

June 26, 2019

TO: Certified Municipal Finance Officers (CMFOs), Certified County Finance Officers (CCFOs), Certified Tax Collectors (CTCs), Certified Public Works Managers (CPWMs), Registered Municipal Clerks (RMCs), and Qualified Purchasing Agents (QPAs)

FROM: Division of Local Government Services
Certification Unit

SUBJECT: Certification Renewal Instructions

Use of Forms

Record of Continuing Education/Certification Renewal Application forms can be accessed at the Professional Certification Programs page of the Division's website located at the following link: <http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dlgs/programs/certification.html#5>. Please note, the form asks for an address/email of record, as opposed to asking for a home address. The reason for this is that the address/email of record may be made available to the public, whereas a home address is excluded as public information. The forms can be completed, and then downloaded, signed, and mailed, along with any applicable fees.

It is important to note that if you do not want your home address/email to be listed as your address/email of record, you must provide an alternate address/email (normally the alternative is your work address/email). In addition, your address of record must include a street number and address. It is equally important that you keep Division staff apprised of any changes to your address/email of record.

Licensee Responsibilities Regarding Certification Renewals

The Division does not send out reminder notifications for renewal of your certification. All licensees are responsible to know when their certification is due for renewal, for tracking completion of their continuing education contact hours, and for keeping a file of their proof of completion of courses. The Division does not maintain any files of proofs of completion of your courses. **You are strongly urged to maintain some form of backup file of your proofs of attendance.**

To maintain your certification, you must obtain the requisite number of contact hours during each renewal cycle. You cannot "skip" a renewal cycle and maintain your certification.

Please allow (2) months for the processing of your Certification Renewal Application form. If you have not received your renewal certificate or have not otherwise been contacted by Division staff concerning your renewal status, please contact the Certification Unit at (609) 292-9757, or at Denalder.Richardson@dca.nj.gov to inquire as to whether your renewal was received, and the status.

Other Renewal Issues; Errors/Omissions of Information and/or Fees

There are several errors/omissions which Division staff has encountered in processing renewal forms, which are noted below. These errors/omissions cause delays in the renewal process, and licensees are encouraged to carefully review their renewals before submitting them to reduce such delays.

Missing Information

Certification Renewal Applications have been received with incomplete addresses, missing signatures, etc. Each of the Application forms is (2) pages. In addition to a listing of the courses, the 1st page requests your current contact information. The 2nd page includes the signature line certifying that you have attended the courses you claim on the Certification Renewal Application form. Staff has received submittals in the mail containing only page 1 or page 2 of the Application.

Missing Payment

All certifications require a \$50 renewal fee, except for the QPA certification, which has a renewal fee of \$35. Staff has received Certification Renewal Applications forms unaccompanied by a fee. It is permissible to include a purchase order (P.O.) with the Application. However, the Application will not be processed until the actual fee is received. The Certification Unit staff will sign off on purchase order (P.O) and return to you promptly for payment processing.

Additionally, it is important that when payment is submitted to the Certification Unit, it is accompanied by information (licensee name, license cert number) so that it can be easily matched to a licensee's Certification Renewal Application form.

Finally, it is preferable to include either the payment or purchase order (P.O.) with the Certification Renewal Application form, as sending them separately can cause delays in the processing.

Out of Cycle Courses

Licensees are reminded that you cannot utilize courses and contact hours that were obtained in a previous renewal cycle toward the current renewal of your certification, **regardless of whether those courses were included with your previous renewal.** For example, using a two-year renewal cycle that runs from December 31, 2018, to December 31, 2020, no hours obtained prior to December 31, 2018, can count toward this renewal cycle.

In the above example, the problem will be that if such hours that do not count are included on the Certification Renewal Application form, the necessary hours may then be lacking in the total hours required for renewal of the certification. There have been licensees who have done

this, and, as a result, their certification lapsed, requiring them to be required to participate in a certification exam again. Therefore, please be mindful of the dates of the courses that are included on your Certification Renewal Application form.

Six Month Grace Periods/Late Fees

All certifications administered by the Division provide the licensee a statutory (6) month grace period to file their Certification Renewal Application form. Therefore, using the above example, if you are due to renew your certification as of December 31, 2018, but are short on the required hours, you may still utilize the next (6) months through June 30, 2019, to obtain the hours and submit your Certification Renewal Application form. **Continuing with this example, hours obtained during the grace period of December 31, 2018 - June 30, 2019, that are needed for the renewal that was due December 31, 2018, cannot also be utilized toward the next renewal cycle of December 31, 2018 – December 31, 2020. Any hours obtained during the grace period above those that are needed for the renewal that was due December 31, 2018, can be utilized toward the next renewal cycle.** These grace periods are automatic in the statutes; you are not required to first obtain approval from the Division to utilize the grace period.

However, three of the certifications that are administered, **CTC, RMC, and CPWM**, require a \$50 statutory late fee to be included if the Certification Renewal Application form is submitted during the grace period. This requirement is noted on these (3) Certification Renewal Application forms.

The Division utilizes the postmark date on a renewal submission to determine if it has been submitted timely. For example, if you hold one of the above (3) certifications and you are required to renew as of December 31, 2018, and your renewal is received postmarked by any date after December 31, 2018 it is considered a late submission. If you have not already included the statutory late fee with such renewal, the Division will mail you a form letter notifying you of the requirement for the late fee. Your renewal will not be processed until the late fee is received.

Thank you for your attention to these matters, and for your cooperation in submitting your Certification Renewal Application form. Carefully checking your Certification Renewal Application form for any such errors or omissions before submitting to reduce the time needed by Division staff to process your Certification Renewal Application. Please contact the Division's Certification Unit at the telephone number or email address noted above if you have any questions regarding these matters.

Certification Unit
Division of Local Government Services