AMERICAN ALLIANCE OF PARALEGALS, INC.

CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

If you are interested in the Paralegal Certification Program of the AAPI, Inc., please click on the link to the Application for Certification. If you would also like to become a Member of the American Alliance of Paralegals, Inc. and receive all of the benefits of membership, including notifications of news and events, please add $35.00 to your membership fee.

FORMS:

- Application for Certification
- Brochure on Certification Program
- Attorney Declaration
- AACP Renewal Application
- CLE Attendance Form

See the Department of Labor website where the AACP is noted http://www.bls.gov/ooh/legal/paralegals-and-legal-assistants.htm#tab-8

Becoming a member of the American Alliance does not automatically make you an American Alliance Certified Paralegal (AACP).

- Becoming an American Alliance Certified Paralegal (AACP) does not automatically make you a member of the American Alliance.
- Effective 1/1/2018 Membership in AAPI is a requirement to becoming an American Alliance Certified Paralegal (AACP).
- Obtaining an American Alliance Certified Paralegal (AACP) is not a requirement of membership.
- Applications for membership are reviewed by the Membership Committee.
- Applications for American Alliance Certified Paralegal (AACP) are reviewed by the American Alliance Certification Commission.

Statistics on Certification:

85 AACPs

The American Alliance Certified Paralegals in total hold the following degrees:

Master Degree: 1
Master and Bachelor Degrees: 9

Master, Bachelor, and Associate: 1
Master, Bachelor, Certificate Degrees: 1
Bachelor Degree: 37
Bachelor and Associate Degrees: 2
Bachelor, Associate, Certificate: 1
Bachelor and Certificate: 12
Associate Degree Only: 14
Associate and Certificate: 2
Certificate Only: 5

States with AACPs:
Alabama
Arkansas
Arizona
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Illinois
Indiana
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Maryland
Michigan
Mississippi
Missouri
Nebraska
Nevada
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
Ohio
Oklahoma
Pennsylvania
South Carolina
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Virginia
Washington

West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM OF THE AMERICAN ALLIANCE OF PARALEGALS, INC.

The American Alliance of Paralegals, Inc., ("American Alliance") hereby establishes a voluntary program for the certification of paralegals consisting of and incorporating the following standards and procedures:

I. EDUCATIONAL AND EXPERIENCE CRITERIA: Every paralegal seeking American Alliance certification must possess no less than five (5) years of substantive paralegal experience and meet one (1) of the following three (3) educational criteria:

(a) A Bachelor or advanced Degree in any discipline from an accredited institution; or

(b) An Associate Degree in paralegal studies from an ABA approved paralegal program or a program which is a voting institutional member of the American Association for Paralegal Education; or

(c) A Certificate from an ABA approved paralegal program or a program which is a voting institutional member of the American Association for Paralegal Education.

II. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION AND TRANSCRIPT: Upon meeting the above criteria, every candidate making application for certification shall submit all of the following items to the American Alliance of Paralegals, Inc. Certification Commission ("the Commission"):

(a) A completed verified application;

(b) An **original** certified copy of the paralegal's official transcript(s) from the educational institution(s) attended;

(c) An affidavit or declaration from the attorney attesting to the paralegal's substantive work experience; and

(d) A **NON-REFUNDABLE** processing fee of **$75.00**.

III. ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATION AND CREDENTIAL: Following submission of the verified application, payment of the processing fee, and review and approval by the Commission, a certificate will be issued to the paralegal indicating certification by the American Alliance based on the above formal educational and experience criteria. Upon such certification each paralegal will be permitted to use the designation American Alliance Certified Paralegal ("AACP").

IV. CODE OF ETHICS. Every American Alliance Certified Paralegal will be bound by the American Alliance's Code of Ethics which is attached hereto as Exhibit A. Any AACP who violates any provision of the Code of Ethics, or who is

convicted of a felony, crime of moral turpitude or engages in the unauthorized practice of law will have his/her American Alliance certification revoked.

V. American Alliance Certification Commission. The Commission will consist of three (3) members appointed for staggered three-year terms by the American Alliance Board of Directors. Two of the three members of the Commission will be American Alliance paralegal members and one will be a paralegal educator. The Commission members shall not receive compensation for their services.

The Commission shall examine the qualifications of each paralegal making application for certification and will determine whether he/she meets the requirements as set forth above. If any paralegal is denied certification by the Commission, he/she may file an appeal to the American Alliance Board of Directors within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the denial. The American Alliance Board of Directors shall make the final determination of the acceptance or denial of the American Alliance certification.

VI. MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION/CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENT.

In order to maintain American Alliance certification, every AACP shall renew their certification status every three (3) years and complete eighteen (18) hours of continuing legal education ("CLE"), with three (3) of the eighteen (18) hours being in ethics. A renewal application and proof of completion of the requisite CLEs along with the three-year renewal fee in effect at the time of renewal shall be submitted to the Director of Education. At the time of renewal, an AACP must be employed as a paralegal.

EXHIBIT A

CODE OF ETHICS

THE AMERICAN ALLIANCE OF PARALEGALS, INC.

1. A paralegal shall not engage in the unauthorized practice of law.

2. A paralegal shall keep confidential any and all information, documents and other materials entrusted to him or her or acquired in some other way during the course of the legal representation of a client. The confidentiality shall be maintained before, during and after the legal representation unless the client has given consent or disclosure is required by law or by court order.

3. A paralegal shall avoid conflicts of interest and shall immediately disclose any potential conflicts of interest to his or her employer.

4. A paralegal shall ensure that his or her status as a paralegal is disclosed at the beginning of any professional relationship with the attorney, client, personnel of a court, or the personnel of an administrative agency.

5. A paralegal shall follow all provisions of the rules of professional conduct for a paralegal of the state in which he or she is employed. If no such specific code for paralegals exists, then a paralegal shall follow the attorney's code of ethics as it applies to paralegals within that state.

6. A paralegal shall maintain personal and professional integrity.

7. A paralegal shall attain a high degree of competency through education, training and experience.

8. A paralegal shall maintain a high degree of competency by engaging in continuing paralegal education on an annual basis.

AACP RENEWAL GUIDELINES

American Alliance Certified Paralegal
Renewal Procedure

The American Alliance of Paralegals, Inc. ("American Alliance") awards the American Alliance Certified Paralegal ("AACP") certification to those paralegals who meet the standards and procedures established by its Board of Directors. The AACP certification recognizes the level of education and experience of each paralegal using the credential. ***(NOTE: EMERITUS AACP STATUS RENEWALS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO SUBMIT CLE REQUIREMENTS)***

All AACPs are required to renew their certification status every three years from the date of their certification and complete eighteen hours of continuing legal education ("CLE") with three of the eighteen hours being in ethics. The required eighteen hours may be obtained through attendance at conferences, seminars, and other approved activities, of which the subject matter is relevant to work associated with paralegals.

In establishing standards for the granting of credit hours for conferences, seminars, and other approved activities, the American Alliance shall consider all of the following:

A. Conferences and Seminars:

Conferences and seminars shall have content directly related to legal issues, with topics and objectives that improve professional competence. Conferences and seminars shall consist of live instruction or be telecommunicated, prepared and conducted by an individual or a group qualified by practical or academic experience.

The Director of Education shall make the final determination of the conference or seminar's qualifications. If the attendance of a conference or seminar qualification for CLE credit is denied by the Director of Education, AACPs may file an appeal to the American Alliance Board of Directors within 30 Days. See section G for appeal requirements.

B. Approved CLE Provider:

1. Conferences and seminars prepared for paralegals sponsored by the American Alliance or any other national or local paralegal association.
2. Proprietary legal providers or any state Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) program.
3. Conferences and seminars for which lawyers receive CLE credit.
4. Legal education shall be included in computing the total hours of actual instruction.

C. Attendance:

Attendance at conferences and seminars will be verified by submitting a CLE Reporting Form to the American Alliance, along with a certificate of attendance. In lieu of a certificate of attendance, you must submit a CLE Attendance Form and the original brochure for each conference or seminar attended.

D. Credit for Other Approved Activities:

The American Alliance shall award CLE credit for authoring/publishing, speaking/presenting/teaching and legal course work including making in-house presentations. The American Alliance shall not accept CLE credit for pro bono work, self-study, or positions held with a professional association, whether it is an elected/appointed, voting/non-voting position.

1. Authoring/Publishing – The American Alliance shall award CLE credit for authoring/publishing material of which the subject matter is relevant to work associated to paralegals. CLE credit shall be given for the first appearance of the material personally authored by the applicant. CLE credit will be based on length and content of the material. No CLE credit shall be given for additional publications of that same work.

An AACP may receive up to ten CLE credit hours for the publication of articles or books authored or prepared by them. The article or book shall be intended primarily for reading or use by paralegals.

To receive consideration for CLE credit for authoring/publishing, an AACP must complete a Request for CLE Credit for Publication of a Book or Article form and submit a copy or outline of the authored/published material along with the form.

2. Speaking/Presenting/Teaching – The American Alliance shall award CLE credit for speaking/presenting/teaching. Consideration will be given for speaking/presenting whether it's an in-house presentation or a presentation to any other group of legal professionals. To qualify for CLE credit for speaking/presenting, the program's topics or subject matter must be relevant to work associated with paralegals. CLE credit for speaking/presenting shall be given for the first time the program is presented, on an hour-for-hour basis. CLE credit for speaking/presenting will be based on the material submitted and the content of the program.

To receive consideration for CLE credit for speaking/presenting an AACP must complete a Request for CLE Credit for Speaking/Presenting form and submit the form along with a copy or outline of the speech/presentation.

CLE credit shall be awarded for teaching a legal education course at any ABA-accredited paralegal program or voting institutional member of the American Association for Paralegal Education ("AAfPE"). An AACP shall receive one hour of CLE credit for each semester hour taught at an ABA-accredited paralegal program or voting institutional member of AAfPE.

To receive consideration for CLE credit for teaching, an AACP must complete a Request for CLE Credit for Teaching a Legal Education Course form along with the outline used for the course.

3. Legal Course Work – The American Alliance shall award credit for legal course work completed at an ABA accredited law school or paralegal program or voting institutional member of AAfPE. Taking an examination is not

required for CLE credit. The course may be completed on an audit (not for academic credit) basis. An AACP shall receive three hours of AACP CLE Credit for each semester credit hour of a class completed at an ABA-accredited law school or paralegal program or voting institutional member of AAfPE.

To receive consideration for CLE credit for legal course work, an AACP must complete a Request for CLE Credit for Legal Course Work.

E. Submitting Material:

All material for CLE credit consideration whether it be from conferences, seminars, authoring/publishing, speaking/presenting/teaching or legal course work must be submitted together no later than 60 days prior to the expiration of your AACP credential; and sent to the following address:

Leslie L. Adams, AACP
Director of Education - American Alliance of Paralegals, Inc.
Fifth Third Bank - Office of Corporate Secretary
38 Fountain Square Plaza, MD10907F
Cincinnati, OH 45263
513-534-6771
education@aapipara.org or lladamsaacp@gmail.com

Within 60 days, the American Alliance will review the submitted material for compliance and issue a letter renewing the AACP credential. If any deficiencies are found, the American Alliance will notify the AACP.

F. Fee

A renewal application, proof of completion of the reporting form, attendance form or other form requesting CLE credit shall be submitted to the Director of Education along with the renewal fee of $40.00. At the time of renewal, an AACP must be employed as a paralegal.

G. Appeals:

An AACP may appeal the decision of the Director of Education to the Board within 30 days of the date of the denial. All appeals must be in writing and include any evidence, affidavits of witnesses, and supporting documents that the Board should consider. The Board shall respond in writing within 60 days. The decision of the Board is final.

H. Revocation:

The American Alliance shall revoke the AACP credential based upon any of the following:

1. AACPs knowingly making a false statement or misrepresentation deemed material to the reporting form or submitted material; or

2. AACP's conviction of a felony or comparable crime as defined by an individual state that does not have a felony designation; or

3. AACPs found to have been in violation of the American Alliance Code of Ethics.

The Director of Education will provide written notice to the AACP (via certified mail) of the pending action, grounds for pending action, effective date of action, and right to respond to allegations (60 days, in writing with supporting documents).

I. Failure to Renew:

Failure to complete the required eighteen hours of CLE or to submit the proper documentation and renewal fee within the applicable time frame shall result in the immediate discontinuance of the use of the AACP credential.

Any paralegal that has failed to renew his or her AACP credential within 30 days after expiration of the credential must satisfy a waiting period of one year before reapplying for the AACP credential.

J. Miscellaneous:

The American Alliance Board of Directors reserves the right to make additions or other changes as deemed necessary to any section of its AACP CLE Renewal Procedures.

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AACP is a United States Patent and Trademark certified service mark registration owned by the American Alliance of Paralegals, Inc. and only those authorized to use it by the American Alliance of Paralegals, Inc. may do so.