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Topics of Discussion

- What is CPA Licensure?
- CPA Exam Pre-requisites
  - Education requirements
  - Application Process
- Passing the CPA Exam
  - AICPA ethics exam
- Applying for Initial Licensure
  - Supervised experience
  - Written Narrative
  - Qualifications Committee
- CPE (Continuing Professional Education)
- FAQ
What is CPA Licensure? Basic Concepts of Regulation and Professional Licensure

- Public Protection
- Licensing in a profession protects the public in two fundamental ways:
  - On the front end:
    - Minimum Educational Standards
    - Minimum Competencies to practice safely
  - Ongoing:
    - Accountability via ethics code enforced by the Board with ability to sanction the license.
CPA Exam Pre-requisites

- To qualify to sit for the Uniform CPA Exam, first time candidates must meet the following requirements at the time of application:
  
  150 Semester (225 quarter) hours, including Bachelor degree from a regionally accredited college that includes:
  
  - 24 semester (36 quarter) hours in upper-division accounting specific courses; and
  - 24 semester (36 quarter) hours in accounting or related (business, economics, finance, and written and/or oral communication)

- Candidates who wish to apply under the PA track (BEC, FAR, REG) must have graduated from high school (or equivalent) and 2 years of public accounting experience under licensed CPA, PA, or chartered accountant (MRA/ NASBA RECOGNIZED)

- Candidates who have earned foreign educational credentials must have their education evaluated by NASBA International Evaluation Services

- Transfer candidates who have previously applied for or sat for the exam in another jurisdiction must meet either the educational (CPA track) or experience requirements (PA) set forth by our agency

*It is important to note that our agency does not evaluate transcripts before an application is submitted.

*Internship credits are limited to a maximum of 4 semester (6 quarter) hours

*Candidates applying under the experience requirement may only apply to be a Public Accountant

Courses from community college are acceptable if they are transferable to an accredited four-year college or university. Generally 100 level and above courses are considered transferable. You are not required to actually transfer the courses.
Application Process

Candidates must submit the following items in order to complete the application process:

- CPA Exam Application
- Official Educational transcripts sent directly from school(s)
- Exchange of Information (if transferring scores from another state)
- Candidate Information Release form (required for first time candidates)

After eligibility is verified, the Board will send an ATT (Authorization to Test) to the candidate and to NASBA for entry. The ATT is valid for 90 days.

Only apply for sections (AUD, BEC, FAR, REG) you intend on taking within the 6-month period.

After receipt of the ATT, NASBA will first issue a payment coupon where you will pay for all sections of the exam you applied for directly to NASBA, and then after payment the NTS (Notice to Schedule) will allow scheduling of exam section(s) at prometric testing center.

*A candidate may not retake a failed test section(s) in the same testing window. If you attempt to re-apply during same window, your ATT will be rejected by NASBA.

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Passing the CPA Exam

All sections of the exam must be passed within an 18 month period. Exam sections are maintained on the candidate’s record for a rolling 18 month period. If the last of the four exam sections is not passed within 18 months of the date that the first section was passed, the earliest section is removed from the candidate’s record, and that section must be taken again within the new 18 month period.

Applicants must pass all sections of the Uniform CPA exam and pass a written examination on the Code of Professional Ethics for accountants before applying for the CPA license in Oregon. The AICPA and Oregon Society of CPAs are the only organizations that currently offer the ethics exam that meets Oregon’s requirement.

References to the following ethics exams can be found on our website, under Licensing Requirements.
Applying for Initial Licensure

- Develop and demonstrate achievement of the 7 Core Competencies
- Have a minimum of 12 months full-time employment or a total of 2,000 hours of equivalent part-time experience.
- Must obtain experience requirements that consist of activities generally performed by Oregon licensed CPAs and PAs engaged in public practice.

  - Typical public practice includes: attestation engagements, tax return preparation, financial advisory services and/or compliance and internal control evaluation.

Experience obtained while performing financial advisory services or tax advisory services must be performed while employed at a public accounting firm.
Supervised Experience

- Must be directly supervised by a qualified supervisor licensee

  - A supervisor licensee is a person who holds an active CPA license issued by any state, during the period of supervision, and for at least five of the past seven years immediately prior to such supervision

NOTE: A Public Accountant (PA) may not act as a supervising licensee or verify an applicant’s experience relating to attest services

- The supervisor licensee must directly supervise the applicant by having regular and meaningful interaction with the applicant in terms of planning, coordinating, guiding, inspecting, controlling and evaluating activities, and have authority over the employee being supervised.

- A licensee acting as a consultant or independent contractor to the applicant’s employer will not meet the requirement of direct supervision.

Qualifying experience and successful completion of the CPA exam must be obtained within 8 years immediately preceding the date of the application.

*Applicants must also pass the AICPA ethics exam before applying for licensure.
Written Narrative

- Applicants are required to provide a written narrative along with examples on how competencies within the profession have been achieved.
- The narrative is to be written by the applicant, based on his/her personal work experience.
- The supervisor licensee must complete the supervisor evaluation worksheet, sign the form, and verify and sign the written narrative.
- Experience may be obtained in the following ways:
  - Attest
  - Tax
  - Industry/Government

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Each of the following core competencies must be included in the written narrative, along with examples on how each competency has been met:

A. Understanding the Code of Professional Conduct.
B. Ability to assess the achievement of a client's objectives.
C. Experience in preparing working papers that include sufficient relevant data.
D. Understanding transactions streams and information systems.
E. Skills in Risk Assessment.
F. Decision Making, Problem Solving, Critical Analytical Thinking.
G. Ability to Express Scope of Work, Findings and Conclusions.

*All seven competencies must be met in order to continue the licensing process. You may obtain a combined total of experience/competencies through more than one qualified employer.
Applicant’s should state how each competency was met, along with specific experiences within each competency.

While the Board does not provide a specific outline for the written narrative, an applicant should consult with their licensed supervisor for guidance, and may contact the Board to receive further guidance.

Please refer to our website, under Licensing Requirements, to learn more about core competencies and how they should be demonstrated within the experience type in which you are applying under.
Industry Experience

- The Qualifications Committee (QC) is responsible for verifying the experience requirements obtained by applicants who gained their experience in private industry or government.

- The QC meets approximately 5-6 times per year and makes recommendations to the Board to either approve or deny an application.

- The Committee reviews experience records submitted by applicants to demonstrate achievement of the core competencies in other professional standards, including non-public accounting experience (equivalent experience) and experience obtained through Board approved experience programs. (Cambia, Lithia, IRS, Dept. of Revenue and Intel)

*Yearly application submission timelines for QC are available on our website.
CPE (Continuing Professional Education)

- Each biennial renewal period, Active CPAs/PAs are required to complete and report 80* hours of CPE.
- At least 24* of the required 80 CPE hours must be completed in each year (July-June).
- Four hours of ethics are required each renewal period for Active licenses. Newly licensed CPAs and PAs must report an Oregon-specific ethics course provided on the Board’s website.
- Acceptable subject matter and other CPE requirements are available under the Administrative rules, under Division 40.
- For a list of NASBA approved self-study courses, please visit https://www.nasbaregistry.org/sponsor-list

*CPE is prorated for new licensees for both total hours required as well as the annual requirement. New licensees must also take an Oregon-specific ethics course by an Oregon approved sponsor for first renewal period.
Frequently Asked Questions

Will the Board evaluate my transcript, before I apply, to ensure I meet the educational requirement?
-While the Board does not evaluate transcripts before an application has been submitted, candidates are welcome to contact the Board if they are unsure about a specific course or have general questions in regards to the education requirements.

Does the Board accept CLEP testing as credit towards the education requirement?
-If the college awarded credit for CLEP testing on your transcript, it will be accepted.

Which upper-division Accounting courses count towards the educational requirement?
-The course must be 300 level and above, and cannot be an introductory or principal course. If the course code does not clearly identify it is upper-division, the Licensing staff will evaluate the course further.

What college courses count as Accounting related courses?
-Courses such as Business, Finance, Economics, Communication (Speech, Writing, Foreign Language) and Management courses count towards the accounting related courses requirement.
How soon will I receive my ATT after I have submitted my CPA exam application?

-Applications are processed in the order they are received in. It may take up to two weeks to process the application.

What common issues delay the application process?

- The Board must receive official educational transcripts directly from the school, the applicant did not complete the notary section on the application, and first-time candidates did not submit the required candidate information release form.

Can I change the section(s) of the exam I wish to take, even after being issued the ATT?

- If you have not paid for your exam fees through NASBA, you may change the section(s) of the exam you wish to take by submitting an Exam Section Change Request form found on our website, under Forms.

What if I experience issues with my NTS (Notice to Schedule)?

- You should contact NASBA first to resolve any issues beyond the ATT step in the exam process, as our agency does not handle the payment of exam sections, or scheduling. However, if NASBA is unable to provide assistance, please contact our agency so that we may assist with resolving any matters.

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Does my supervisor CPA have to hold a current, active CPA license?
- Under OAR 801-010-0065(2)(a)-(b)(A), to qualify as a supervisor licensee the person providing supervision must hold an active CPA license issued by any state during the period of supervision and for at least five of the past seven years immediately prior to such supervision.

Can my experience be obtained while I am still completing the Uniform CPA Exam?
- Applications for licensure may include any appropriate experience obtained with an 8-year window of passing the exam, whether it is before, during or after passing the Uniform CPA exam.

If I passed the Uniform CPA exam in another jurisdiction, may I apply for licensure within Oregon?
- During the application process, you will want to ensure you have sent the Interstate Exchange Form to the respective state board to complete your exam transfer information, and request they send it directly to our agency. Additionally, our agency must determine you have met qualifications to be licensed, and therefore will need to verify educational requirements.
Can I apply for licensure with combined work experience from more than one employer?  
- You may submit work experience from more than one employer to apply a combined total of experience for licensure. If you obtained the combined total of the seven required competencies, you must submit separate narratives outlining the competencies met with each employer, including supervisor evaluation worksheets by a qualified supervisor for each employer. It is important to note that you may only outline work examples and competency requirements met with the employer who will be signing off on the written narrative.

How do I know which experience track am I to apply under for licensure?  
- If you work in public accounting, you will apply under the Attest or Tax track, or both, depending on the work you perform at your place of employment. If you work in private industry or government, in an accounting role, you will apply under the Industry track and will prepare your application for review by the Qualifications Committee.

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What classifies direct supervision for verification of experience?
- The qualified supervisor licensee must work in a supervisory/management position and directly oversee the applicant. The relationship between the applicant and supervisor must be a regular, meaningful interaction throughout day to day operations, and the supervisor licensee must be able to attest to all the work being performed by the applicant, and can verify all of the competency requirements are being achieved.

Will the Board provide an outline or example of the required written narrative for licensure?
- The Board does not provide an outline or examples of the written narrative, as it is the responsibility of the applicant to create their own narrative, outlining their unique work experiences through the required competencies. While there is no specific requirement, it is important to note that a generally accepted narrative includes at least two paragraphs per competency, and outlines at least one specific, and detailed, example within the workplace for each competency.

Once I have been licensed, how will I know the pro-rated CPE requirement for renewal?
- The Board sends a congratulations letter along with the wallet card in the mail, after licensure has been granted. The letter outlines the specific total CPE requirement, as well as pro-rated annual CPE requirement for renewal. You may also reference the Oregon Administrative Rules, Chapter 801, Division 40, located on our website, to determine the pro-rated total.

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References

Oregon Board of Accountancy Information:
http://www.Oregon.gov/boa/Pages/ExamReq.aspx
http://www.Oregon.gov/boa/Pages/Licensing.aspx
http://www.Oregon.gov/boa/Pages/adminrules.aspx

NASBA Information:
https://nasba.org/products/nasba-international-evaluation-services/
https://nasba.org/exams/cpa-exam/
https://www.nasbaregistry.org/sponsor-list

AICPA Information:
http://www.aicpa.org/BECOMEACPA/CPAEXAM/Pages/CPAExam.aspx
QUESTIONS?