

# **State Purchasing Division (SPD)**

## Georgia Procurement Certification Program

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## **Georgia Procurement Certification Overview**

In today's ever-changing business environment, it is essential to keep pace with new technologies and specifically with the evolution of the procurement field. As the State Purchasing Division's (SPD) strategy is moving to offering customers complete solutions, the Georgia Procurement Certification Program offers a means to ensure that agencies and universities can retain and develop professionals who understand and apply leading practices and perform procurement duties in accordance with the Georgia's established administrative rules, procedures and appropriately use the State's available tools and applications.

Therefore, the purpose of the Georgia Procurement Certification Program is to:

- Provide the appropriate training courses that provide the necessary skills for procurement professionals to perform their duties according to the State law, administrative rules as outlined in the GPM, established workflow and procedures, and the appropriate use of the available tools and applications.
- Provide and establish a measure of achievement and required attainment of purchasing competency.

The goal of the Georgia Procurement Certification Program is to develop the appropriate skills for the job function as well as to test that the employee acquired those skills. Completion of the certification will provide state-wide recognition as State certified purchasing professionals and as such recognized as having the appropriate skills necessary to perform their responsibilities at the expected level of competence. The program is designed to be flexible by allowing employees to take the courses applicable to their role and prepare for and take the Certification Exam at specified schedules.

The Georgia Procurement Certification Program includes several Certification Paths. These Certification Paths have been defined to include courses that provide job-related training and designed to assure that employees perform their procurement duties adequately according to the State law, administrative rules as outlined in the GPM, established workflow and procedures, and the appropriate use of the available tools and applications. Thus, SPD will review the certification standing of the state entity's or university's staff in order to adjust the state entity or university Delegation of Request for Purchasing Authority (DPA) status. Consideration for positive DPA adjustment for the completion of Request for Quotations (RFQs) will be given to state entities, colleges, or universities with 100% Basic Certification Status. A state entity, college, or university receives this status when 100% of their procurement staff completes the Basic Certification. Similarly, consideration for positive DPA adjustment for the completion of Request for Proposals (RFPs) will be given to state entities, colleges, or universities with 100% RFP Certificate Status. A state entity, college, or university receives this status when 100% of their procurement staff responsible for developing and managing RFPs completes the RFP Certificate. Otherwise, the state entity's or university's DPA is not impacted or negatively impacted. Special considerations will be handled based on policy outlined in the Special Considerations section.

For a more holistic education approach, the completion of national professional procurement certification or training programs is recommended to enhance the Georgia Procurement Certification by providing a theoretical foundation on the performance of procurement activities. For example, a training class on developing RFPs from a national procurement training organization provides the theoretical principles and philosophy on how to develop the RFP, while the Georgia Procurement Certification Program provides the specifics on how to develop the RFP in accordance to established State of Georgia administrative rules, procedures and the use of appropriate tools and applications. In addition, successfully completing the Georgia Procurement Certification Program provides a means for acquiring Continuing Education Units (CEUs) that can be applied to national professional certification programs. Alongside, completing relevant procurement courses from national accredited organizations also provides a means for acquiring CEUs that can be applied for recertification at the end of the Georgia Procurement Certification period. Certified employees must earn at least 40 hours of continuing education over a 5-year renewal period to be able to maintain the Georgia Procurement Certification.

SPD employees are required to be certified in order to function as official SPD resources and be able to perform more complex duties in their career path. Certification results play an important role in the SPD employee's career advancement.

As new tools, procedures and policies are made available to our purchasing professionals, recertification is required. Recertification in this case concentrates on the skills necessary to apply the newly released tools, procedures, and/or administrative rules.

### ***Certification Benefits***

The Georgia Procurement Certification Program is a tool to objectively help measure the performance of an employee on a given job at a defined skill level. Certification, therefore, is beneficial for individuals who wish to validate their own skills and performance levels and/or their employees. For optimum benefit, the certification tests reflect the critical tasks required for a job, the skill levels of each task, and the frequency by which a task needs to be performed.

In addition to assessing job skills and performance levels, the Georgia Procurement Certification Program may also provide benefits such as:

- Promotes recognition as a Georgia certified purchasing professional
- Increases self esteem
- Provides continuing professional benefits by enhancing product and domain skills
- Measures the effectiveness of training
- Provides objective benchmarks for validating skills
- Makes long-range planning easier by defining the professional paths and necessary skills for continuous growth
- Helps manage professional development
- Contributes to competitive advantage
- Increases morale and loyalty

Based on the recent Universal Public Purchasing Certification Council (UPPCC) Job Analysis Study, it is clear that professional certification has its benefits.

- 82 percent of over 1,800 public procurement professionals surveyed affirmed that when considering candidates for employment positions when all other qualifications are equal, certified professionals have the hiring advantage.
- Respondents also confirmed the tendency for employers to offer higher starting salaries and/or additional bonuses to certified employees than to the non-certified employee.
- Aside from the financial benefits certification can provide, many individuals consistently comment that certification builds their self-esteem, increases confidence in their abilities as well as broadens professional knowledge through their exam preparation efforts.

### ***Certification Components***

This section describes the components of the Georgia Procurement Certification Program:

- Certification Titles
- Training Courses and Training Curriculum
- Certification Process
- Certification Exams
- Certification Remedial Activities
- Recertification

#### Certification Titles

The titles assigned to each of the certification are as follows:

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Certification Title	Certification Paths Necessary for the Certification Title	Audience
Georgia Certified Purchasing Associate (GCPA)	Basic Certification	Employees who need basic understanding of State procurement tools, procedures, and policies and will be creating Request for Quotations solicitations
Georgia Certified Purchasing Manager (GCPM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RFP Certificate</li> <li>• Contract Management Certificate</li> <li>• Team Georgia Marketplace™ Certificate (for Team Georgia Marketplace™ users only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees responsible for writing and managing the RFP process</li> <li>• Employees responsible for conducting negotiation in conjunction with SPD</li> <li>• Employees responsible for writing and administering the contracts</li> </ul>
Georgia Certified Purchasing Card Administrator (GCPCA)	P-Card Certification	Employees whose responsibilities include coordinating and administering the P-Card Program at their facilities

Team Georgia Marketplace™ training courses necessary to complement the specific procurement certification are highlighted with the appropriate certification color. The Team Georgia Marketplace™ Certificate is only required for procurement staff whose state entity has implemented Team Georgia Marketplace™.

Training Courses and Training Curriculum

The *Training Courses* include content designed to teach the following information:

- PeopleSoft functionality for those agencies that use Team Georgia Marketplace™.
- Established procedures and use of approved forms.
- Workflow based on SPD practices and administrative rules as outlined in the Georgia Procurement Manual (GPM).

The *Training Curriculum* defines the sequence and prerequisites necessary to advance through the different training courses. The [Georgia Purchasing Curriculum and Certification Chart](#) includes the list of courses included in each Certification Path. The chart is color coded to reflect the different Certification Paths:

- **GCPA – Georgia Certified Purchasing Associate Certification:** Courses highlighted in **blue** represent required courses to obtain the Basic Certification or the Georgia Certified Purchasing Associate (GCPA) Certification.
- **Georgia Certified Purchasing Manager (GCPM) Certification:** Courses required to obtain the Georgia Certified Purchasing Manager (GCPM) Certification. This certification includes the RFP Certificate and the Contract Management Certificate as well as the Team Georgia Marketplace™ Certificate required for Team Georgia Marketplace™ users only.
- **Team Georgia Marketplace™ Certificate:** Courses highlighted in **green** represent required courses to obtain the Team Georgia Marketplace™ Certificate. Only Procurement staff is required to complete the Team Georgia Marketplace™ Certificate.
- **Request for Proposal (RFP) Certificate:** Courses highlighted in **burgundy** represent required courses to complete the RFP Certificate. The RFP Certificate is part of the Georgia Certified Purchasing Manager (GCPM) Certification.
- **Georgia Certified Purchasing Card Administrator:** Courses highlighted in **orange** represent required

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courses to obtain the Georgia Certified Purchasing Card Administrator Certification.

Training courses necessary to perform activities in Team Georgia Marketplace™ are included as part of the appropriate certificate or certification.

**GCPA – Georgia Certified Purchasing Associate Certification**

This certification is designed to review fundamentals of the purchasing practice as well as basic understanding of state procurement tools, procedures, and administrative rules. Specific attention is provided to equip the student with skills to successfully complete Request for Quotations (RFQs). This certification is required to complete the Request for Proposals (RFP) Certificate. The following training courses are required to complete the Georgia Certified Purchasing Associate Certification.

Certification Path	Course Number	Training Courses	Certification Exam	Comments
Basic Certification or Georgia Certified Purchasing Associate (GCPA) Certification	1000W	Introduction to State Purchasing – Part A	Available Online through the LMS	Employee must register online through the LMS and complete at your own pace and from your location
	1002W	Introduction to State Purchasing – Part B	Available Online through the LMS	Employee must register online through the LMS and complete at his/her own pace and from his/her location
	1010L	Fundamentals of State Purchasing	All certification exams are administered through a proctor and scheduled either after the training class or as a half-day training class. For scheduled Certification Exams, students can take any Certification Exam at any time within the scheduled half-day.  Team Georgia Marketplace™ certification exams are open book.	Certification Exams are scheduled either after the training class or as a regular training class through the LMS. For scheduled Certification Exams, students register through the LMS and complete the Certification Exam when scheduled
	3000L	Writing Basic Specifications		
	TGM40L	eProcurement for PO Buyers ( for Team Georgia Marketplace™ users)		
	3010L (for Non-TGM Users) or TGM50L (for TGM Users)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eQuote (for non-Team Georgia Marketplace™ users)</li> <li>• Strategic Sourcing (for Team Georgia Marketplace™ users)</li> </ul>		
7050W	Legal Issues			

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Certification Path	Course Number	Training Courses	Certification Exam	Comments
	8600L	How to Conduct a Self Audit (Compliance) – Required for APOs/CUPOs only	APOs/CUPOs complete the Certification Exam by performing an audit at their state entities following the requirements specified in the Certification Exam for this training course. APOs/CUPOs can use assistance from their procurement staff.	

**GCPM – Georgia Certified Purchasing Manager Certification**

This certification is designed to review the procurement tools, procedures, and administrative rules necessary to process Request for Proposals (RFPs) as well as the tools, procedures, and administrative rules necessary to manage the contracts once established. The Georgia Certified Purchasing Manager (GCPM) Certification includes two certificates:

- **Request for Proposal (RFP) Certificate** – Designed for employees who need more advanced understanding of State procurement tools, procedures, and policies as they relate to RFPs and are responsible for writing and managing the RFP process.
- **Contract Management Certificate** (Not Available) – Designed for employees who need more advanced understanding of State procurement tools, procedures, and policies as they relate to Contract Management and are responsible for writing and administering the contracts.

**RFP Certificate:**

Certification Path	Course Number	Training Courses	Certification Exam	Comments
RFP Certificate  This Certificate is Part of the Georgia Certified Purchasing Manager – GCPM Certification	3015W	RFP Template		Employee must register online through the LMS and complete at his/her own pace and from his/her location
	3015W	**RFP Project Management		
	3022W	RFP Preparation Scorecard	Available Online through the LMS	Employee must register online through the LMS and complete at his/her own pace and from his/her location
	3025L	eSource for RFIs, RFPs, and RFQCs (for non-Team Georgia Marketplace™ users)		Certification Exams are scheduled either after the training class or as a regular training class through the LMS. For scheduled Certification Exams, students register through the LMS and complete the Certification Exam when scheduled
	5000L	RFP Evaluation Process		
	5020L	**RFP Negotiations		
	6000L	RFP Award Process		

\*\*Courses in Development

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**Contract Management Certificate:**

Certification Path	Course Number	Training Courses	Certification Exam	Comments
Contract Management Certificate  This certificate is part of the Georgia Certified Purchasing Manager – GCPM Certification	TGM60L	Supplier Contract Management (for Team Georgia Marketplace™ users only)	Certification Exams are proctored and scheduled after the training class	
	TGM70W	**Advanced Supplier Contract Management (for Team Georgia Marketplace™ users)		
	7000L	**Contract Management		

\*\*Courses in Development

**GCPCA – Georgia Certified Purchasing Card Administrator**

This certification is designed for employees whose responsibilities include managing and/or administering the P-Card Program at their state entities.

Certification Path	Course Number	Training Courses	Certification Exam	Comments
P-Card Certification (Georgia Certified Purchasing Card Administrator – GCPCA Certification)  TGM Courses for TGM Users Only	1000W	Introduction to State Purchasing – Part A	*See information for this training course above	
	1002W	Introduction to State Purchasing – Part B	*See information for this training course above	
	6600W	Introduction to P-Card Principles	Available Online through the LMS	Employee must register online through the LMS and complete at his/her own pace and from his/her location
	8800L	Evaluating P-Card Program Management	Available Online through the LMS	
	TGM100L	Team Georgia Marketplace™ P-Card	Administered through a proctor and scheduled at the end of the training class	Only required for Team Georgia Marketplace™ users
	TGM105W	Team Georgia Marketplace™ P-Card Administration		

\*\*Courses in Development

### Certification Process

The Certification process includes the steps, forms, procedure to follow, and resources to contact to become certified.

The certification process describes the procedures to follow to be certified and how the program fits with the rest of the Professional Development Business Unit and SPD activities. The following items define the process:

- Overview
- Steps
- Certification Timeframes
- Training Attendance
- Certification Agreement for employees

### **Overview**

The Georgia Procurement Certification Program allows employees and their managers to plan training activities with a focus on specific career objectives. The Georgia Procurement Certification Program has available Certification Paths. Each *Certification Path* focuses on teaching and guiding the student through the process of learning the skills necessary to use PeopleSoft (for Team Georgia Marketplace™ users) and apply the applicable procedures and forms based on the law and administrative rules outlined in the GPM. Thus, certification requirements include specific courses that are appropriate for the Certification Path and the Certification Exams designed for each course included in that Certification Path.

To participate in the Georgia Procurement Certification Program, the employee, in conjunction with his/her manager, chooses the appropriate Certification Path based on his/her job responsibility and career plan. Employees register in the Certification Path through the Learning Management System (LMS) which automatically keeps records of student attendance and course completion. Employees have one year to complete a Certification Path and cannot participate in more than one Georgia Procurement Certification Programs at one time. If at the completion of one year, the employee has not completed the Certification Path, the employee is required to complete all the certification requirements again in order to receive the certification. The start date for a certification begins when the employee registers in the Certification Path.

To receive Certification, the employee must take and successfully pass each of the Certification Exams with a passing score of at least 80 points (out of 100 points) within a year of the certification start date. Each employee has three attempts at successfully passing the Certification Exam for each course outlined in the Certification Path. If the employee fails the first and second Certification Exam, he/she can repeat the course(s) appropriate for the topics missed in the Certification exam and/or participate in work activities that would enhance the skills missed in the Certification Exam, and then, retake the Certification Exam. Certification Exam results will be available through the LMS and if requested, will be shared with the employee's manager.

If the employee fails the Certification Exam a third time, the state entity/university procurement management will be notified immediately to develop a plan of action based on the risk. SPD's policy will be to remove the employee from performing purchasing functions such as developing RFQs, RFPs, manage contracts, etc. and adjust the employee's user ID and password information to access the SPD systems available in such way as to impede the processing of these purchasing functions (for example eQuote, PeopleSoft, or Team Georgia Marketplace™). During this process, SPD will work closely with the state entity or university to develop a transition plan and determine who at the state entity will continue to perform these purchasing functions. New procurement professionals, who do not pass the Certification Exams and, as a result, cannot achieve the certification, will not be allowed to perform these purchasing functions and will not receive user access information for the SPD systems available for conducting these purchasing functions. SPD's position regarding this issue is that when purchasing staff from agencies or universities fail to successfully complete the Certification Exams (and the resulting impact on their delegated authority) negatively affect their value to the entity. Conversely, Successful completion enhances their value and ability to make significant contributions.

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For SPD employees, Certification Exam results will be used as part of the employee's performance evaluation and as a factor in his/her employment. Failing the third attempt to successfully pass the Certification Exam could be considered grounds for employment termination or reassignment.

As new tools, processes and/or policies are made available to SPD employees and customers, recertification for these new tools, processes, and/or policies are required. In addition, as training courses are rewritten and redesigned, re-attendance are also required. Notification of the required courses and requisites will be made available.

### Steps

Procedures for certification are straightforward. The employee, working closely with his/her manager, follows these steps to participate in the Georgia Procurement Certification Program:

1. The Manager and employee discuss the Georgia Procurement Certification Program, benefits, procedures, and rules.
2. The Manager and employee discuss and determine the training activities outlined in the applicable Certification Path based on the employee's job requirements, and then decide the appropriate Certification Path.
3. The employee enrolls in the specific Georgia Procurement Certification Program Path by accessing the LMS and registering in the appropriate Learning Path (or Certification Path).
4. The employee attends the required courses. Courses are marked as mandatory when there is a requirement of attendance.
5. The employee prepares for the test using the following resources (where available):
  - Test objectives
  - Education courses
  - Other reference materials
  - PowerPoint presentation for the training class which is available from the LMS under the Files tab.

**Note:** *SPD maintains a Library Resource Center with a diverse choice of professional materials and place to study. Employees can arrange to use the Library Resource Center and/or access the professional materials by sending the request to [Training@doas.ga.gov](mailto:Training@doas.ga.gov).*

Employees are encouraged to work with their managers and with SPD Professional Development to have access to the above resources.

6. The employee registers and takes the Certification Exam. Certification Exams are scheduled as regular training classes and available through the LMS. A proctor will preside over the Certification Exams except for when the exam is available through the LMS. Once the employee has taken the Certification Exam, the test results are automatically reflected in the employee's transcript available through the LMS.
7. The employee repeats steps three through seven until all requirements are completed for the desired Certification Path within a year. Beginning date for the Certification Path is marked by the Certification Path (Learning Path in the LMS) registration date.
8. When the employee has successfully completed all requirements, certification for the selected path will be awarded.

### Certification Timeframes

Georgia Certifications is valid for 5 years. At the conclusion of the fifth year, the employee must renew the certification by retaking some of the training courses and successfully passing the Renewal Certification Exams. As a result of the Statewide Purchasing Transformation effort, SPD expects to continue to develop new training courses and continue to modify existing training courses resulting on a requirement for employees to retake these courses. Notification will be given of the new training course offerings, whether they are optional or mandatory, and if existing training courses have been reconstituted significantly enough to warrant attendance or completion. Information on certification renewal requirements and course options

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are available online through the LMS and announced through SPD regular communication methods (emails, newsletter, etc.) Employees would access the LMS following the instructions in Accessing the Learning Management System (LMS) section included in this document.

As a complement of the employee's education and in order to maintain certification, the employee is expected to attend relevant procurement-related courses to be granted Continuing Education Units (CEUs). Relevant *procurement-related* courses from accredited organizations such as National Institute of Governmental Procurement (NIGP), Institute of Supply Management (ISM), etc. receive CEUs. Certified employees must earn at least 40 hours of continuing education over a 5-year renewal period. When appropriate, SPD will help to create learning alliances between national accredited organizations by obtaining or approving procurement of training provided through outside sources and/or establishing contracts that assist in decreasing the registration fee for any of the procurement-related courses available through these national organizations.

To receive CEUs, the employee must submit to [Training@doas.ga.gov](mailto:Training@doas.ga.gov) a copy of his/her Certificate of Completion of the relevant *procurement-related* courses from the accredited organization.

### **Training Attendance/Course Completion**

Attendance to instructor-led and successful completion of the online training courses highlighted as mandatory in a Certification Path is obligatory. Mandatory courses are highlighted as mandatory requiring attendance (if instructor-led) and/or successful completion (if available online).

An employee successfully completes a training class when he/she attends 85% of the training class. The 85% rule is applied based on the duration of the training course. For example, 85% of a 7-hour training course equates to at least 6 hours that the employee is required to be in attendance. When an employee is registered for a training class, the training site becomes the employee's designated workstation for the duration of that training class. Because the employee is in actuality being paid to attend and fully participate in the training class, the employee is expected to arrive at the training site *on time*, to return from breaks and lunch as the trainer directs, and to leave the training class after the training class ends. Supervisors and managers are asked to assist with the enforcement of this expectation by discouraging employees from performing work tasks while enrolled in training activities. At least 15 minutes after the start of a training class, the training class sign-in sheet is removed from the training classroom to create the certificates of completion. Employees who arrive once the sign-in sheet has been removed from the training classroom do not receive credit for successful completion of the training class and must enroll in the training class when offered again. In addition, the employee must return from breaks and lunch on time, and abstain from using his/her cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA)/Blackberry device while in the training class as using the cell phone while in the training class is considered the same as not being in attendance.

### **Certification Agreement – SPD Employees ONLY**

SPD employees and managers are asked to conform to the terms of the Certification Agreement. In this agreement, employees must be certified to qualify for assignments to accounts as primary project team member. While not certified, new employees can be assigned as secondary or learning resources to specific customers or internal projects. Certification is required for all SPD employees who perform or audit the procurement functions.

For SPD employees who are required to be certified, a maximum of three attempts will be permitted to successfully complete the Certification Exam. Should the third attempt not be successful, the incumbent will no longer qualify to perform the purchasing functions and will be removed from the position. If another position for which the employee is qualified is unavailable, the employee will be separated from State employment. If the employee has been issued a user ID and password to access the systems available through SPD for conducting purchasing functions, they will be deactivated.

As new employees are hired, they are required to receive:

- The Basic Certification or GCPA within 6 months of employment

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- The RFP Certificate within the next 6 months after receiving the Basic Certification

The employee must receive both certifications within a year of his/her employment with SPD in order to remain in his/her current position.

### Certification Exams

The Certification Exams include tests designed to evaluate competency for the different Certification Paths defined in the Georgia Procurement Certification Program. Each course outlined in the Certification Path has an exam and are available online. Only the Introduction to State Purchasing training courses Certification Exams are available without the presence of a proctor. Employees can complete the Introduction to State Purchasing Certification Exams online from their respective locations. The Certification Exams for all Certification Paths are timed and the time allocated for completion depends on the number of questions, but approximately, each question has 1 minute and 30 seconds.

The Learning Management System (LMS) randomizes the Certification Exam questions and provides a different Certification Exam each time a student attempts to take the same exam. The certification exams have a true-false, multiple-choice, matching, sequencing, and fill-in-the-blank formats. All the Certification Exams are timed and are evaluated by the LMS automatically. The evaluation results are stored in the employee's training record in the LMS.

To receive Certification, the employee must take and successfully pass each of the Certification Exams with a passing score of at least 80 points (out of 100 points) within a year of the certification start date. Each employee has three attempts at successfully passing the Certification Exam for each course outlined in the Certification Path. If the employee fails the first and second Certification Exam, he/she can repeat the course(s) appropriate for the topics missed in the Certification exam and/or participate in work activities that would enhance the skills missed in the Certification Exam, and then, retake the Certification Exam. Certification Exam results will be available through the LMS and if requested, will be shared with the employee's manager.

If the employee fails the Certification Exam a third time, the state entity/university procurement management will be notified immediately to develop a plan of action based on the risk. SPD's policy will be to remove the employee from performing purchasing functions such as developing RFQs, RFPs, manage contracts, etc. and adjust the employee's user ID and password information to access the SPD systems available in such way as to impede the processing of these purchasing functions (for example eQuote, PeopleSoft, or Team Georgia Marketplace™). During this process, SPD will work closely with the state entity or university to develop a transition plan and determine who at the state entity will continue to perform these purchasing functions. New procurement professionals, who do not pass the Certification Exams and, as a result, cannot achieve the certification, will not be allowed to perform these purchasing functions and will not receive user access information for the SPD systems available for conducting these purchasing functions. SPD's position regarding this issue is that when purchasing staff from agencies or universities fail to successfully complete the Certification Exams (and the resulting impact on their delegated authority) negatively affect their value to the entity. Conversely, successful completion enhances their value and ability to make significant contributions.

### Certification Review Activities

Certification Review Activities include activities and courses designed to assist certification participants who do not pass the Certification Exams. Certification remedial activities provide the employee with the opportunity to prepare for a second and third attempt at certification. Remedial activities can include, but are not limited to the following:

- Repeating training courses
- Reading reference materials

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- Attending review training courses designed to review specific topics of the training course
- Opportunities for experience

For SPD employees, remedial activities are planned in conjunction with the employee's manager and documented as the employee's Performance Improvement Plan. Professional Development instructors may assist with specific suggestions based on the employee's Certification Path and test performance. For state entity and university system employees, it is expected that they and their manager develop a remediation plan in conjunction with SPD.

### Recertification Activities

Recertification Activities include activities and training courses designed to certify employees due to the availability of new tools or change in procedures or policies. Recertification activities ensure the evaluation of the employee's ongoing competency.

The scheduling of the recertification activities is done depending on the amount of new material available. For example, the release of Georgia Procurement Manual (GPM) changes is always accompanied by webinars that review the changes implemented. These webinars will carry Continuing Education Units (CEUs) that can be applied for recertification. To receive CEUs for recertification, the student must attend the webinar and be registered as a webinar attendee.

As a complement of the employee's education and in order to maintain certification, the employee is expected to attend relevant procurement-related courses to be granted CEUs. Relevant *procurement-related* courses from accredited organizations such as National Institute of Governmental Procurement (NIGP), Institute of Supply Management (ISM), etc. receive CEUs. Certified employees must earn at least 40 hours of continuing education over a 5-year renewal period. When appropriate, SPD will help to create learning alliances between national accredited organizations by obtaining or approving procurement of training provided through outside sources and/or establishing contracts that assist in decreasing the registration fee for any of the procurement-related courses available through these national organizations.

To receive CEUs, the employee must submit a copy of his/her Certificate of Completion of the relevant *procurement-related* courses from the accredited organization. Students receive CEUs ONLY if the training course is a procurement-related training course.

### ***Special Considerations***

SPD is cognizant of the fact that maintaining a 100% Certification Status is challenging for some organizations. As new people are hired into other organizations or promoted into different positions, the new incoming procurement staff needs to be educated and certified. Because education and certification requires time and commitment from each organization, SPD grants a special dispensation and a grace period of 8 months to allow organizations to comply with the 100% Basic Certification and/or RFP Certificate.

An state entity or university receives the 100% Basic Certification Status when 100% of their procurement staff responsible for completing procurement functions that require the use of RFQs completes the Basic Certification and the 100% RFP Certificate when 100% of their staff responsible for completing procurement functions that require the use of RFPs completes the RFP Certificate.

As other issues arise, that prevent the organization from achieving the 100% Certification Status, the State entity Procurement Officer (APO) or the University Procurement Officer (UPO) can submit a justification requesting a temporary exemption. APOs/UPOs can submit the temporary exemption requests to the attention of the State Purchasing Division (SPD) Chief Learning Officer (CLO) and send it to [ProcessImprovement@doas.ga.gov](mailto:ProcessImprovement@doas.ga.gov). In this request, include the following information:

- Reason for the request
- Staff involved

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- Certification in discussion
- Timeframe to complete certification and estimated date of completion
- Reasons for the delay
- Workflow arrangements, based on roles and responsibilities, the state entity or university has taken to support the procurement functions while the staff becomes certified
- Any necessary assistance from SPD, based on roles and responsibilities, the state entity or university requires to support the procurement functions while the staff becomes certified

***Accessing the Learning Management System (LMS)***

Registering for training classes and Certification Paths is accomplished through the LMS. Employees can register for training classes and cancel from training classes through the LMS. The LMS transcript keeps a record of each registration transaction.

To access the LMS, the employee enters the <http://doas.rollbook.com> address in the web browser. Using a [virtual tour of LMS](#) or the [LMS User Guide](#), the employee can navigate through the LMS in order to review training schedules, register for or cancel training courses, complete courses/tests online, and obtain reports on training progress.

To sign into LMS, the employee follows these simple steps:

1. Type this URL address into the web browser: <http://doas.rollbook.com>
2. Login to the system by entering the employee's email address. (If the first attempt is unsuccessful, try the first name.last name format versus just the initial and last name).
3. Type in the password. The password is the employee's ID number (without the preceding zeros). After signing in, the LMS displays the Welcome page.
4. The Welcome page displays a list of features available on the LMS and provides a tour on how to complete the available features of the system.
5. To avoid showing the LMS Welcome page on the next login, click on *Don't Show This Again*.

## Appendix A – Frequently Asked Questions

1. I am not a Buyer do I have to be certified?  
All state employees responsible for procurement functions must be certified. Those employees who do not perform the procurement function do not have to be certified unless becoming certified enhances the procurement function at the state entity. This decision is left to the manager and the individual.
2. How long do I have to obtain certification?  
As new employees are hired, they are required to receive:
  - The Basic Certification or GCPA within 8 months of employment
  - The RFP Certificate within the next 6 months after receiving the Basic Certification
3. What happens if I fail the exam three (3) times?  
If the employee fails the Certification Exam a third time, access to the Learning Management System (LMS) will be blocked and the student will be blocked from attending other training events. The Professional Development staff will schedule a Review Session with the student. Team Georgia Marketplace™ users cannot obtain access to Team Georgia Marketplace™ to perform activities in the system until such time as successfully completing and passing the test.
4. Do I need to take all the courses before I take an exam?  
You can take the certification exam for the courses outlined in the certification program as you complete each course. However, you must complete the training courses and pass the certification exams with an 80% or greater to obtain the certification.
5. Do I need to retake a class I have already taken to be able to take the certification exam?  
If you have taken the training class after June 1<sup>st</sup> 2007, you do not have to retake the training class.
6. Procurement is not my only job function do I need to be certified?  
All state employees responsible for procurement functions must be certified. If you do not perform procurement functions, you do not need to be certified.
7. What classes do I need for Basic Certification and when must they be completed?
8. Why do I have to be certified?  
Certification is a way to ensure that all procurement professionals have the necessary skills to perform their duties according to the State law, administrative rules as outlined in the GPM, established workflow and procedures, and the appropriate use of the available tools and applications. It also provides a method to measure achievement and required attainment of purchasing competency. By completing the Georgia Procurement Certification Program procurement staff develops the appropriate skills for the job function as well as show that the necessary skills were acquired.
9. What title do I receive when I become certified?
 

Certification Title	Certification Paths Necessary for the Certification Title
Georgia Certified Purchasing Associate (GCPA)	Basic Certification
Georgia Certified Purchasing Manager (GCPM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RFP Certificate</li> <li>• Contract Management Certificate</li> </ul>
Georgia Certified Purchasing Card Administrator (GCPCA)	P-Card Certification
10. I am a Buyer and a user of the Team Georgia Marketplace™, do I need to have my Basic certification?

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Yes. Although, instead of taking the eSource for RFQs (3010L) or eSource for RFPs, RFIs, and RFQCs (3025L) training courses, you must take the Team Georgia Marketplace™ training courses.

11. I manage the procurement department, but do not do purchasing, do I need to be certified?  
It is highly recommended.

12. I already have my CPPB and/or CPPO and/or CPM, why is it necessary that I participate in the Georgia Certification program?

Because the training courses offered by the Georgia Certification program are designed to:

- Provide the appropriate training courses that give the necessary skills for procurement professionals to perform their duties according to the state law, administrative rules as outlined in the GPM, established workflow and procedures, and the appropriate use of the available tools and applications.
- Provide and establish a measure of achievement and required attainment of purchasing competency.

None of the National Procurement organizations provides training that is specific to how Georgia performs procurement functions, the required procedures and forms that must be used, as well as the systems to use for performing the procurement functions.