



NALA CERTIFYING BOARD ANNOUNCES NEW CERTIFIED PARALEGAL EXAM SPECIFICATIONS

EFFECTIVE WITH 2024 ADMINISTRATIONS

BACKGROUND

The NALA Certifying Board provides oversight for the development and ongoing maintenance of the Certified Paralegal Examination. The Certifying Board, NALA certification staff, and trained subject matter experts work in partnership with a qualified psychometric consultant to ensure the examination is delivered and maintained in a manner consistent with generally accepted testing practices, according to national accreditation standards for certification programs.

NALA conducts job analysis studies approximately every five to seven years to identify and validate the knowledge and skills measured by the Certified Paralegal Examination. The results of the job analysis studies serve as the basis for exam specifications.

In May 2022, the NALA Job Analysis Task Force and Certifying Board conducted the 2022 Job Task Analysis Study ("Study"). This Study examined the duties and responsibilities of paralegals in the workplace. The goals of this study were to:

- Validate and update the Certified Paralegal Examination content and
- Ensure that NALA has current information about the roles and responsibilities of paralegals

NALA contracted with PSI Services, LLC, a leader in developing, delivering, and maintaining licensure and certification examinations, to conduct the Study. As part of the Study, NALA sent an electronic survey to more than 21,000 paralegals. The results showed 1,883 responses, for a 9.7% response rate, which is typical for surveys of this nature. Only the responses from those currently working, students, educators, or employers of those in the paralegal field were included in the results.

The Study findings and the report detailing the process used are located on NALA's website, nala.org, under Certification.

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 2024

NEW CERTIFIED PARALEGAL (CP) EXAMINATION SPECIFICATIONS

Based on analysis of the Study, improvements in technology, recent refinements by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), and the advice of NALA's psychometricians, the Certifying Board approved a new structure for the Certified Paralegal (CP) Examination, effective in January 2024.

NALA will administer the CP Examination in its current structure for all of 2023.

The new examination format will open in January 2024 for a 30-day testing window to complete the post-administration analysis, scoring, and standard setting. The subsequent Knowledge Exam testing will open in late spring 2024.

The Certifying Board listened to working paralegals, students, educators, and attorneys who employ paralegals and applied the findings of the Study to the examination. The Certifying Board works diligently to connect the Certified Paralegal Examination directly to the day-to-day duties and responsibilities of paralegals in the workplace. The modifications announced for the 2024 examination are part of the continued effort to ensure the Certified Paralegal

Examination remains an accurate and relevant reflection of today's paralegals.

EXAMINATION FORMAT

The 2024 Certified Paralegal Examination will continue to consist of two required sections taken in the following order:

KNOWLEDGE EXAM

- The Knowledge Exam consists of multiple-choice questions covering the topic areas listed in Appendix A (Exam Specifications).
- The Knowledge Exam is administered on-demand, year-round at testing centers, with preliminary results reporting upon completion.
- Candidates must successfully complete the Knowledge Exam to be eligible to take the Skills Exam.

SKILLS EXAM

- The Skills Exam consists of a written assignment. Specifications are outlined in Appendix A (Exam Specifications).
- The Skills Exam is administered during four testing windows each year: February, April, July, and October.

EXAMINATION POLICIES

First Administration - Knowledge Exam

- The first administration of the Knowledge Exam will be offered during a 30-day window with 120 items. This administration will be used for post-administration analysis, scoring, and standard-setting. During this testing window, results will not be available upon completion but will be provided once the analysis, scoring, and standard-setting has been completed.
- 100 items will be scored (determined after administration).
- 20 items will be pretested for statistical analysis (determined after administration) but will not be scored.
- A 3-hour testing time (90 seconds per item) will be provided for this one-time testing session.

Subsequent Administrations - Knowledge Exam

- When the examination opens for year-round testing, 120 items will be included on each Knowledge Exam.
- 100 items will be scored.
- 20 items will be pretested for statistical analysis.
- A 3-hour testing time (90 seconds per item) will be provided for all subsequent Knowledge Exams.
- Results reporting will be available upon completion with on-demand testing year-round.

Knowledge Exam

- Candidates must first pass the Knowledge Exam.
- Candidates are eligible to take the Knowledge Exam only after they have graduated from an educational program or have the required minimum experience. The system of on-demand testing has removed deadlines to apply for the examination. Candidates will be able to apply when they are eligible.
- Once candidates receive the authorization to test for the Knowledge Exam, they will have up to three attempts within 365 days of the initial authorization to pass the Knowledge Exam.
- If the candidate does not take all three attempts of the Knowledge Exam within 365 days of the initial authorization to test or does not pass, the application is voided. A new application, fee, and testing center fee are required to reapply for the Certified Paralegal Exam.

Skills Exam

- Candidates who pass the Knowledge Exam will receive authorization to take the Skills Exam after paying the testing center fee.
- Candidates have up to three attempts within 365 days from the authorization to test to pass the Skills Exam.
- If the candidate does not take all three attempts of the Skills Exam

- within 365 days of the initial Skills Exam authorization to test or does not pass, the application is voided. A new application, fee, and testing center fee are required to reapply for the Certified Paralegal Exam. The candidate is required to start over by taking the Knowledge Exam.
- Candidates MUST wait 90 days between each of the three attempts of the Skills Exam and submit a retake application, fee, and testing center fee to NALA to initiate each additional attempt and receive a new Testing Ticket notification.

New Applicants for the 2024 Testing Windows

- Candidates who are authorized to test in January 2024 but opt not to test during the first 30-day testing period will automatically receive a new Knowledge Exam authorization to test date when the examination opens for year-round testing.
- Candidates who are authorized to take the Knowledge Exam from December 2023 through January 2024 but do not take it during that time will automatically be provided a six-month extension.

Candidates in Retake Status

- Candidates who first take the Knowledge Exam in 2023, do not pass, and are eligible to submit a retake application in 2024 will retake the Knowledge Exam in its new format.
- Any candidates who do not successfully complete the current Knowledge Exam by December 31, 2023, will take the Knowledge Exam in its new format, starting in 2024.

Withdrawal, Incomplete, or Rejected Applications

- If a candidate must withdraw the application, a \$75 cancellation fee is required.
- If the application is incomplete or rejected, the application will be denied, and a \$75 processing fee is required.



Application

First-time candidates (Includes one attempt of the Knowledge Exam and one attempt of the Skills Exam)

- Standard: \$325 for members, \$375 for non-members
- Military: \$240 for members, \$280 for non-members
- Student: \$150 for members, \$175 for non-members

Retake candidates

- \$150 for subsequent attempts of the Knowledge Exam
- \$150 for subsequent attempts of the Skills Exam

Testing Center

On-site Testing

- Knowledge Exam: \$67
- Skills Exam: \$60

Remote Proctoring

- Knowledge Exam: \$50

Partner Testing

- Knowledge Exam: \$20
- Skills Exam: \$20

APPENDIX A-EXAM SPECIFICATIONS

Knowledge Exam		100 points
1	United States Legal System	15
1A	Sources of Law	
1B	Judicial System	
1C	Remedies	
1D	Administrative Law	
2	Civil Litigation	15
2A	Jurisdiction	
2B	Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and Evidence	
2C	Alternative Dispute Resolution	
3	Contracts	10
3A	Formation, Rights, and Duties	
3B	Enforcement and Defenses	
4	Corporate/Commercial Law	10
4A	Business Organizations	
4B	Rights and Responsibilities	
5	Criminal Law and Procedures	7
6	Estate Planning and Probate	7
6A	Estates, Trusts, and Wills	
7	Real Estate and Property	8
7A	Property Rights, Ownership, and Transactions	
8	Torts	10
8A	Negligence and Strict Liability	
9	Professional and Ethical Responsibility	12
9A	American Bar Association (ABA) Model Rules of Conduct	
9B	Unauthorized Practice of Law	
10	Debtor/Creditor and Bankruptcy	6
Skills Exam		30 points
1	Legal Writing	10
1A	Composition	7
1B	Mechanics	3
2	Critical Thinking	20
2A	Identification of Relevant Facts	4
2B	Issue Spotting	7
2C	Analysis of Facts and Rules	7
2D	Drawing Conclusions	2