

Comparison of National Level Paralegal Certification Exams®

PLEASE NOTE: The content of the chart below is verified only as to the information about the NFPA® PACE® exam and NFPA's new Paralegal CORE Competency Exam (PCCE™). The information regarding the NALA and NALS exams is unverified, and provided for informational and comparison purposes only. The NALS and NALA information below was obtained from publically available sources about those exams. Please contact NALA and NALS for exact details regarding the CLA/CP or PP exams.

Association	NFPA®	NFPA®	NALA	NALS
	Paralegal CORE Competency Exam (PCCE™)	Paralegal Advanced Competency Exam (PACE®)	Certified Paralegal/Certified Legal Assistant Exam (CP/CLA)	Professional Paralegal Exam (PP)
Credential	CORE Registered Paralegal (CRP™)	PACE Registered Paralegal® (RP)	Certified Paralegal (CP); Certified Legal Assistant (CLA)	Professional Paralegal (PP)
Established	2011	1996	1976	2004
Exam Eligibility (Education and/or Experience)	<p>Bachelor's degree in any subject, a paralegal certificate, no experience or continuing legal education (CLE);</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Bachelor's degree in paralegal studies, no experience or CLE;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Bachelor's degree in any subject, no paralegal certificate, 6 months of experience and 1 hour of ethics taken in the year preceding the examination application date;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Associate's degree in any subject, no experience or CLE required;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Associate's degree in paralegal studies, no experience of CLE required;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Paralegal certificate from a program that meets or exceeds</p>	<p>Associate's degree in paralegal studies obtained from an institutionally accredited and/or ABA approved paralegal program and six (6) years of substantive paralegal experience;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Bachelor's degree in any course of study obtained from an institutionally accredited school and three (3) years of substantive paralegal experience;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Bachelor's degree and completion of a paralegal program within an institutionally accredited school (which may be embodied in the bachelor's degree) and a minimum of two (2) years substantive paralegal experience;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Four (4) years of substantive paralegal experience on or before December 31, 2000.</p>	<p>Graduation from legal assistant program approved by ABA or associate degree program or post-baccalaureate certificate program in legal assistant studies; or bachelor's degree program in legal assistant studies, or legal assistant program of 60+ hours, 15 hours in substantive legal courses;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Bachelor's degree in any field plus one year's experience as a legal assistant (15 hours of substantive legal courses equivalent to one year's experience as a legal assistant);</p> <p>OR</p> <p>High School diploma or equivalent plus seven years' experience as a legal assistant under the supervision of an attorney, plus a minimum of 20 hours of CLE within the two year period prior to sitting for the exam.</p>	<p>Five years' experience performing paralegal duties;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Two year waiver for candidates with a paralegal degree;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>One year waiver for candidates with a post-secondary degree, successful completion of PLS exam, or other certification(s)</p>

	<p>the requirements set forth in NFPA's Short Term Paralegal Program Position Statement, 1 year of experience and 6 hours of CLE, including 1 hour of ethics taken in the year preceding the examination application date;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>High school diploma or GED, 5 years of experience and 12 hours of CLE, including 1 hour of ethics taken in the 2 years preceding the examination application date.</p>			
Exam Fees	\$215 – Non-refundable	Member: \$25 Application Fee; \$225 Exam Fee Non-Member: \$75 Application Fee; \$250 Exam Fee	\$225 Member Fee; \$250 Non-Member Fee	Member: \$200; Non-Member: \$250.
Testing Dates and Locations	Every day except Sundays and Holidays at Prometric Testing Centers across the United States and Guam etc. Candidates must take the exam within 90 days of approval of application.	Every day except Sundays and Holidays at Prometric Testing Centers across the United States and Guam, etc. Candidates must take the exam within 90 days of approval of application.	March, April, July, and December in most major cities.	First Saturday of March and last Saturday in September in most major metropolitan areas.
Retest	\$215; 6 month waiting period to apply to retest.	\$250 Member Fee; Non-Member \$325 Fee. 6 month waiting period to apply to retest.	\$50/section Member Fee; \$50/section Non-Member Fee.	\$50/part Member Fee; \$60/part Non-member Fee. No waiting period to retest.
Testing Time	Two and one-half (2.5) hours	Four (4) hours	Two (2) Days	One (1) Day
Composition of Exam	<p>Domain 01: Paralegal Practice –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paralegal Profession Ethics and Professional Practice U.S. Legal System Legal Research Legal Writing and Critical Analysis Communication Law Office Management and Legal Technology Civil Litigation 	<p>Domain I – Administration of Client Legal Matters: conflict checks; develop, organize and maintain client files; develop and maintain calendar/tickler systems; develop and maintain databases; coordinate client services.</p> <p>Domain II – Development of Client Legal Matters: client interviews; analyze information; collaborate with counsel; prepare, file and serve legal documents and exhibits; prepare clients and witnesses for legal proceedings.</p>	<p>Federal law and procedure, major subject areas include communications, ethics, legal research, human relations and interviewing techniques, judgment and analytical ability, and legal terminology.</p> <p>Sections of Substantive law include <i>five mini-examinations</i> in the areas of: administrative law, bankruptcy, business organizations/corporations, contracts, family law, criminal law and procedure, litigation, probate and estate planning, and real estate. All candidates must take the exam</p>	<p>Part 1 – Written Communications: Grammar and word usage, spelling, punctuation, number usage, capitalization, composition and expression.</p> <p>Part 2 – Legal Knowledge and Skills: Legal research, citations, legal terminology, the court system and ADR, and the legal skills of interviewing clients and witnesses, planning and conducting investigations, and docketing.</p>

	<p>Domain 02: Substantive Areas of Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Organizations • Contracts • Criminal • Estates, Wills and Trusts • Family • Real Estate • Torts <p>For detailed information please see Appendix A of the PCCE Candidate Handbook available on the NFPA website.</p>	<p>Domain III – Factual/Legal Research: obtain factual and legal information; investigate and compile facts; inspect, evaluate and analyze evidence; ascertain and analyze legal authority.</p> <p>Domain IV – Factual/Legal Writing: communicate with client/counsel; draft legal analytical documents.</p> <p>Domain V - Office Administration: personnel management; acquire technology; coordinate and utilize vendor services; create and maintain library and legal resources, develop and maintain billing system.</p>	<p>covering the American Legal System.¹</p>	<p>Part 3 – Ethics and Judgment: Ethical situations involving contact with clients, the public, coworkers, and subordinates; other ethical considerations for the legal profession; decision-making and analytical ability; and ability to recognize priorities.</p> <p>Part 4 – All areas of substantive law, including administrative; business organizations and contracts; civil procedure and litigation; criminal, family, real property, torts; wills, trusts and estates; admiralty and maritime; antitrust; bankruptcy; environmental; federal civil rights and employment discrimination; immigration; intellectual property; labor; oil and gas; pension and profit-sharing; taxation; water; workers' compensation.²</p>
Certification Renewal – CLE	Every two years from anniversary date of exam: 8 hours of CLE, including 1.0 hour in ethics.	Every two years from anniversary date of exam -12 hours of CLE, including 1 hour of ethics.	Every five years – 50 hours, including 5 hours of legal ethics	Every five years – 75 hours, including 5 hours of legal ethics.
Renewal Fees	\$25	\$25	\$50	\$75
Number Certified	146 (7/11)	593 (6/11)	16,382 (6/11)	504 (10/11)

¹ Information obtained from NALA website

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