

VCO Recertification Guidelines

- VCO must earn 60 contact hours with 20 contact hours in the last two years of the five-year recertification term
- Dual VCA/VCO must earn 60 contact hours (actual hours) with 20 contact hours in the last two years of the five-year recertification term and is available for an additional fee.

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. I received my certification in January 2012. When do I need to recertify?** Five years from the year you received your certification; then every five years thereafter. In this case, your recertification year is 2017. You have until the last business day of 2017 to recertify.
- 2. When can I recertify my VCO?** You may recertify between January 1st and the last business day of the recertification year regardless of your renewal date.
- 3. May I recertify my VCO early – as soon as I have my contact hours?** Sorry, our data system does not accept those parameters.
- 4. When is my recertification complete?** When your recertification application is approved and you have paid the fee.
- 5. What happens if my recertification is late?** Up to five years after the recertification term, you must submit a Re-instatement Application. After the Re-instatement Application is approved and fee paid, you may schedule and retake the exam. Passing score is 75 for the VCO exams. You will be responsible for the most up-to-date knowledge. Beyond five years after the recertification deadline, you must reapply for certification program and meet the current criteria guidelines for admission.
- 6. I left the state and came back and my certification expired. How do I get it back?** After five years from certification expiration date: You must reapply for the VCO program and pay all fees associated with the classes and exam. Reapplications for certification will be according to prevailing guidelines. Upon successful completion of the VCO program, a new certificate valid for five years will be issued.
- 7. I recertified in March of my recertification year, when may I start counting contact hours for my next recertification term?** As soon as your recertification application is approved and your fee is paid. You do not have to wait until the next January.
- 8. How do I calculate the last two years of the recertification period?** You may apply for recertification as early as January of your recertification year; therefore, your recertification year is not counted when calculating the last two years of the recertification period. For example, if you are scheduled to recertify in 2015, you would subtract two from 2015 and 2013 would mark the beginning of your last two years. The 10 or 20 contact hours required in the last two years prior to recertification would have to be earned between 2013 and 2015.
- 9. Some certificates say “contact education hours” and some say “CPE contact hours.” Are all contact hours equal?** No, units, credit contact hours and contact hours **are not** the same. See table below:

1 Continuing Professional Education Unit (CPE) = 50 min
1 Continuing Education Unit (CEU) = 10 contact hours
1 Semester Credit hour = 16 contact hours
1 Continuing Education Hour (CEH) = 1 hour
1 Continuing Education Contact Hour (CECH) = 1 hour
- 10. How do I convert points to contact hours (actual hours)?**

1 NIGP/UPPCC Point = 7 contact hours
1 VCA/VCO Point = 7 contact hours
.5 VCA/VCO Point = 3.5 contact hours
- 11. Are there a maximum number of contact hours you can count per event or during the recertification period?** Yes, and the Recertification Application clearly states what they are per category.
- 12. What are acceptable procurement-related topics offered by professional training programs?** Accounting, Contracts, Economics, Finance, Business Ethics, Law, Materials Management, Inventory Control, Surplus, Project Management, Public Administration, Managerial and Leadership. If in doubt about a procurement-related course, just send the name of the course and description to the VIP office for review.
- 13. Is there a recertification test?** No, other states use this practice, but Virginia promotes continuous learning.

14. Why are we limited to seven contact hours for Webinars? Webinars are considered passive learning because there is little or no interaction between the presenter and learner. A person is not required to participate to receive a certificate.

15. Why do you limit how many contact hours we can receive from an event? We want you to receive learning from multiple sources.

16. Does VIP keep a transcript of the learning events for certificate holders? No.

17. When may I claim dual certification? The first time you recertify your VCO certification establishes the date for dual certification. For example, if your VCA certification expires in 2013 and your VCO certification expires in 2014, you would be eligible to apply for dual certification in 2014. It is assumed that your VCA certification remains in force until you become eligible for dual certification. An additional fee applies for dual certification.

18. How many hours do I need for Dual Recertification? Dual recertification to recertify both VCA and VCO certifications simultaneously requires a minimum of 60 hours with 20 hours earned in the last two years of the recertification term. You may earn up to 60 contact hours (total recertification contact hours) in Category A and up to 48 contact hours in Category B.

19. My VCO certification has lapsed, do I have to take the program again? You have up to five years from the expiration date to retake and pass the VCO exams. Individuals with certifications in lapsed status are not entitled to continue using the VCO certification credentials (after your name) and they are not considered certified by the Virginia Institute of Procurement until the certification is successfully [re-instated](#).

QUESTIONS ABOUT QUALIFICATIONS

1. How many DPS Forums can I attend during a recertification period? There are no restrictions for the DPS Forum. You may attend as many as you want and receive all your recertification contact hours from the DPS Forum. Remember the number of contact hours you need in the last two years of the recertification period.

2. How many contact hours do I count for the DPS Forum or any conference? You may count the number of contact hours of acceptable sessions you attended at the conference. The DPS Forum provides the number of contact hours on the Attendance Documentation Form. Not every conference or Forum will result in the same number of contact hours. Meetings, networking and social events are not considered acceptable sessions. Expositions are limited to 2 contact hours regardless of length.

3. The DPS Forum states that you can earn up to 2.5 points. Does this mean the Forum is worth 17.5 contact hours? No, for Forums 2010 to 2012, you may count 16 hours for the DPS Forum if you attended the full conference and Expo; otherwise, count the actual contact hours of sessions you attended. The Attendance Documentation Form must be included with your recertification application.

4. Can I get contact hours for a Tradeshow or Reverse Tradeshow? No, tradeshows or reverse tradeshows are not considered learning events.

5. I received a seminar certificate that states 24 contact hours. Is that what I can count towards recertification? You must follow the guidelines on the Recertification Application for maximum contact hours per event. VIP allows seven contact hours for one day of training; NIGP allows eight contact hours for one day of training

6. Do eVA classes such as Quick Quote and eMail count towards VCA/VCO recertification? eVA training, along with Microsoft Excel and other types of technical training, are tools for performing your job and do not count as recertification contact hours. If you were to take a course on a subject such as performing Spend Analysis that used a tool, we would consider the course for recertification contact hours as long as it is not just a course on the mechanics of how to use the tool.

Note: All sessions at the Forum count toward recertification contact hours as indicated on the Attendance Documentation Form in the Forum Guide.

7. May I take a course on procurement law like APSPM or VPPA and receive credit for recertification contact hours? Yes, and we encourage you to do so since procurement laws change annually.

8. **I am an active member of a national procurement organization. Does my membership count toward the 20 contact hours that I need during the last two years prior to 2013 recertification?** Yes, if you are a member during that two-year period. Your membership counts for seven contact hours that you may only claim once during your recertification term.

9. **Does membership in VAGP and CAPA count towards membership in a national procurement organization?** VAGP and CAPA are chapters of NIGP, a national procurement organization, and are not allowed in this category.

Note: National Professional Membership Category C will be eliminated in 2014 due to the following:

- **Some Agencies pay for national membership and others do not. VIP considers equal access to recertification opportunities an important component of the recertification process.**
- **NIGP is eliminating this category since it is not considered a learning event.**

10. **Would a course like Franklin Covey “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People” presented by Franklin Covey certified trainers count under procurement-related courses?** Yes, it would fall under the Leadership topic, which is a procurement-related topic as shown in Category A on the 2013 Recertification Application. If in doubt about a procurement-related course, just send the name of the course and description to the VIP office for review.

11. **Are construction courses eligible for recertification contact hours? *For VCO certificate holders only***
The Bureau of Capital Outlay Management, Division of Engineering and Buildings, Department of General Services, offers two courses: a two-day course on the Construction and Professional Services Manual; and a two-day course for the Virginia Construction Contracting Officer (VCCO), to prepare for the VCCO exam. You may receive credit for 14 contact hours if you attend one or both courses. You may receive **20 contact hours** if you pass the VCCO exam. You must submit a copy of your VCCO Certificate for documentation.

12. **Other construction courses must be approved first** for VCO recertification contact hours. Send agenda, schedule, session descriptions and sponsor to linda.morris@dgs.virginia.gov for review. Only procurement-related topics on the agenda will be acceptable.

13. **Are Board of Accountancy approved professional credits acceptable for recertification contact hours? *For VCO certificate holders*,** the approved Board of Accountancy seminars/conferences must be a procurement-related topic and adhere to the same guidelines as any procurement-related topic in Category A.

14. **How many contact hours is an online course?** There is not a set number of contact hours that applies to every course. The number of contact hours is determined by the originator.

15. **How do I get credit for instructing a procurement-related course?** You must submit a class roster, agenda with schedule and a copy of the materials or PowerPoint.

16. **If I speak at a conference I'm attending, do I get credit for both speaking and attending?** Sorry, no double counting; you only get credit for one.

17. **Can I use my Learning Management System (LMS) or NIGP transcript for documentation?** Yes, as long as it shows the official logo, your name and all required information such as contact hours. If the class is not an obvious procurement class, a class description should be included with the documentation.

18. **What do you do when a certificate of completion does not contain points or contact hours?** You must include an agenda and schedule with the certificate. VIP may also request a session description.

19. **My national procurement organization gave me contact hours/points for participating in a survey. May I use those contact hours/points towards my VCO recertification?** National procurement organizations use certification/recertification contact hours/points as an incentive to get people to participate in projects that benefit the organization. Any activity of this nature will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by VIP to determine if the activity will be approved for VCO recertification contact hours. VIP does not recognize survey participation as a learning event, but other activities may qualify.

20. **May I count an Agency procurement class more than once during the five-year recertification period? My Agency requires me to take a particular class every two years.** Agency procurement classes may be counted once during the five-year recertification period.