of time (six months from the date of the NTS), so it is recommended you take your exams as soon as you are prepared. You don't want to lose a testing opportunity by running out of time.

Convenient ways to schedule:

- Online: www.prometric.com/cpa (receive an instant e-mail confirmation)
- Phone: 800-580-9648

Additional information about the CPA Exam application process can be found at www.nasba.org.



Looking for a testing site in your area?

Below is a list of Prometric testing centers in Pennsylvania.

Allentown

2211 Mack Blvd.
Allentown, PA 18103

Clarks Summit

1148 Northern Blvd.
Abington Shopping Center
Clarks Summit, PA 18411-2222

Conshohocken

100 W. Elm Street, Suite 300
Conshohocken, PA 19428

Harrisburg

1100 N. Mountain Road
Harrisburg, PA 17112

Lancaster

1864 Fruitville Pike, Kmart Plaza
Lancaster, PA 17601

Monroeville

4055 Monroeville Blvd.
Building 1, Suite 425
Monroeville, PA 15146

Philadelphia

601 Walnut Street
Curtis Center, Suite 150 West
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Pittsburgh (North Hills)

Pittsburgh Research Pk.
5700 Corp Dr., Suite 400
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

York

2300 East Market Street
York, PA 17402

For other test locations visit www.prometric.com.

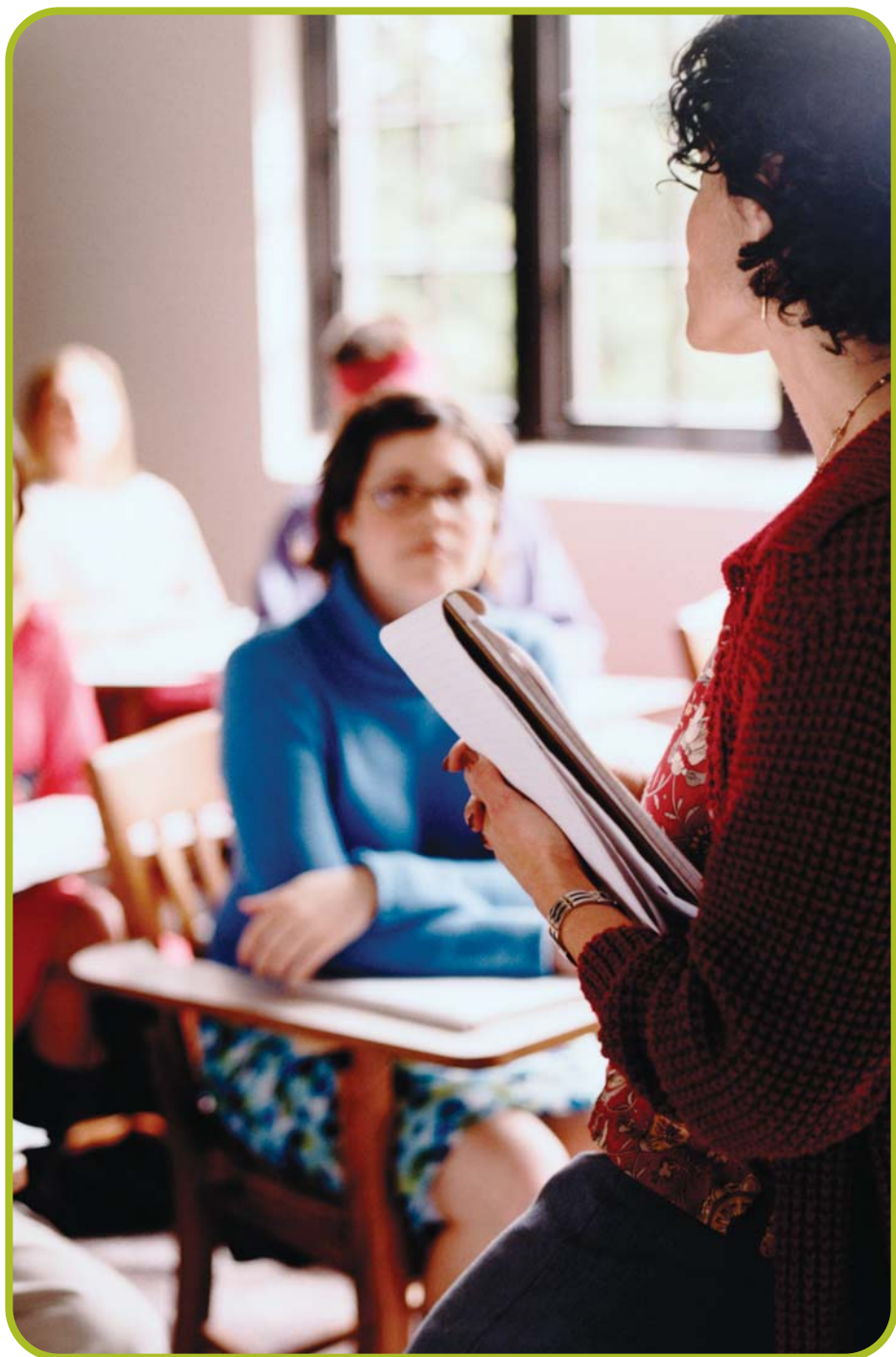
Examinations must be scheduled at least five days in advance. You select the test center location, time, and date of your exams. Tests are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. **The earlier candidates schedule appointments, the better their chances are of obtaining the location, date, and time of their choice.** Test appointments cannot be scheduled less than five days in advance. Walk-in testing is **not** allowed.

Testing dates

The CPA Exam is available five days a week. Each year contains four testing windows. Testing windows are:

January – February | April – May | July – August | October – November





chapter 4  Preparation

Chapter 4 :: Preparation

Practice makes perfect! Use the following preparation tools before taking the exam.

Practice and Resources

Visit www.cpa-exam.org, created by the American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) and supported by the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy (NASBA) and individual state boards. Designed to inform examinees and the general public about the Uniform CPA Exam, the Web site offers step-by-step instructions on applying for the exam and what to expect when taking it. The Web site also offers tutorials, sample exams, and general test tips. Content is updated frequently, so visit this site often to get the most accurate information.

PICPA also updates CPA Exam information on a regular basis at www.picpa.org.

Test Prep

PICPA members receive special discounts and offers from these CPA Exam review providers:

Becker Professional Education

CPAexcel

ExamMatrix CPA Exam Review

Philadelphia CPA Review

Roger CPA Review

Wiley CPA e-Prep

For more details, visit www.picpa.org.

PICPA CPA Exam Scholarship

PICPA members are eligible to apply for assistance with the CPA exam. The program awards one \$500 scholarship to twenty members each year to help cover the cost of sitting for the Exam. Applicants must be a PICPA member, a U.S. Citizen, and plan on pursuing an accounting career in Pennsylvania.

Visit www.picpa.org/cpaexam for a more information.

Not a PICPA member? Join today at www.picpa.org/join and start reaping the benefits of membership.



Test Content and Areas of Study

CPA Exam sections cover a number of subjects that candidates are expected to understand prior to the test. Below is an overview of the subject matter each section contains.

Auditing and Attestation (AUD)

Tests your knowledge and skills relating to auditing procedures and standards, standards related to attest engagements, and the skills needed to apply that knowledge.

Auditing and Attestation covers the following six topics:

1. Engagement Acceptance & Understanding the Assignment
2. Understanding the Entity & Its Environment (including Internal Control)
3. Performing Audit Procedures & Evaluating Evidence
4. Evaluating Audit Findings, Communications & Reporting
5. Accounting & Review Service Engagements
6. Professional Responsibilities (including Ethics & Independence)

Financial Accounting and Reporting (FAR)

Tests your knowledge and skills relating to generally accepted accounting principles for business enterprises, not-for-profit organizations, and government entities.

Financial Accounting and Reporting covers the following five topics:

1. Conceptual Framework, Standards, Standard Setting & Presentation of Financial Statements (first-time adoption of IFRS)
2. Financial Statement Accounts: Recognition, Measurement, Valuation, Calculation, Presentation & Disclosures
3. Specific Transactions, Events & Disclosures
4. Accounting and Reporting for Governmental Entities
5. Accounting and Reporting for Non-Governmental and Not-for-Profit Organizations



Regulation (REG)

Tests your knowledge and skills relating to federal taxation, ethics, professional and legal responsibilities, and business law.

Regulation covers the following six topics:

1. Ethics, Professional and Legal Responsibilities
2. Business Law
3. Federal Tax Process, Procedures, Accounting, and Planning
4. Federal Taxation of Property Transactions
5. Federal Taxation of Individuals
6. Federal Taxation of Entities

Business Environment and Concepts (BEC)

Tests your knowledge and skills relating to the general business environment and the business concepts required to understand the reasons for, and accounting implications of, business transactions.

Business Environment and Concepts covers the following six topics:

1. Corporate Governance
2. Economic Concepts & Analysis
3. Financial Management
4. Information Systems and Communications
5. Strategic Planning
6. Operations Management

Content and Skill Specification Outlines (CSOs/SSOs) that detail the specific testable content on each of the Exam parts are available through the AICPA. Visit www.cpa-exam.org

Be Prepared! Review the tutorial and sample tests at www.cpa-exam.org.

chapter 5  CPA Exam Fast Facts

Chapter 5 :: CPA Exam Fast Facts

Refer to the following fast facts for all your CPA Exam needs.

Exam details at your fingertips

Can I take the exam outside of Pennsylvania?

Yes, but there is an additional charge for taking the exam at the Guam test center.

When can I take the exam?

Testing is available the first two months of every quarter: January & February; April & May; July & August; October & November. It is **NOT available** in March, June, September, or December.

What happens if I graduate, get busy with work, and do not pass at least one part of the CPA Exam before Dec. 31, 2011?

Individuals who do not pass at least one part of the CPA Exam before Dec. 31, 2011 must meet the new education and experience requirements to become certified. It is very important to study and take the CPA exam soon after graduation.

What education requirements do I need to apply for the exam and to become a licensed CPA in Pennsylvania?

Prior to Jan. 1, 2012 – Candidates must have graduated with a bachelor's or master's degree and completed at least 24 semester-credits in accounting subjects. These subjects include accounting and auditing, business law, finance, or tax subjects acceptable to the Pennsylvania State Board of Accountancy (SBOA). Candidates who opt to complete 150 semester-credits must meet the 24 semester-credits in accounting subjects noted above, plus an additional 12 semester-credits in accounting, auditing, and tax subjects acceptable to the SBOA.

Effective Jan. 1, 2012 – All candidates seeking the CPA designation will have to complete 150 hours of college education, including 36 hours in accounting, auditing, business law, finance, or tax subjects.

To meet the 150-hour requirement, can the credits be in undergraduate study?

Yes, obtaining the additional credits can be accomplished through undergraduate, graduate, or a combination of both levels of study.

When can I apply to sit for the exam?

You can apply and sit for the exam once you have graduated and completed 120 hours of education from an accredited college or university.

How long do I have to pass all four parts?

You have 18 months to pass all four parts once you pass the first section.

What is a passing score?

A passing score is 75. The score does NOT represent percent correct.

Who distributes the exam scores?

The Pennsylvania State Board of Accountancy distributes the scores.

What is the work experience requirement before receiving a CPA license?

Prior to Jan. 1, 2012 – Candidates have two options. If they have a bachelor's degree, they need two years (3,200 hours) of public accounting experience including 800 hours at attest activity. If they have a master's degree, they need one year (1,600 hours) of public accounting experience including 400 hours at attest activity.

Effective Jan. 1, 2012 – All candidates will be required to have one year (1,600 hours) of public accounting experience, including 400 hours at attest activity.

How long do I have to complete my work experience requirement?

Prior to Jan. 1, 2012 – Individuals taking the CPA Exam for the first time before Dec. 31, 2011, must complete their work experience within 10 years (120 months) preceding the application date for the CPA certificate.

Effective Jan. 1, 2012 – All CPA candidates must have completed their one year work experience requirement within five years (60 months) preceding the application date for the CPA certificate.

How can a foreign transcript or degree be evaluated?

All educational credentials earned outside the United States must be evaluated by one of the following professional credentials evaluation organizations to show U.S. equivalency:

Educational Credential Evaluators Inc. (414) 289-3412, www.ece.org

Foreign Academic Credentials Service Inc. (618) 656-5291, www.facsusa.com

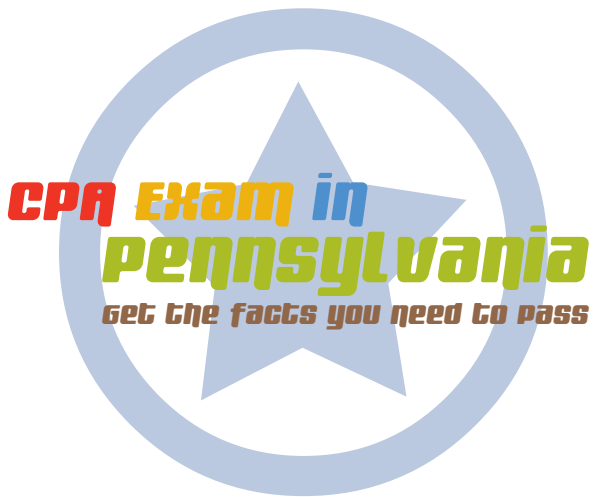
Josef Silny & Associates Inc. (305) 273-1616, www.jsilny.com

HOW CAN PICPA HELP?

- Join PICPA! There is a level of membership during each stage of your career. Whether you are a student or a professional making a career change, PICPA can help you establish your business network. Join today at www.picpa.org/join.
- Request a PICPA member to speak to a class or accounting club on a variety of topics: accounting career choices, taking the CPA Exam, life after college, life/work balance, etc. The topic is completely up to you and the speaker. To request a speaker, contact the Careers in Accounting team.

Contact PICPA's Careers in Accounting team at (215) 496-9272 or schools@picpa.org for any additional questions.





Statements of fact do not imply an opinion on the part of PICPA officers or members.
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who we are. . .

Pennsylvania Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA) is a professional association of more than 20,000 CPAs working together to improve the accounting profession and better serve the public interest. Founded in 1897, PICPA is the second-oldest CPA organization in the United States. Membership includes practitioners in public accounting, industry, government, and education. Headquartered in Philadelphia, with a government relations office in Harrisburg and a western regional office in Pittsburgh, PICPA provides support for the organization's broad range of activities.

The mission of PICPA is to further the well-being of its members, while upholding the public interest by:

- Enhancing quality services founded on professional competence, integrity, and objectivity
- Serving as an advocate for, and promoting the public image of, its members
- Articulating positions on professional and public issues when the expertise of CPAs is relevant



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