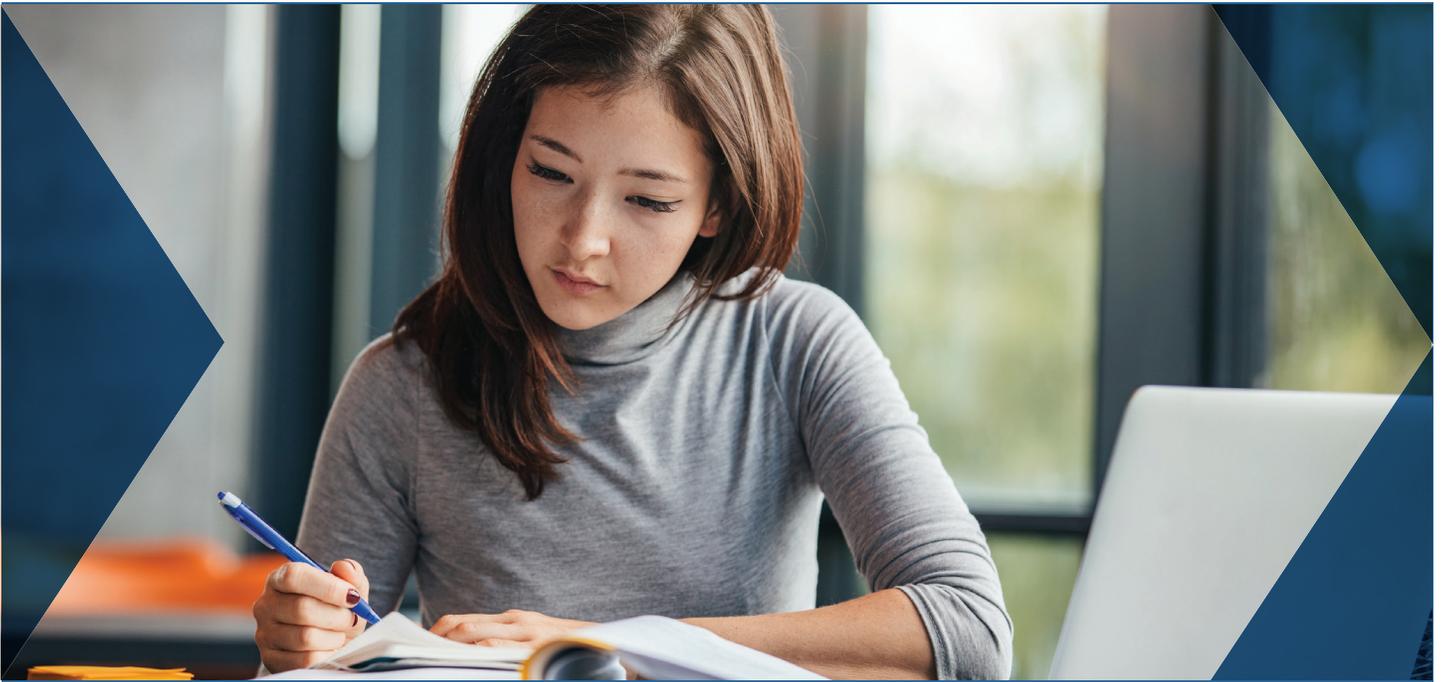


**START EARLY TO STAND OUT**



# AICP Candidate Pilot Program Guide



The American Planning Association's  
Professional Institute

**American Institute  
of Certified Planners**

*Making Great Communities Happen*

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **American Planning Association**

The American Planning Association brings together thousands of people—practicing planners, citizens, elected officials, and students—dedicated to making great communities happen. APA is a nonprofit public interest and education organization committed to urban, suburban, regional, and rural planning. APA's professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, provides leadership in professional development, ethics, and the standards of planning practice.

### **About the AICP Certification Exam**

The AICP Certification Examination tests the knowledge and skills of candidates eligible for membership in AICP. The examination has been developed by committees of experts in the field of planning with the help of Prometric test specialists. An examination committee oversees the program to ensure its continuing professional relevance.

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American Institute of Certified Planners  
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p. 312-431-9100  
f. 312-786-6700  
[aicp@planning.org](mailto:aicp@planning.org)  
[www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)

### **Prometric**

APA works with Prometric to administer the AICP Certification Examination. Prometric is the recognized global leader in testing and assessment services, providing computer-based, internet, and paper-and-pencil testing solutions. It offers a fully integrated testing system that includes test development, test delivery, and data management capabilities. On behalf of more than 600 current clients in the academic, professional, government, corporate, and information technology markets, Prometric develops and delivers assessments through a global network of testing centers in 131 countries, as well as directly to candidates via the web.

Prometric  
AICP Program  
2000 Lenox Pike Corporate Center  
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648  
800-853-6769  
[www.prometric.com/aicp](http://www.prometric.com/aicp)

## INTRODUCTION TO THE AICP CANDIDATE PILOT PROGRAM

The steps and criteria required for AICP certification are the same whether you choose to enroll in the AICP Candidate Pilot Program or follow the traditional path. The AICP Candidate Pilot Program changes the *order* in which those steps are completed, enabling you to take the exam and earn the AICP Candidate designation prior to attaining professional planning experience.

- Students and graduates of PAB-accredited programs can join the program, earn Certification Maintenance credits, and begin optional mentoring.
- Graduates of PAB-accredited programs can take the AICP Certification Exam prior to earning the required professional planning experience. Once they pass the exam, they may use the “AICP Candidate” designation after their names on resumes, etc.
- After AICP Candidates earn their professional planning experience, they submit documenting essays. Once APA approves their essays and they pay AICP dues, they become certified, join AICP, and may use the AICP credential.

Participants have five years from the date of their enrollment to complete the AICP Candidate Pilot Program and become a member of AICP. This includes completing the following milestones:

1. Graduating from a PAB-accredited program;
2. Taking and passing the AICP exam and becoming an “AICP Candidate”;
3. Gaining the required professional planning experience; and
4. Applying for AICP certification and receiving approval.

The total cost of the program is \$495, which includes\*:

1. \$20 enrollment fee;
2. \$100 exam registration fee (\$100 per exam attempt); and
3. \$375 AICP certification application fee (one time only, when applying for AICP certification).

*\*All fees are non-refundable.*

**Note:** Current deadlines are posted on the [AICP Candidate Pilot Program webpage](#).

# AICP CANDIDATE PILOT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Participants must meet the following eligibility requirements before enrolling in the Program:

1. Be a current member of the American Planning Association; and
2. Be a student in or graduate from a program that is approved by the Planning Accreditation Board\* at the time of graduation.

\* [Accredited degrees](#) have been determined by the Planning Accreditation Board to meet standards approved by the American Institute of Certified Planners and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning or recognized by the Canadian Institute of Planners.

## IMPORTANT DATES AND PROGRAM TIMELINE

### Enrollment

Students in or graduates of PAB-accredited programs can enroll in the AICP Candidate Pilot Program at any time during the year. However, enrollees may not register for the AICP Certification Exam until they have graduated and submitted appropriate documentation. APA review of graduation documentation can take up to six weeks.

Participants should be aware of the following dates and timelines.

### Exam Registration Windows

The AICP Certification Exam is offered in May and November. Each exam window is two weeks long. The registration deadline for each window closes at the end of the preceding month. For the May exam, the registration deadline is the last Friday in April. For the November exam, the registration deadline is the last Friday in October.

*Example:* If you enroll in the Program (or update your enrollment if you enrolled as a student and have graduated) in April, the earliest you could take the exam is November.

### AICP Application Windows

After you have enrolled in the Program, passed the AICP Certification Exam, and gained the appropriate planning experience, you can apply to become an AICP member. The application windows are in December and June each year, typically from the first Monday to the last Friday. Application review by AICP Peer Reviewers takes 8-10 weeks. (See Step 3: Gain Experience and Apply for AICP Membership in this guide to learn more about the application process.)

### Program Duration

Participants have five years from the date of their enrollment to complete the AICP Candidate Pilot Program and become a member of AICP.

**Note:** Current deadlines are posted on the [AICP Candidate Pilot Program webpage](#).

# STEP 1: ENROLLMENT

## Enrollment Process Overview

### 1. Bring your APA membership up to date

All participants in the AICP Candidate Pilot Program must be current members of the American Planning Association. Please make sure that your APA and chapter memberships are up-to-date before you enroll.

If your chapter and APA dues (if applicable) are not fully paid, you will not have access to the online enrollment form.

### 2. Review the enrollment eligibility requirements

All participants must meet eligibility requirements for the AICP Candidate Pilot Program before enrolling. See AICP Candidate Pilot Program Eligibility Requirements.

### 3. Submit the online enrollment information and pay a \$20 fee

Participants can enroll in the AICP Candidate Pilot Program year-round at [planning.org/aicp/candidate](https://planning.org/aicp/candidate).

#### Describe and verify education history

**Students:** Select your PAB-accredited degree program (college or university name and undergraduate or graduate program).

**Graduates:** Select your PAB-accredited degree program (college or university name and undergraduate or graduate program), enter your graduation date, and upload your graduation documentation.

Acceptable forms of documentation are: PDF of official transcript; PDF of letter from registrar/dean; or notarized copy of diploma. Please be sure to review all your documents for accuracy prior to uploading them.

#### Read and verify you have read the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

##### Application summary and review

Review the information you provided prior to submission.

##### Submit form and pay \$20 enrollment fee

You must pay online with a credit card. (Note: All fees are subject to change. Refer to the [APA website](#) for the most up-to-date information.)

### 4. Receive emails from APA acknowledging receipt of your enrollment information and payment

#### For Graduates

It will take approximately six weeks for APA to thoroughly review your enrollment information, including graduation documentation. When the review is completed, APA will update your enrollment status in the AICP Status section of [My APA](#), and notify you by email whether your Program enrollment is approved or incomplete.

#### Graduation Documentation for Participants Who Enrolled as Students and Have Graduated

Students who enroll in the Program must submit graduation documentation to be eligible to register for the AICP Certification Exam. This step is required to confirm that you have graduated. To submit this documentation, go to the AICP Status section of [My APA](#) and choose "AICP Candidate Enrollment Status."

Please note that you must submit graduation documentation by the first Monday in March if you want to take the AICP Certification Exam in May, or the first Monday in September if you want to take the exam in November. Acceptable forms of documentation are: PDF of official transcript; PDF of letter from registrar/dean; or notarized copy of diploma. Please be sure to review all your documents for accuracy prior to uploading them.

## Incomplete Enrollment

Enrollees who provide incorrect information will be assigned "Incomplete" status. They must update their enrollment information with accurate information about their PAB-accredited program or graduation documentation.

## Denied Enrollment

Enrollees who are not students in or graduates of a PAB-accredited program will be assigned "Denied" status. They must demonstrate that they meet required Program criteria in order to participate.

## Enrollment Status Key

Due to the high volume of enrollments APA receives as a submission deadline approaches, it may take up to 10 weeks to review your submission. During the review process, APA status updates will inform you where your application is in the review process. You are responsible for checking the status of your enrollment status in the AICP Status section of [My APA](#).

Below are the enrollment statuses and their definitions.

| Status | Meaning             | Definition   |
|--------|---------------------|--|
| A      | Enrollment Approved | Your enrollment was approved. You are a graduate enrolled in the AICP Candidate Pilot Program. |
| EN     | Enrolled            | Your enrollment was approved. You are a student enrolled in the AICP Candidate Pilot Program.  |
| P      | Enrollment Pending  | You submitted enrollment information and APA is reviewing it.                                  |
| D      | Enrollment Denied   | Your enrollment was denied. APA will notify you of the reasons for denial.                     |

**Note:** Current deadlines are posted on the [AICP Candidate Pilot Program webpage](#).

# CERTIFICATION MAINTENANCE

## Background

Certification Maintenance strengthens the value of the AICP certification, demonstrating members' ongoing commitment to excellence and professional development.

All professional planners who are members of AICP engage in mandatory continuing education to maintain their certification. The CM program links certified planners to training opportunities that keep them up to date on the latest trends, technologies, and best practices.

The AICP Candidate Pilot Program includes CM to ensure participants are current in professional practice and knowledge.

## Earning CM Credits

Enrolled Program participants must earn a total of 16 CM credits (1 contact hour of training = 1 CM credit). A minimum of 1.5 CM credits must be on the topic of ethics; another 1.5 CM credits must be on the topic of current planning law. You will record the CM credits you earned in the AICP Status section of [MyAPA](#) and via links to the [CM Log](#) and [CM Search](#) pages.

You will have five years from the date you enrolled in the AICP Candidate Pilot Program to complete your CM credit requirements.

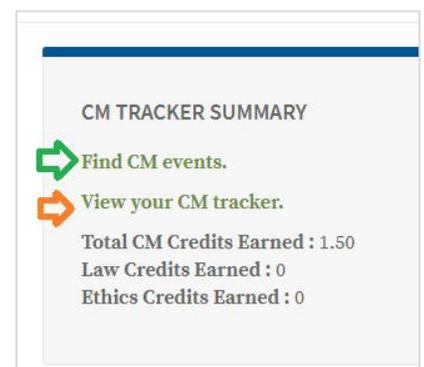
## Find and Track CM Credits

Training opportunities that earn CM credit are displayed on the [CM Search](#) page. We encourage you to bookmark this page and check back often to search for training opportunities.

### Step 1: CM Tracker Location

From the AICP Status section of MyAPA, click "AICP Candidate Enrollment Status."

- The enrollment status page will display a summary of your CM credit totals.
- You will also see links to [find CM](#) events and to your full [CM Tracker](#).



## Step 2: CM Tracker

View and manage your CM credits.

- Your CM status should be “active” (blue arrow).
- 16 total CM credits are required (green arrow).
- Of those credits, you must earn 1.5 CM Law credits and 1.5 CM Ethics credits (purple arrow).
- Remaining credits needed will decrease as you add CM-activities to your tracker (pink arrow).
- There is a link to go back to your AICP Candidate status page (orange arrow).

View your AICP Candidate Pilot Program status.

### AICP Candidate Pilot Program CM Tracker

CM Status: Active

16.00 Credits required

0.00 Credits earned

16.00 Remaining credits needed

0.00 Law credits earned of 1.50 required

0.00 Ethics credits earned of 1.50 required

## Step 3: Search

Search events by event type.

- Click “Search CM Events” for live in-person or on-line training.
- Click “Search On-Demand Products” for recorded training.
- Click the “?” for more information.

Add Credits

Add Events

Add Events

Search CM-registered events that occurred at a particular time, either in-person or online.

Add On-Demand Courses

Add On-Demand Courses

Search CM-registered on-demand courses, such as recorded webinars and podcasts.

## Step 4: CM Search

Look for CM-eligible training and add credits to your CM Tracker.

- Events offering CM credits will have a CM notation with the total number of credits.
- If Law or Ethics is included you will see the L or E, for example **CM | 6.25 L | 1**.
- Using the keyword search, you can search based on the seven-digit event ID number (e.g. 9103443), the title, or a portion of the title.
- You can refine your search using filters like event type and date range.

## CM Search

Showing 1 - 20 of 3267

keyword Go

FILTER +

Sort: Time (newest to oldest)

THE SEMINAR GROUP  
LIVE IN PERSON EVENT  
Coastal Issues and Shoreline Regulations in Georgia

November 14, 2017, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST  
Atlanta, GA  
Location: Hall 1A06 (Javits Convention Center)  
Andrew Ernst | Rhodes Robinson | C. Max Zygmunt

#9130443  
CM | 6.25 L | 1

### Step 5: Add CM credits to your tracker

- For single and on-demand courses, click “Add to My CM Tracker.”
- For multipart events (e.g. conferences with multiple sessions), click “Add Activities to My CM Tracker.”

**APA MISSOURI CHAPTER**  
**Ethics Jeopardy!**  
 June 28, 2016, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. CDT  
 Kansas City, MO

#9105317  
**CM | 1.50**  
**E | 1.50**

  
 Add to My CM Tracker

**APA CALIFORNIA CHAPTER, CENTRAL COAST SECTION**  
**LIVE IN-PERSON EVENT**  
**2017 Santa Barbara Housing Conference: "The Road to Housing"**  
 August 25, 2017, 8:30 a.m. to August 26, 3:30 p.m. PDT  
 Santa Barbara, CA

#9125193  
**CM | MULTI**

  
 Add Activities to My CM Tracker

### Step 6: Track and evaluate the event

- Evaluate the event by rating it (*orange arrow*), from one to five stars. This is required to add the event to your tracker.
- You may add comments (*green arrow*) about the event (optional).
- Click the Agree box to verify you attended the event in full (*red arrow*).

## Track CM & Evaluate Event

---

**Engage and Inspire: Envisioning Redevelopment**  
**CM | 1.50**

You are tracking CM credits to satisfy the requirements of the AICP Candidate Program.

RATE THIS EVENT: 

**Four Stars**

 COMMENTS (OPTIONAL):

  Agree

Through my ethical obligations, as governed by the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, I verify that I attended this program in full.

### Step 6: Track and evaluate the event, continued

- Rate the speaker(s) (required) and add your comments about the speaker(s) (optional) (*purple arrow*).
- If you would like to publish your comments to share with other AICP members, click Agree (optional) (*blue arrow*).
- Click the green Submit button to add this event to your [CM Tracker](#) (*red arrow*).

## Speaker Evaluations

Only speakers who are included in the APA Speaker Database are available for evaluation. Event speakers who are not in the database will not appear in this section.

**SCOTT SHINE, AICP**

RATE THIS SPEAKER:

       **Three Stars**

SPEAKER COMMENTS (OPTIONAL):

  Agree

You may publish these comments, along with my name, on APA's website to help other AICP members judge the quality of this provider's events.

**Submit** 

## You have successfully submitted your claim.

- When you click Submit, you will be redirected to your [CM Tracker](#).
- At the top of your CM Tracker page you will see the green confirmation that you have successfully submitted your claim.
- Note: if you are logging a multipart event (e.g. a conference with multiple sessions) click the link to “Log More Activities...” to continue adding to your [CM Tracker](#).
- If you are finished adding CM events, click “Dismiss”.



## Helpful CM Resources

Below are links to CM training opportunities that are free or reduced cost for APA members.

[APA free on-demand education offering CM credits](#)

[APA e-Learning](#): Live and on-demand courses. CM notation indicates eligibility for CM credits.

# MENTORING

Participants in the AICP Candidate Pilot Program may take advantage of the opportunity to be matched with a mentor.

## Sign Up

To sign up to be matched with a mentor, program participants must complete [a brief online survey](#). APA will match you with a mentor based on shared interests and geography and tell you how to contact him or her.

APA will provide a Guidelines and Ground Rules document and other resources to facilitate the mentor/protege relationship. Guidelines and Ground Rules includes a Letter of Agreement to formalize how and when you and your mentor will meet and communicate. Both you and your mentor must sign the document and return it to APA.

## Roles and Responsibilities

You are responsible for initiating the mentoring relationship. Once you have made first contact, be prepared to get the most from the opportunity.

- Make a good first impression. Bring a goal or topics for discussion to the first meeting.
- Take time to become acquainted and set expectations for the relationship at the beginning.
- Bring specific topics for discussion to each session.
- Be humble, listen attentively, and don't rush to judgement. Be open to feedback.
- Discuss how to cancel or reschedule a meeting.
- Commit to minimizing schedule changes.

## STEP 2: REGISTER FOR THE AICP CERTIFICATION EXAM

### Register for the Exam

Participants in the AICP Candidate Pilot Program may register for and take the AICP Certification Exam after they have earned a degree from a PAB-accredited program.

To register for the exam, go to the AICP Status Section of [My APA](#). The registration process includes paying the \$100 AICP Certification Exam registration fee and receiving an Eligibility ID for the current exam window. The registration confirmation email will tell you where to retrieve your Eligibility ID and how to schedule an appointment to take the exam at a specific date and time at the Prometric testing center of your choice.

### Exam Candidates Outside of the United States and Canada

Exam candidates outside of the United States and Canada take the computer-based test during the regular May and November testing windows. The examination can be administered at a Prometric international site or a prearranged site such as an embassy or university. Locate an international Prometric test center site [here](#). There is no additional fee to sit for the test outside of the United States.

### Special Testing Arrangements

Exam candidates with documented visual, physical, hearing, or learning disabilities that would prevent them from taking an examination under standard conditions may request special testing accommodations and arrangements.

Prometric requires written documentation of the disability from the candidate's doctor or another qualified medical professional that specifies the accommodations needed by the applicant. The exam candidate must email a copy of the document to APA at [aicpexam@planning.org](mailto:aicpexam@planning.org) **prior to making an exam appointment**. There is no extra fee for making special testing arrangements.

In considering a request from an applicant for special accommodations, APA and Prometric are guided by a sense of fairness. Special accommodations are granted to give a candidate the opportunity to be tested in an equivalent manner with other candidates, but not to provide an advantage over other candidates.

A list of pre-approved personal items for testing accommodations can be found on the [Prometric website](#).

**Note:** Current deadlines are posted on the [AICP Candidate Pilot Program webpage](#).

# SCHEDULING TEST APPOINTMENTS

## Test Center Locations

All domestic and international candidates may schedule, reschedule, and cancel appointments online at [www.prometric.com/aicp](http://www.prometric.com/aicp). Please note that testing center locations change, albeit infrequently. The website lists current test center locations and contact information and directions for each site.

## Where to Take the Examination

Test centers are located domestically and internationally. Review the test center list [online](#) and select the most convenient location, regardless of whether it is in the state where you live. Prometric will make every effort to assign you to the center of your choice. There may be times, however, when more examinees apply for one center than can be accommodated. Examination candidates who attempt to schedule at a test center already at capacity will have the opportunity to select another date within the exam window or a different test center as near as possible to the requested location.

## Scheduling Your Examination Appointment

If your application is approved, you will receive an Eligibility ID after you pay the exam registration fee. You also will receive instructions on how to set up your exam appointment during the testing window. Please note:

- You must have your Eligibility ID to schedule an appointment. Find it in the AICP Status section of [My APA](#) after you have registered.
- Candidates must take the examination during the testing window indicated in the Eligibility ID email.

To schedule your appointment:

- Try to schedule your appointment on [Prometric's website](#). Their online scheduling system is the most accurate, efficient, and effective way to get your first choice for an exam appointment.
- If you are unable to schedule your appointment online, call either Prometric's Candidate Service Call Center at 800-796-9853 or the Prometric test center of your choice.

NOTE: A tester who needs to make special testing arrangements should first contact [APA](#) to make sure the special accommodations request has been communicated to Prometric, and then schedule with Prometric's Candidate Service Call Center at 800-967-1139. (See Special Testing Arrangements.)

## Additional Scheduling Information

- Eligibility IDs for a particular testing window are not released until the previous window has passed and all administrative reporting has been completed.
- Review your Eligibility ID carefully. Be certain all information is correct. This will facilitate rapid and efficient processing at your test appointment. Contact APA at 312-431-9100 or email [aicpexam@planning.org](mailto:aicpexam@planning.org) if your Eligibility ID is incorrect.
- Prometric charges APA for the number of candidates who schedule an appointment to test. If, after scheduling an appointment, you do not take the exam during the assigned testing window, you will be required to pay the exam fee again in order to reschedule for the next testing window. (See Appendix for details.)
- If you sign up for the exam, you are expected to sit for the test during that exam window. If you do not schedule an appointment to test and are not approved for a transfer to the next exam window by the relevant deadline, you will forfeit your full exam registration fee. (See Appendix for details.)

Finally:

- You must make your appointment at least 48 hours before the test window opens.
- The AICP Certification Exam is not the only examination administered at Prometric testing centers. Seats fill quickly, so register as early as possible.
- Make sure you have your Eligibility ID on hand when you make your exam appointment.
- If you lose your Eligibility ID, contact APA at [aicpexam@planning.org](mailto:aicpexam@planning.org) to request a duplicate authorization.
- Test centers typically are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Saturday hours vary by test center.
- If your first test center choice is unavailable, you will be offered an alternative as close as possible to your first choice.
- Once your examination has been scheduled, you will receive a confirmation number via email. You will not receive a confirmation of your appointment by regular mail. Do not lose this number—you will need it if you need to change your appointment. (See Appendix for details.)
- To get door-to-door directions to the Prometric testing center, call Prometric's automated direction line at 800-796-9853 or visit Prometric's website at [www.prometric.com/aicp](http://www.prometric.com/aicp).

## PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

As part of your enrollment in the AICP Candidate Pilot Program, you will receive information to help you prepare for the AICP Certification Exam. Your chapter's Professional Development Officer can refer you to additional resources. Find your PDO's contact information at [planning.org/chapters/pdo](http://planning.org/chapters/pdo). More exam prep information is available at [planning.org/certification/examprep](http://planning.org/certification/examprep).

## DAY OF EXAM

### Identification Requirements

Proper photo ID is required to enter the test center. You must have two forms of identification bearing your name and your signature. At least one must be a primary form of identification that includes a recent photo.

- Primary forms of identification include: valid passport, valid driver's license, or photo-bearing employee ID card.
- Secondary forms of identification include: military ID card, citizenship card, valid credit or debit card with signature, or Social Security card.
- You may not use a draft classification card or student ID.

Important:

- Keep both forms of identification with you at all times. If you leave the testing room for any reason, you will be required to show the Test Center Administrator your identification to be readmitted.
- If you do not bring the appropriate identification to the test center, you will not be able to test within that testing window.
- Your name as it appears on your identification must match the name used to register for the exam.. Therefore, if any information on your Eligibility ID is incorrect, contact AICP at [aicpexam@planning.org](mailto:aicpexam@planning.org) or 312-431-9100 prior to scheduling your exam appointment. (See Acceptable Differences in ID in the Appendix.)

### At the Test Center

Plan to be at the test center for four hours. Arrive early and bring proper ID. You must arrive at the test center 30 minutes before your scheduled appointment to complete the required admission process before testing begins. Late arrivals will not be admitted.

After you are admitted, the Test Center Administrator will give you a short orientation and escort you to a work station. You must remain in your seat during the examination, except when authorized to leave by the TCA.

You will have access to a calculator on the computer. The TCA will provide you with a marker and small dry erase board, which may be augmented as needed during testing. You may not remove the scratch paper from the testing room. You will not be allowed to bring your own scratch paper, pencil, or calculator into the testing room.

Raise your hand if you:

- have a problem with your computer;
- need more scratch paper;
- need to take a break (Note: you will not get extra time to take the examination); or
- need the TCA for any reason.

When you have finished the exam and a post-examination survey, the TCA will collect all your scratch paper.

### Examination Logistics

You will have 3½ hours to answer 170 examination questions. 150 of the questions will be scored; 20 are questions being considered for future examinations that will not be scored. This is the standard format for computer-based testing. Scored and unscored questions and content areas are distributed randomly throughout the examination.

You will have 15 minutes prior to the exam for an online tutorial and 15 minutes after the exam to answer a brief computer-administered exit survey.

During the examination, you will have the opportunity to review all questions. You may change answers or mark or

skip questions and go back to complete your answers. This system allows you to use your time efficiently. Answer the questions you are sure of first, leaving your remaining time for the more difficult questions.

When time expires, all answers, regardless of how they are marked, will be calculated into your score. You cannot see the questions once your allotted time expires or you submit your completed exam.

### **Exit Survey**

The exit survey will provide APA and Prometric with an evaluation of your testing experience. All comments will be reviewed after the testing window closes and will remain confidential.

## STEP 3: GAIN EXPERIENCE AND APPLY FOR AICP MEMBERSHIP

After passing the AICP Certification Exam, you will become an “AICP Candidate.” You can use this designation after your name in your resume and LinkedIn profile, on your business card, and in other places where you list your professional credentials. When looking for a job, be sure to let potential employers know that “AICP Candidate” means you passed the AICP exam, so you only need to earn planning experience to become an AICP member. This may help you get a position that requires earning AICP certification within a certain timeframe.

The next step is to gain the required amount of planning experience and apply to become an AICP member. AICP Candidates with a PAB-accredited undergraduate degree need three years of experience; AICP Candidates with a PAB-accredited graduate degree need two years of experience. The AICP membership application for AICP Candidates consists of three essays that document that your professional planning experience meets [required criteria](#).

For detailed information about the AICP application process, review the relevant information in the [AICP Certification Exam Guide](#):

- [Application process](#)
- [Criterion requirements](#)
- [Does your experience qualify?](#)
- [Internship experience](#)
- [Employment verification](#)
- [Application tips](#)
- [Criterion checklist](#)

We also suggest that you ask your chapter’s Professional Development Officer (PDO) to review your essays before you submit them.

AICP Peer Reviewers will make a decision 8–10 weeks after you submit your application. If APA approves your application, you will be told what to do next.

### Early-Bird Application Window

There are two benefits to applying during the early-bird application window (the first week of the application window). First, an early-bird applicant whose application is not approved may revise the applications—according to the advice provided in the denial letter—and resubmit it in the same exam window. Second, an early-bird applicant receives early notification of the application decision.

- *Re-submitting a disapproved application.*  
The application must be resubmitted before the deadline conveyed in the denial letter to be considered for the same application window. APA will notify an applicant who resubmits of the outcome of the second review by the final notification deadline. Note: APA does not guarantee approval of a revised and resubmitted application.
- *Early notification of application status*  
An early-bird applicant will be notified of the application’s approval or denial by the early-bird notification deadline posted at [planning.org/certification/currentexam](http://planning.org/certification/currentexam). APA will inform any early-bird applicant who does not receive approval or denial notification by this date that the application requires additional review. These applicants will be first in the review queue and will receive their approval or denial notice shortly thereafter.

Please refer to the exam application schedule posted at [planning.org/certification/currentexam](http://planning.org/certification/currentexam).

Email [aicpexam@planning.org](mailto:aicpexam@planning.org) with questions about the AICP application process.

# APPENDIX: EXAM REGISTRATION DETAILS

## Transfers and Appointment Changes

The following policies apply to rescheduling your test appointment within the same exam window or transferring to the next exam window. For a May window, the next exam window is November of the same calendar year. For a November window, the next exam window is May of the next calendar year.

### Changing Your Test Appointment (within the [same exam window](#))

To change an appointment date or time within the same exam window, you must cancel your scheduled appointment and reschedule your appointment through Prometric.

Log on to [www.prometric.com/aicp](http://www.prometric.com/aicp) or contact the test center directly by **noon (ET), at least two full business days prior to your scheduled appointment**. You will not be permitted to cancel or reschedule your appointment if you miss this deadline.

Prometric charges a \$35 fee for cancelling or rescheduling an exam appointment 2–29 days before the scheduled test date. (See the No-Show Policy below.) Prometric will not charge a fee to cancel or reschedule your exam appointment if you do so 30 or more days before your test date. (See the chart below for more information.)

**Cancelling an exam appointment with Prometric is only the first step in the transfer process.** You also must contact APA staff to request a transfer before the deadline. If you cancel your exam appointment and do not request a transfer or do so after the deadline, you will forfeit your exam fee. Leaving a voicemail message does not qualify as canceling or rescheduling your testing appointment.

| Prometric's Cancellation / Rescheduling Policy  |   |
|---|---|
| Time Period   | Fee   |
| 30 or more days before the test date  | None  |
| 2–29 days before the scheduled test date  | \$35 (to be collected by Prometric from tester) |
| Less than two days before the test date   | Full exam fee payment                           |
| Fail to appear for the scheduled test   | Full exam fee payment                           |
| Refused entry for arriving 15 minutes or more after the scheduled start time on the test date | Full exam fee payment                           |

## Transfers to the Next Exam Window

If you register to take the AICP Certification Examination, you are expected to take the test during the upcoming exam window. However, you may transfer to the following exam window.. You must pay a \$100 transfer fee online when you register for the next exam. (For example, if you transfer your May exam registration, you must pay \$100 when you register for the upcoming November exam.)

### To request a transfer to the following exam window:

1. Cancel your existing exam appointment with Prometric. (See Changing Your Test Appointment above.)
2. Email APA at [aicpexam@planning.org](mailto:aicpexam@planning.org) with your request to transfer and confirmation of your cancelled exam appointment. Be sure to include your full name and APA ID number in the email. If you do not request a transfer by APA's transfer deadline, you must either take the test during the scheduled exam window or forfeit your exam fee. (See Refunds below.) APA's transfer deadline is posted at [planning.org/certification/currentexam](http://planning.org/certification/currentexam).
3. APA will process your transfer request and email your confirmation, with instructions on how to register for the next exam.

Please note: Consecutive exam transfers are not permitted except for extenuating circumstances. Transfer requests submitted after the transfer deadline or submitted while you still have a test appointment scheduled will not be accepted.

## No-Show Policy

You will be considered a “no show” and will forfeit your full exam fee if:

- You miss your scheduled appointment.
- You cancel with Prometric less than two full business days prior to your scheduled appointment.
- You cancel with Prometric but do not request a transfer, or if you request a transfer after the deadline.
- You arrive 15 minutes or more past your scheduled appointment time.
- You do not bring acceptable ID with you to the test center and are denied admission.

In the cases listed above, you will not be allowed to reschedule your examination within the current exam window, you will forfeit all fees paid, and you must pay another full exam fee to register for a future exam window.

## If You Never Schedule an Appointment

Testers who register to take the AICP exam must schedule a test appointment and sit for the exam during the upcoming exam window. Testers who register for the exam and do not test or transfer will forfeit their full exam fee.

## Refunds

APA will not refund the exam fee. Testers who register for the exam must either take the test or transfer via the transfer request process.

## Acceptable Differences in ID

Each tester must bring two forms of ID on exam day; both must contain signatures, and one must have a photo. If a tester’s name differs on the photo identification and the Eligibility ID email, refer to the list and examples of acceptable name variations below. If the name variation is listed, the tester may schedule an exam appointment. If the name variation is not listed, the tester must email APA at [aicpexam@planning.org](mailto:aicpexam@planning.org) before making an appointment to test. AICP staff will update the tester’s record and forward the updated record to Prometric. APA will notify the tester once the appropriate changes have been made. The tester must wait 48 hours before making an appointment for the updated file to reach the Prometric test centers.

**NOTE:** The address in your exam appointment confirmation does not need to match the address provided on your identification.

| Allowable Name Discrepancies   | Examples   |
|--|--|
| A single-letter discrepancy exists in examinee’s name.   | • Single letter difference: Johnson vs. Johmson • Single letter transposition: Alexander vs. Alexandre • Single letter omission: Schultz vs. Shultz • Single letter addition or subtraction: Miller vs. Mialler or Miler |
| One version of examinee’s name has a middle initial or middle name while other does not.   | • John E. Smith vs. John Smith • Mary R. Abernathy vs. Mary Rose Abernathy   |
| First name is provided formally on one document, but a typical variation is used on another document.  | • Michael Jones vs. Mike Jones   |
| Incorrect letters are used in a name on one document but correct letters are used on another document.   | • Diller vs. Ditter • Dutton vs. Ditton  |
| Maiden name is used as a middle name on one document, while given middle name is used on another document.   | • Mary Elizabeth Smith vs. Mary Jones Smith  |
| Names are shown in Last Name, First Name format.   | • Russell, Evan vs. Evan Russell   |
| Suffixes to name should be ignored.  | • For example: Jr., Sr., II, III   |
| If the names on examinee’s record on computer and ID differ because the examinee made a legal name change, the examinee must present one of the following: • marriage certificate • divorce decree • legal name change |  |
| <b>Important:</b> Substitution of another name for either the first or last name or both names (e.g., Smith to Jones or Smith to Smith-Jones, or John to James) is not permitted.                                      |  |

## Testing Procedures

To ensure that all testers take the examination under comparable conditions and achieve fair and accurate results, a standardized testing environment will be maintained.

The following regulations and procedures will be observed at every test center:

- You must follow the instructions given by the Test Center Administrator.
- You will be provided a multi-functioning calculator. It will be a basic, non-programmable, non-printing, four function calculator with percent and square root buttons. You may use only this calculator during the examination. No other calculator will be allowed in the testing room.
- Do not bring books or other reference material into the testing room. The TCA will not permit anyone found possessing such materials to continue the examination.
- You will be provided a secured locker to store personal possessions and materials not allowed in the testing room. You may reclaim these items when you leave the test center.
- Visitors are not permitted at the test center.
- You may not bring scratch paper into the testing room. The TCA will give you scratch paper.
- If you wish to leave the room during the examination, you must secure the TCA's permission.
- You will not be permitted to continue the examination beyond the 3½ hour time limit. An on-screen clock will count down the time remaining.

## Tester Misconduct

The following are examples of behaviors that are considered misconduct and will not be tolerated:

- Giving or receiving assistance of any kind.
- Using any unauthorized references.
- Attempting to take the examination for someone else.
- Failing to follow testing regulations or the Test Center Administrator's instructions.
- Creating a disturbance of any kind.
- Copying, removing, or attempting to remove examination questions or scratch paper from the testing room.
- Tampering with the operation of the computer or attempting to use it for any function other than taking the examination.
- Leaving the testing room without permission.
- Using a calculator, cell phone, tablet, or similar electronic equipment.

## Computer-based Examination Tutorial

A brief tutorial precedes the examination. The tutorial is designed to familiarize you with the computer and the testing software. You will have up to 15 minutes to complete the tutorial. This is in addition to the 3½ hours allotted to take the examination. The tutorial will teach you how to select answers, move from one question to the next, use testing features such as "Item Review," and use the mouse and keyboard. By familiarizing you with the operation of the computer, the tutorial will make it easier for you to concentrate on completing the examination. You do not need to be concerned with the answers you select during the tutorial; it is intended for practice only and there is no penalty for incorrect answers. Once you exit from the tutorial, you may not return to it. We strongly encourage you to take the tutorial.

As a convenience, APA offers a sample tutorial on our website at [planning.org/certification/examprep](http://planning.org/certification/examprep) that is available to candidates at any time.

## Reporting Test Center Irregularities

While at the test center, should you experience a delay in taking your examination or encounter any technical problems, please make sure that this irregularity is documented by the TCA. The TCA will file a written report with Prometric and APA.

## **Some Notes on Computer-based Testing**

You do not need extensive computer experience to take the examination. On-site assistance includes:

- An online tutorial to guide you through how to use the computer.
- Computer workstations equipped with a mouse, standard keyboards, and 17-inch monitors for optimum viewing.
- Fully trained Test Center Administrators who are available during your examination for technical assistance. TCAs will not assist with examination content.

Among the benefits of computer-based testing are:

- Ability to mark questions for later review.
- Ability to track and display the time remaining on the examination.

# APPENDIX: SCORING THE EXAMINATION

## Score Validity Review

In the absence of observed misconduct, it should be noted that Prometric and APA routinely conduct post-test administrative review of the validity of the test scores. If irregularities are found as a result of these reviews, the candidate will be contacted and notified of procedures to resolve any validity issues concerning his or her score.

## Score Reports

Your scores are confidential and are released to APA by Prometric. Official score reports will be emailed to testers after completion of the exam to the email address on file. Your official score report will show a total scaled score and will indicate whether you have passed or failed.

Scores are reported on a scale of 25-75, with 55 as a passing score. To protect candidates' privacy and to maintain the confidentiality of test results, score information for individual candidates will not be given over the telephone. If you have specific questions or concerns about your scores, you may contact APA. Email [aicpexam@planning.org](mailto:aicpexam@planning.org) to request a duplicate score report. Prometric will retain electronic score data for two years. APA retains this information in perpetuity.

## Diagnostic Scores

For diagnostic purposes, testers who did not pass the exam are informed of how many questions they answered correctly (raw score) in each of the examination content areas. Do not expect diagnostic scores to average out to the total score. Raw score information is intended only to assist the tester in preparing for reexamination by indicating the areas in which the tester had the most difficulty. Testers who did not pass the exam should review those areas in which they scored comparatively low before retaking the examination.

## Equating

The computerized version of the examination pulls the 150 scored questions from a larger pool of questions, meaning that there are different versions of the examination. Equating makes statistical adjustments to test scores to compensate for differences in the relative difficulty of different versions of the examination.

Suppose you and your colleague are equal in your mathematical abilities. You both take a mathematics test. Both tests are intended to cover the same type of mathematics questions; however, the test you take is harder than the one your colleague takes. You answered 35 questions correctly on your test. Your colleague answered 40 questions correctly on his test. It would not be accurate or fair to conclude, on the basis of the test scores, that you were not as proficient in mathematics as your colleague. The difference in the scores was not due to your mathematical abilities, because our first assumption was that you and your colleague were of equal ability. The difference in your scores was due to one test being harder than the other. Equating allows us to determine that a 35 on the test that you took represents the same level of mathematical knowledge, skills, and abilities as a score of 40 on the test that your colleague took.

## Scaling

Scaling allows scores to be reported on a common scale. Instead of having to remember that a 35 on the test that you took is equivalent to a 40 on the test that your friend took, we can use a common scale and report your score as a scaled score of 55. Since we know that your friend's score of 40 is equal to your score of 35, your friend's score would also be reported as a scaled score of 55.

**Important note:** Scaled scores are not percentage scores. They allow us to report different raw scores that represent the same kind of knowledge, skills, and abilities as the same scaled score.

The scaled scores in the AICP Certification Examination range from a low of 25 to a high of 75. A scaled score of 55 or greater indicates a pass. The passing score was set by the AICP Commission — as recommended by the AICP Exam Committee — using a standard established statistical procedure.

## Reliability

Reliability is a concept that refers to the accuracy of test scores, such as the scaled scores derived for the AICP Certification Examination. All test scores are affected by sources of error to some extent; the smaller the effect, the higher the reliability. Examples of error sources include an unclearly worded test question or even a momentary spell of boredom. Hypothetically, if you could take the same test an infinite number of times, while remaining unchanged (physically and psychologically), your scores would vary. The average of these scores would be your true score, which would be free of error. If a test were perfectly reliable (not affected by error), each time you took the test you would receive the same score and there would be no difference between your test scores and your true score. For a highly reliable test, your test scores would vary, but would all be close to your true score. The concept of reliability is expressed statistically as a reliability coefficient. Reliability coefficients range from 0 (absence of reliability) to 1 (perfect reliability).

## Standard Error of Measurement

Since no measure of test performance is perfectly accurate, you might ask: "How accurate is my AICP Certification Examination scaled score?" This question is not directly answerable since it requires knowing what your score should be (true score). Your true score can never be known. The difference between your actual test score and your true score would be the "error of measurement" associated with this administration of the examination. Since errors of measurement vary from one test administration to another; it would be convenient to estimate how much these errors can be expected to vary. Such an estimate can be calculated without administering the examination to any examinee more than once. This estimate is called the standard error of measurement. If a test could measure basic elements of the subject matter without error, the value of the SEM associated with that test would be zero, in scaled score units. Although the SEM will invariably exceed zero, its value should be small. APA and Prometric closely monitor the SEM of each test form to ensure reasonable accuracy for the AICP Certification Examination.

## If You Have a Complaint

If you have a complaint or wish to make a comment about test center facilities or supervision, examination content, or any other matter related to the testing program, please write to APA at:

American Planning Association  
205 N. Michigan Ave.  
Suite 1200  
Chicago, IL 60601  
Attn: AICP Exam

312-431-9100  
[aicpexam@planning.org](mailto:aicpexam@planning.org)

In all correspondence, be sure to give your name, address, and APA ID number. If your questions or comments concern an examination you already have taken, also include the name of the examination, the date you took the examination, the location of your test center, and your examination number. APA will investigate each complaint and respond within a reasonable amount of time.

## If You Retake the Examination

If you decide to take the examination again, you should be aware that, without any change in your level of knowledge, your test score may increase or decrease slightly. This slight change may be caused by something as simple as the way you feel on the day of the test or the temperature of the room in which you take the test. To increase the probability of significantly improving your test score, increase your knowledge of the subject material. You cannot retake only one part of the examination; you must retake the entire examination again and pay the full exam fee.