

Georgia Certification Program

Policies & Procedures

I. Purpose

(a) In accordance with O.C.G.A. §§ 48-5-268, 48-5-291, and 48-5-311 and Chapter 560-11-2 Substantive Regulations, the Georgia Certification Program for County Tax Assessors and Appraisers is established for the purpose of providing certification and continuing education for county government employees; specifically members of county boards of tax assessors, appraisers and members of boards of equalization.

(b) The purpose of these policies is to provide interpretive guidance to participants attending the courses and examinations offered through the Georgia Certification Program for County Tax Assessors and Appraisers.

(c) Relevant statutes, case law, or rules and regulations may modify or negate any or all of the provisions of these policies.

(d) The Director of the Local Government Services Division shall have the authority to make exceptions to these policies based on extenuating circumstances. However, such exceptions shall not be in conflict with relevant statutes, case law, or rules and regulations.

II. Eligibility for Participation.

(a) Eligibility for participation in the Georgia Certification Program for County Tax Assessors and Appraisers shall consist of:

1. Georgia state and county government employees;
2. Individuals or employees of companies under contract with Class I counties who predominantly contract with public entities for advisory or ministerial services to the county board of tax assessors. The individual or company seeking participation in the Georgia Certification Program for County Tax Assessors and Appraisers shall provide the Local Government Services Division with documentation of an active contract.
3. Individuals who are prospective government employees when the prospective government employee submits to the Local Government Services Division a letter of intent to consider the individual for employment from the government employer at the time of registration.

III. Registration Fees.

(a) Registration fees for the courses and examinations offered to eligible participants in the Georgia Certification Program for County Tax Assessors and Appraisers shall be set annually by the Director of the Local Government Services Division and shall be used to fund the following costs:

1. Instructor costs where the Local Government Services Division has contracted with an independent instructor or a county government employee with the expertise and experience necessary to serve as an instructor;
2. Materials costs for developing, printing, and binding course manuals, registration forms, course rosters, examinations, and other needs associated with the training program;
3. Equipment costs where specialized equipment is necessary for the proper instruction and examination of appraisal processes and procedures;
4. Location and facility costs where the Local Government Services Division has contracted for the offering of courses and examinations throughout the state.

(b) Registration fees shall be made payable by check to the Georgia Department of Revenue, Local Government Services Division, and submitted with the registration form.

(c) The Local Government Services Division shall withhold the results of any course or examination taken by an eligible participant until such time as the registration fee is paid.

(d) No refund or credit of registration fees shall be allowed for any eligible participant who fails to cancel a course or examination one week prior to the date of the course or examination or who fails to attend a course or examination for which a confirmation has been issued.

(e) Exceptions to the refund or credit of registration fees shall be those documented medical emergencies and any other extenuating circumstances that warrant waiver. The Director of the Local Government Services Division shall have the discretion to determine if such extenuating circumstances meet the requirements for exception.

IV. Registration Procedures.

(a) Eligible participants shall use registration forms prescribed and provided by the Local Government Services Division when registering for courses and examinations.

(b) Registration forms shall be submitted by eligible participants two weeks prior to the date the course or examination is being offered. The registration fees authorized in these policies shall accompany the registration form.

(c) An eligible participant may cancel a registration upon the following terms:

1. The eligible participant must notify the Local Government Services Division, in writing, of their intent to cancel within one week prior to the date the course or examination is scheduled.

(d) Failure to meet the cancellation deadline shall subject the participant to forfeiture of the paid registration fees.

(e) If the registration fee has not been received by the Local Government Services Division at the time of cancellation and remains due at the time of any subsequent registration, the subsequent registration shall not be accepted until the account is resolved.

(f) Eligible participants may request that their registration be withdrawn and another eligible participant be substituted in their place. In such cases, the substituted eligible participant shall be placed on a waiting list and confirmed for attendance in the order the request is received.

(g) Courses offered through the Georgia Certification Program for County Tax Assessors and Appraisers may be cancelled by the Local Government Services Division when the minimum number of eligible participants has not registered two weeks prior to the date the course is scheduled or for any other reason determined by the Director of the Local Government Services Division.

V. Continuing Education Credit for Courses.

(a) Credit for courses shall be awarded to appraisers who successfully complete the courses and examinations offered through the Georgia Certification Program for County Tax Assessors and Appraisers. For appraisers, successful completion shall mean:

1. The eligible participant has fulfilled the prerequisite course requirements;

2. The eligible participant has met the mandatory 95% attendance requirement of 38 hours for courses offering 40 hours of continuing education credit, 19 hours for courses offering 20 hours of continuing education credit, and 4.75 hours for courses offering 5 hours of continuing education credit; and

3. The eligible participant has achieved a passing score of 70 or better on the course examination, if a course examination is required, and has completed and submitted all required case studies, in-class work, and any additional required course work.

(b) The eligible participant shall receive 10 hours of course credit for successful completion of Current Ad Valorem Edicts and Trends.

(c) Credit for courses shall be awarded to assessors who successfully complete the courses and examinations offered through the Georgia Certification Program for County Tax Assessors and Appraisers. For assessors, successful completion shall mean:

1. The eligible participant has successfully completed the “Foundation Courses” consisting of:
 - (i) Course I – Certification for Assessors;
 - (ii). Georgia Assessment Administration;
 - (iii) Exempt Properties Workshop; and
 - (iv) Specialized Assessments Workshop.
2. The eligible participant has fulfilled the prerequisite course requirements;
3. The eligible participant has met the mandatory 95% attendance requirement of 38 hours for courses offering 40 hours of continuing education credit, 19 hours for courses offering 20 hours of continuing education credit, and 4.75 hours for courses offering 5 hours of continuing education credit; and
4. The eligible participant has achieved a passing score of 70 or better on course examination, if a course examination is required, and has completed and submitted all required cases studies, in-class work, and any additional required course work.

(d) The eligible participant shall receive 10 hours of course credit for the course Current Ad Valorem Edicts and Trends if the “Foundation Courses” have not been successfully completed.

(e) Credit for courses shall also be awarded to appraisers and assessors who successfully complete the following courses:

1. Courses sponsored by the Georgia Association of Assessing Officials when such sponsored courses have been submitted for review and approved by the Director of the Local Government Services Division;
2. Courses totaling 40 hours offered by and approved by the International Association of Assessing Officers; and
3. Courses at least 40 hours in length offered by either the Society of Real Estate Appraisers or the American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers and approved for course work toward the award for the SR or MAI designations.

(f) Credit for other courses may be considered upon request, in writing, to the Director of the Local Government Services Division. Along with the written request, proper documentation showing an overview of the course and successful completion must be submitted.

(g) Credit for courses shall not be awarded to an eligible participant for courses taken more than once in a four-year period or for one-day review courses.

(h) In addition to the requirements of this policy, assessors shall successfully complete a recertification course every six years from the date of their initial appointment.

VI. Regional Examinations; Prerequisites; Successful Completion.

(a) The Local Government Services Division shall prepare and administer examinations in regional locations of the State at least four times annually.

(b) The examinations required to be administered to Georgia assessors and appraisers include:

1. The Assessors Qualification Examination;

2. The examination of all staff appraisers for Appraiser I, Appraiser II, Appraiser III, and Appraiser IV level designations;

3. Retesting of eligible participants who did not receive a passing grade on a course examination when a registration for retesting has been made to the Local Government Services Division within two weeks of the date of the next scheduled regional examination; and

4. Any examination taken as an optional examination for credit toward the Georgia Certified Appraiser professional designation.

c) An eligible participant may challenge any one or more of the examinations cited in this policy, however, a cumulative total of four and one-half hours will be allowed for completing all examinations being challenged.

(d) To register and successfully complete the staff appraiser examinations, the following requirements must be met:

1. Appraiser I

(i) Prerequisites: Successful completion of Course I and Course IA.

(iii) Successful Completion: Achieve a passing grade of 70 or better on the Appraiser I examination.

2. Appraiser II

(i) Prerequisites: Successful completion of Course I and Course IA, and any one of Course III, Course IVA, Course IVB, or Course V.

(ii) Successful Completion: Achieve a passing grade of 80 or better on the Appraiser I examination and a passing grade of 70 or better on the Appraiser II examination.

3. Appraiser III

(i) Prerequisites: Successful completion of Course I and Course IA, Course II, and any two of Course III, Course IVA, Course IVB, or Course V.

(ii) Successful Completion: Achieve a passing grade of 80 or better on the Appraiser II examination and a passing grade of 70 or better on the Appraiser III examination.

4. Appraiser IV

(i) Prerequisites: Successful completion of Course I and Course IA, Course II, any two of Course III, Course IVA, Course IVB, or Course V, plus Course VI or the University of Georgia Management Development Program Level I, II, or III, and one elective course.

(ii) Successful Completion: Achieve a passing grade of 80 or better on the Appraiser III examination and a passing grade of 70 or better on the Appraiser IVI examination;

(e) In successfully completing the retest cited in subparagraph 3. of Paragraph (b) of this policy, an eligible participant shall have made a passing grade of 70 or better.

VII. Course and Examination Dishonesty.

(a) The Program Director of the Georgia Certification Program for County Tax Assessors and Appraisers, on the basis of evidence presented, shall make a determination of the accuracy of any accusation that an individual has cheated on a course or examination.

(b) When the Program Director determines that the evidence indicates dishonest behavior, the individual shall be subject to the following disciplinary actions:

1. The individual shall be prohibited from taking any course or examination for a period of one year, beginning on the date specified by the Program Director; and

2. The Program Director shall notify, in writing, the appropriate county official in the individual's county of the dishonest behavior.

(c) An individual may appeal all determinations of dishonest behavior made by the Program Director to the Director of the Local Government Services Division.

VIII. Education Records.

(a) The Local Government Services Division shall maintain the education records of the eligible participants of the Georgia Certification Program for County Tax Assessors and Appraisers.

(b) The education records shall be made available to anyone requesting the records when such requests are made in writing under the Open Records Act.

(c) The amount of fees authorized by the Open Records Act shall be charged to anyone requesting the education records.

(d) In any situation in which there is a discrepancy in the education records maintained by the Local Government Services Division and those of an individual, the individual shall submit an original certificate to the Local Government Services Division, which reflects the successful completion of any course or examination in question.