

# Certification:

The Career Advantage

Application for CPS or CAP Certification



*Turning Jobs  
Into Careers*

# Professional Certification:

**The** International Association of Administrative Professionals, the premier association for administrative professionals, offers two professional ratings. The Certified Professional Secretary and Certified Administrative Professional ratings are the recognized standards of proficiency.

**The CPS and CAP examinations are based on the premise that an** administrative professional should have basic knowledge of office systems, technology, office administration and management, and know how to apply the principles of good human relations and communications. Some of the examinations are also based on knowledge acquired by the office professional through formal education and informal reading. Employers expect their admin to be familiar with current technologies in office practice and procedures and aware of developments in office systems and technology.

## Benefits of Certification

- Improve your professional qualifications
- Increase your skills and knowledge
- Earn a higher salary
- Raise your professional self-esteem
- Obtain college credit



# Applying

## for the CPS or CAP Exam



### Which Exam Is Right For You?

If you are thinking about attaining certification but aren't sure if you want the CPS, CAP or both ratings, refer to the chart below. It can help clarify the content areas of the exams.

Exam	CPS	CAP
Part 1: Office Systems and Technology	●	●
Part 2: Office Administration	●	●
Part 3: Management	●	●
Part 4: Advanced Organizational Management		●

### Taking The Exams

The first time you take the CPS exam, you must take all three parts and for the CAP, all four. If you don't pass all parts of the exam, you only have to re-take those parts that you did not pass. You may use six consecutive attempts (three years) if needed, to pass all parts. The three-year time limit begins the first time you take the exam.

If, after three years, you don't pass all parts of the exam, you may submit a new application and fees and begin again. Credit for parts previously passed will not be carried over to the new application.

### Frequently Asked Questions

**If I take the four-part CAP exam will I also gain the CPS rating?**

No. New candidates have the option of applying for either the three-part CPS exam and achieving that rating, or applying for the four-part CAP exam and achieving that rating.

**How does a new candidate attain both ratings?**

Enroll as a CPS candidate first, pass the exam and meet the experience requirements, and then enroll as a CAP candidate (taking Part 4 only).

**What do I study to prepare for the exams?**

Each candidate must decide which method or methods of preparation work best for them. Use the Certification Review Guide to direct your study for the exams. The guide

includes outlines, sample questions, bibliography of recommended study materials and suggestions on exam review. College texts listed in the bibliography are the materials used to write the exams. You can get the free guide here: [www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/examrevw.pdf](http://www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/examrevw.pdf).

**Are there review materials available specific to the CPS and CAP exams?**

Yes. Review materials by Prentice Hall (Pearson) and Metcalf Educational Services can be used in preparation for the exams. However, the review materials should not be a candidate's primary source of study. Any review materials used should be in conjunction with college texts listed in the Certification Review Guide: [www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/exams.html](http://www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/exams.html). Using a variety of materials is key in successfully preparing for the exams.



More than 66,000

administrative professionals have achieved the CPS rating since 1951, with nearly 28,000 holding an active CPS rating. Over 5,000 individuals have achieved the CAP rating since its first administration in May 2001.

## Dates To Remember

Application Deadline	Exam Date
Received by February 15	First consecutive Friday and Saturday of May*
Received by August 15	First consecutive Friday and Saturday of November*

\* Parts 1-3 of the CPS and CAP exams are administered all day Saturday and Part 4 of the CAP exam is administered Friday afternoon. Certain international centers have been approved to give the exams on days other than Friday and Saturday.

Late applications will be accepted February 16-28 and August 16-31; A late fee of \$50 must be paid. No applications will be accepted beyond those dates.

Find The Exam Dates Online: [www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/exams.html](http://www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/exams.html)

# Requirements

## for the CPS or CAP Exam

### Experience Requirements

No matter how much education you have before undertaking the CPS or CAP exam, administrative experience is required (see chart at the left). Any experience or degree you have will be enhanced through IAAP's CPS or CAP rating. For specific answers to questions on requirements, see below.

Degree	Experience Required
No Degree	4 years
Associate Degree	3 years
Bachelor's Degree	2 years

#### How far back can I go to support my administrative experience?

All experience submitted must be within the past 15 years. Also, you must have held each position at least two months.

#### Does all experience have to be with one employer?

No. However, total experience submitted must include at least 12 months continuous with one employer in the past five years.

#### Must all of the experience be complete before I apply to take the exams?

CAP exam applicants must have all experience complete and verified at the time they submit their application.

CPS exam applicants may apply prior to having all experience complete, as long as they are currently working in an administrative position, or are a full-time student in a degree granting program. Business educators with 12 months administrative experience in the past 15 years may also apply for the CPS exam.

#### Is only full-time administrative experience acceptable?

No. Administrative experience of at least 20 hours per week is also considered.

#### If I am currently employed in an administrative position, but have not met all experience requirements, how much time do I have to complete the balance?

CPS exam applicants have a total of six years to complete all experience. However, the CPS rating will not be granted until the candidate has fulfilled the experience requirements and submitted verification to the Certification Department.

#### How is experience verified?

Administrative experience is verified using the Job Function & Employer's Statement included in this application packet. A letter from the supervisor listing dates of employment, job title and job duties is also acceptable.



# Fees

## for the CPS or CAP Exam



### Cost

Exam	Member/Nonmember	Fees	Amount
3-part CPS exam	Member	Processing Fee	\$ 50
		Examination Fee	\$ 160
	Nonmember	Processing Fee	\$ 85
		Examination Fee	\$ 250
4-part CAP exam	Member	Processing Fee	\$ 50
		Examination Fee	\$ 210
	Nonmember	Processing Fee	\$ 85
		Examination Fee	\$ 300
CPS holder taking part 4 of CAP Exam	Member	Examination Fee	\$ 120
	Nonmember	Examination Fee	\$ 160
Retaking part(s) of the CPS or CAP exam	Member	Examination Fee (per part)	\$ 60
	Nonmember	Examination Fee (per part)	\$ 100

### Submit Your Application:

Submit completed application, Job Function & Employer's Statement (or letters from employers) and fees

By Mail: IAAP  
10502 Ambassador Drive  
PO Box 20404  
Kansas City, MO 64195-0404

By E-mail: Scan and send documents to [certification@iaap-hq.org](mailto:certification@iaap-hq.org)

By Fax: 816.891.9118 or 816.801.1378

### Notification:

You will be notified by e-mail when the Certification Department has received the application. Those who do not have e-mail will be notified by mail. Due to the large number of applications received, please allow two weeks for notification before contacting the Certification Department.

### Refund, Withdrawal & Transfer Policies:

Some fees can be recovered if you apply for the exam and decide not to take it. Candidates withdrawing from the exam may receive a refund of one-half the exam fee. The processing fee and any late fees are non-refundable.

If you apply for the exam and decide you will not be prepared in time, you may request a one-time transfer to the next examination. Candidates who transfer to the next exam must pay a \$50 transfer fee. Neither the transferred exam fee nor the \$50 transfer fee are refundable. No other transfers are permitted within a three-year time limit.

Your request to withdraw or transfer must be submitted in writing or e-mail to the IAAP Certification Department by April 1 if registered for the May exam or October 1 if registered for the November exam.

No refunds or transfers are given without prior written notice to the IAAP Certification Department.

# Application To Take The CPS or CAP Examination

New Candidates Only— Not to be used by existing candidates.

Individualized registration forms are mailed to all eligible retake candidates prior to each examination.

## HEADQUARTERS USE ONLY

Year \_\_\_\_\_ Education \_\_\_\_\_ Qualifying Status \_\_\_\_\_  
Experience Required \_\_\_\_\_  
Exam Type \_\_\_\_\_ Experience Verified \_\_\_\_\_ HQ Initials \_\_\_\_\_

**Check One:**       **CPS Exam Applicant**      or       **CAP Exam Applicant**  
**Please Print Legibly**

IAAP ID # (if known) \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security No. (optional) \_\_\_\_\_  
First Name and Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_ UPU/PUAS \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Tel (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Home Tel (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Fax (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### CPS Exam Applicants - 3 part exam

Have you previously filed a CPS Examination application?

Yes       No

If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_

Name (if different when applied) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

or

### CAP Exam Applicants - 4 part exam

Have you previously filed a CAP Examination application?

Yes       No

If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a CPS holder?       Yes       No

Date certified \_\_\_\_\_

Name (if different when certified) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Exam Dates:

MAY (received, e-mailed or faxed by February 15th)\*

NOVEMBER (received, e-mailed or faxed by August 15th)\*

\* See Fees on the next page for applications submitted after the deadline.

CPS and CAP Exams administered first consecutive Friday and Saturday of May and November:

CPS & CAP Exam Part 1-3: Administered Saturday

CAP Exam Part 4: Administered Friday

Certain international centers have been approved to administer the exams on days other than Friday and Saturday.

### Exam Center Choices

Select 3 choices from center listing found at:

[www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/examctrs.pdf](http://www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/examctrs.pdf)

1st:     

2nd:     

3rd:

## FEES (payable in U.S. funds)

## Check ONE

### IAAP Member

CPS Applicant: Processing Fee \$ 50  
 Examination Fee + \$ 160  
 TOTAL AMOUNT = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

CAP Applicant: Processing Fee \$ 50  
 Examination Fee + \$ 210  
 TOTAL AMOUNT = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Part 4 ONLY: Processing Fee \$ 0  
 Examination Fee + \$ 120  
 TOTAL AMOUNT\* = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Nonmember

CPS Applicant: Processing Fee \$ 85  
 Examination Fee + \$ 250  
 TOTAL AMOUNT = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

CAP Applicant: Processing Fee \$ 85  
 Examination Fee + \$ 300  
 TOTAL AMOUNT = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Part 4 ONLY: Processing Fee \$ 0  
 Examination Fee + \$ 160  
 TOTAL AMOUNT\* = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

or

**\*Late Applicants:** A \$50 late fee must be added for applications submitted February 16-28 and August 16-31.  
 No applications will be accepted beyond those dates.

## PAYMENT

- Check or money order enclosed payable to IAAP
- Please charge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to my credit card:
- Select one:  Visa  Mastercard  Discover  AmEx

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it appears on card (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## ALL APPLICANTS

Experience and Education verification:

- Attach Job Function and Employer's Statement (or letters from employers) to verify all needed experience.
- Provide copy of transcript or diploma to verify college degree earned.

**NOTE:** Current CPS holders applying for Part 4 only of the CAP exam are not required to submit verification of experience and education.

If applying as a Student or Business Educator, attach letter from college/university attending or employed by. Student's letter must include degree program and scheduled date to complete requirements. Business Educator's letter must include dates employed and courses being taught.

**All Applicants:** I certify that I have read and understand the Applying and Qualifying regulations, that the information supplied is correct and in accordance with the instructions, and that I am responsible for submitting information to keep my file current. I further certify that my experience as submitted conforms to the IAAP definition of an administrative professional and that the Certification Department reserves the right to obtain further verification of information provided in this application. I understand and agree that all examination materials, answers and test scores are the exclusive property of International Association of Administrative Professionals. I also agree to accept the scores as final as reported by the Institution for Certification.

I agree that IAAP may at its discretion release information contained in this application, my examination results and my test scores to researchers selected by IAAP to study testing issues for the IAAP examination program under appropriate conditions of confidentiality established by IAAP. Aside from such research purposes, I understand that my individual examination results and test scores will be considered by IAAP to be confidential unless authorized by me and will not be released to others except pursuant to legal process. I understand that any material misstatement in connection with this application will automatically void it. I also understand that answer sheets and applications are maintained by IAAP for a three-year period.

The Institute for Certification reserves the right to refuse the acceptance of any application.

IAAP is not responsible for lost, damaged, misdirected, incomplete, illegible or postage-due applications.

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Mail Application With Fees And Supporting Documents To:

International Association Of Administrative Professionals  
 Certification Department  
 10502 NW Ambassador Drive | PO Box 20404  
 Kansas City, MO 64195-0404

### OR E-mail Or Fax With Credit Card Authorization:

E-mail: certification@iaap-hq.org  
 Fax: 816.891.9118 or 816.801.1378



## To Be Completed By Employer

### SECTION B

All of these duties do not apply to all administrative positions. Those listed are merely examples of the types of duties performed under the Job Functions listed. Please check below each job function performed by applicant.

JOB FUNCTIONS	Frequently	Occasionally	Never
Interpersonal Communications (phone calls, direct visitors, update management, etc.)			
Written Communication (compose correspondence, edit documents, respond to e-mail, etc.)			
Information Distribution (communicate office policies and procedures, etc.)			
Document Production (create documents using word processing, spreadsheet, presentation software, etc.)			
Scheduling and Planning (maintain calendar, schedule appointments/meetings, etc.)			
Records Management (set up/maintain/update file systems, etc.)			
Financial Records Management (budgeting, invoices, financial software, etc.)			
Meeting Management (arrange meetings, facility contracting, travel arrangements, etc.)			
Managing Physical Resources (inventory/order supplies, etc.)			
Conducting Research (gather information for reports/managers, etc.)			
Supervising and Managing Human Resources (prioritize staff work, train others, personnel, etc.)			
Leadership (serve as team leader, develop liaisons, [internal and external], conduct meetings, etc.)			
Computer Hardware, Systems and Configuration (execute basic commands on an operating system, back-ups, networking, etc.)			

### SECTION C

If there are (were) other major duties performed, please list below. Also, include any additional comments you may wish to make concerning applicant's performance.

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### SECTION D

If you are (were) not the applicant's immediate supervisor, please state circumstances and relationship.

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Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Print Legibly) \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Firm \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone Number ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Business Fax Number ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

# Certification:

## Frequently Asked Questions

Am I required to be a member of IAAP before taking the CPS or CAP exam?

No, although members of IAAP do receive discounts on exam fees and some study materials. Details on member benefits are on the IAAP website ([www.iaap-hq.org](http://www.iaap-hq.org)).

How do I find out where the exams are given?

The centers listing can be found on the IAAP website at [www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/examctrs.pdf](http://www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/examctrs.pdf). Not all centers listed are used for each exam, so candidates are asked to make three choices of possible centers. Candidates will be notified of their center assignment approximately one month before the exam.

What information will be included on the exams?

### Part 1 - CPS & CAP Exams

#### Office Systems & Technology:

- 12% computer hardware, systems and configuration
- 16% document layout, design and reproduction
- 60% software
- 12% managing physical resources

### Part 2 - CPS & CAP Exams

#### Office Administration:

- 28% records management
- 72% communication

### Part 3 - CPS & CAP Exams

#### Management:

- 48% human resources
- 16% accounting procedures and analysis
- 12% time management
- 24% communication

### Part 4 - CAP Exam Only

#### Advanced Organizational Management:

- 28% organizational planning
- 24% advanced administration
- 24% team skills
- 24% advanced communication

Do I need to attend college classes before I take the exam?

To prepare for the exams, candidates may need three to six hours of course work at community college level in the areas tested on Parts 1-3 of the CPS and CAP exams. For Part 4 of the CAP exam, 6-9 hours of upper division management courses are recommended (or the equivalent in on-the-job management training courses).

What happens after the exam?

About 45 days after the exam you'll receive a performance report showing either a "pass" or "need." Scoring is determined by the educators on the Institute for Certification and a psychometric consultant using psychometric data.

How long is my certification active?

CPS and CAP holders are required to recertify every five years to keep their certification active.

How is recertification achieved?

Recertification is achieved by earning 90 points every five years in the categories of education, experience, leadership and an elective category. Complete details on recertification can be found on the IAAP website at [www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/recertification.pdf](http://www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/recertification.pdf).

Is it possible to attain college credit after passing the CPS or CAP exam?

The American Council on Education (ACE) does recommend college academic credit for those who have passed the exams. Complete details can be found on the IAAP website ([www.iaap-hq.org](http://www.iaap-hq.org)) under Professional Development > Certification > College Credit.

## Useful Websites:

IAAP Certification Online:  
[www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification](http://www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification)

Exam Review Materials:  
[www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/examrvw.pdf](http://www.iaap-hq.org/prodev/certification/examrvw.pdf)

IAAP Membership Information:  
[www.iaap-hq.org/join](http://www.iaap-hq.org/join)

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## For More Information

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IAAP  
Certification Department  
10502 NW Ambassador Drive  
PO Box 20404  
Kansas City, MO 64195-0404

tel: 816.891.6600  
fax: 816.891.9118

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