

Florida Government Finance Officers Association

Certification Committee

Policies and Procedures Manual

1. Transition Plan

- A. Outgoing chair and board liaison need to meet with the new chair and board liaison in order to provide for a smooth transition from one year to the next.
- B. New chair and board liaison will need to update the committee manual prior to conference in order to provide members with an updated manual.

2. Purpose, Goals, and Action Plan

- A. **Purpose:** To serve as the governing body responsible for overseeing the Certified Government Finance Officer (CGFO) Program, including evaluating and administering the semiannual certification exams.
- B. **Long Range Goal:** To uphold the CGFO certification which is intended to encourage a level of knowledge and professionalism in the field of government finance.
- C. **Short Range Goals**
 - 1. To administer and oversee the CGFO Program in coordination with the Florida League of Cities (FLC) staff
 - 2. To evaluate and administer the semiannual certification exams
 - 3. To schedule and coordinate review sessions for the exam
 - 4. To review applications for the CGFO Program
 - 5. To review renewals for the CGFO Program including random audits of current CGFO's
- D. **Action Plan**
 - 1. Appoint one Committee Member as Vice Chairperson (upon approval of the FGFOA President-Elect)
 - 2. Appoint one Subcommittee Chairperson for each Subcommittee

3. Assign Committee Members to a Subcommittee
4. Recommend items for FGFOA Board of Directors approval including:
 - a. Exam review/rewrite
 - b. Adding spring review sessions
 - c. Develop review sessions by webinar

3. Membership Structure

- A. The Committee is generally composed, but not limited to, approximately 20 members plus the Chairperson. This provides a sufficient number of members to accomplish the duties and responsibilities assigned to the Committee. Members must be current CGFO's.
- B. The Chairperson is appointed by the President and serves as overall coordinator (Chairperson MUST be an active member).
- C. The Chairperson appoints one Committee Member as Vice Chairperson upon approval of the FGFOA President-Elect.
 1. Assist Committee Chairperson in coordinating Committee activities
 2. Draft articles for the FGFOA newsletter
- D. The Chairperson appoints one Subcommittee Chairperson for each major area of responsibility (sub-committee chairs MUST be active members).
 1. Applications & Renewals Subcommittee
 - a. Review applications for eligibility each fall and spring
 - Usually occurs in January and September
 - FLC (Merrily Bennett) pre-reviews applicants and will email them to the Subcommittee Chairperson and copy the Chairperson
 - The Subcommittee Chairperson is responsible for determining eligibility of the applicant to sit for the exam and be subsequently certified as set forth in the "CGFO Program Information" document, located on the FGFOA website at the following link:

<http://www.fgfoa.org/CGFOprogram.aspx?CNID=448>

- The Subcommittee Chairperson should ensure the review is done timely and accurately and sent to FLC within a week. The Chairperson should be copied on all responses.

b. Review renewals

- Renewals are due by July 31st
- Review usually occurs July through September
- The Subcommittee Chair will ensure that all CPE's reported are within the date range for the renewal period and in compliance with the "Policies and Procedures for Maintaining CGFO Status" document, which can be downloaded at:

<http://www.fgfoa.org/CGFOprogram.aspx?CNID=4369>

- Any renewal received after August 1st must submit all documentation with renewal to be reviewed by the Subcommittee.
- The Subcommittee Chairperson should ensure the review is sent to the FLC in a reasonable amount of time. The Chairperson should be copied on all responses.

c. Randomly select 25% of renewals to audit

- Random sample should be selected and reviewed by the end of September
- An acceptable computer generated sampling software such as the RANDBETWEEN function on Excel is acceptable.
- The subcommittee chooses one or two sessions (excluding any FGFOA sponsored seminars) for review and notifies the Chairperson. The Chairperson coordinates with FLC to send the letters. If the renewal form has the required number of CPEs in FGFOA sponsored seminars, it is not necessary to request supporting documentation from any other sessions.

- When the requested information is received, The Chairperson forwards the information to the subcommittee for review. The subcommittee advises the Chairperson if the documentation is acceptable or not. The Chairperson notifies FLC to send letter (templates on file with FLC) advising the CGFO that the process is completed or requests further information if necessary.
- d. The Subcommittee Chairperson is responsible for submitting reports to the Vice Chairperson for the quarterly newsletter by:
- August 7, 2015
 - November 15, 2015
 - February 15, 2016
 - May 16, 2016

2. Exam Questions Review Subcommittee

- a. The exam should be reviewed semiannually for the fall and spring exams for accuracy and changes in accounting standards. Items to review include:
- Check for proper grammar
 - Ensure validity of questions – careful attention to “two-part” questions – consider rewriting so there are no two-part questions in the bank
 - Propose new questions
 - Review topic mix
 - Update exam bank
 - Update test exam versions
 - we never use the same exam twice – the questions order should always be changed each exam session
- b. Answer questions from applicants
- If a question is determined to be unfair by the subcommittee, the Subcommittee Chair should work

with the Chairperson to determine whether the question should be thrown out or not. The Chairperson will then inform FLC.

- c. Work with Board Liaison and Chairperson on the Request for Service process for a consultant to write new exam questions and review old exam questions. **This will need to go before the FGFOA Board in August.**
- d. Consider practice exam questions and make recommendations to the Board. **This should go before the FGFOA Board in November, if possible.**
- e. The Subcommittee Chairperson is responsible for submitting reports to the Vice Chairperson for the quarterly newsletter by:
 - August 7, 2015
 - November 8, 2015
 - February 8, 2016
 - May 9, 2016

3. Exam & Review Subcommittee

- a. The exam is held each fall at the School of Government Finance SOGF) and each Spring at locations to be determined.
- b. **By end of August**, the Subcommittee Chairperson is responsible for coordinating the fall exam:
 - Secure a site for review (this is usually at the SOGF, so FLC should be able to assist)
 - Secure a site for exam (again, this is usually at the SOGF so FLC should be able to assist)
 - Secure instructors for review courses (FLC has an approved instructor list)
 - Secure proctors for the exam (this can be members of the subcommittee or the committee in general, as well as any other CGFO's)

- Administer a budget if necessary (verify if needed with FLC; fall is usually already budgeted, but there may be need to provide proctors a lunch or compensate instructors)
 - Attend the fall review and exam or designate a responsible party that can attend in their place
- c. **By the November 4th Board meeting**, the Subcommittee Chairperson should determine if having the spring review is desired/feasible and coordinate with the Chairperson and Board Liaison to get it on the meeting agenda.
- d. **By end of December**, the Subcommittee Chairperson is responsible for coordinating the spring exam:
- Secure a site for review or work with the Review by Webinar Subcommittee to coordinate the review sessions, if applicable
 - Secure a site(s) for the test (has been at several locations throughout Florida in the past)
 - Secure instructors for review courses, if applicable (FLC has an approved instructor list)
 - Secure proctors for the exam (this can be members of the subcommittee or the committee in general, as well as any other CGFO's)
 - Administer a budget if necessary (verify with FLC the amount of budget available to pay for site locations; there may be need to provide proctors a lunch or compensate instructors)
 - Attend the fall review and exam or designate a responsible party that can attend in their place
- e. The Subcommittee Chairperson is responsible for submitting reports to the Vice Chairperson for the quarterly newsletter by:
- August 7, 2015
 - November 8, 2015
 - February 8, 2016

- May 9, 2016

4. Special Committee – Review by Webinar Subcommittee

a. The Subcommittee Chair is responsible for reviewing and making a recommendation on the feasibility of offering review courses via webinar:

- Work with FLC staff and perhaps the Webinar Committee to determine if we can offer reviews by webinar
- Propose the structure of the webinar
 - Length of time (hours per each course)
 - Number of days review will be available
 - Whether or not it can be viewed again
- Propose any charge for the webinar
 - Determine how to control that only paying parties are viewing the webinar

b. **By the November 4th Board meeting**, the Subcommittee Chairperson should determine if having the reviews by webinars is feasible and coordinate with the Chairperson and Board Liaison to get it on the meeting agenda.

c. Secure instructors for webinars if approved.

d. Work with the FLC to announce, administer registration, and conduct the webinar if approved.

e. The Subcommittee Chairperson is responsible for submitting reports to the Vice Chairperson for the quarterly newsletter by:

- August 7, 2015
- November 8, 2015
- February 8, 2016
- May 9, 2016

E. Each Subcommittee Chairperson is responsible for coordination of activities associated with the tasks assigned to that Subcommittee.

F. Each Committee Member is assigned to one of the Subcommittees.

4. Member Responsibilities

A. Chairperson

1. Coordinates all major aspects of the Committee meetings

a. Establishes times and places

- i. Meetings can be in person, by conference call, Go-To-Meeting, or in Orlando at the Florida League of Cities (FLC) office
- ii. The FLC arranges conference calls and Go-To-Meeting, if requested

b. Conducts Committee meetings

- i. Prepares meeting agenda
- ii. Ensures minutes of the meeting are taken

c. Assists Subcommittee Chairpersons' activities

d. Motivates and involves all Committee Members

2. Reports Committee activities

a. Keeps Committee Members and Board Liaison apprised of Committee activity and progress

b. Prepares and presents reports about Committee progress for scheduled FGFOA Board of Directors meetings. If unable to attend, coordinates with Board Liaison and/or Vice Chairperson for Committee report presentation.

c. Reviews articles for the FGFOA newsletter prior to submission, **due by the following dates:**

- August 14, 2015
- November 15, 2015
- February 15, 2016
- May 16, 2016

- Spotlight Article for CGFO of the year, May 16, 2016, and coordinates with FLC to link the article to the CGFO of the Year List on the FGFOA website.
 - d. Prepares a report for the Annual Conference business luncheon summarizing all Committee activities for the year **by May 31, 2016.**
- 3. Attends FGFOA Board Meetings and annual conference
- 4. Assists with the transition of responsibilities to the new Board Liaison and Chairperson
- 5. Sends electronic version of Committee Manual and other documents to new Chairperson to utilize as a guide
- 6. Solicits volunteers – additional committee members, if necessary
- 7. Informs committee members of key dates/deadlines
- 8. Coordinate with FLC administrative staff to ensure all documents, brochures, etc. on the FGFOA website are updated and contain accurate information, including:
 - a. Certificate Committee Manual (this document)
 - b. Policies and Procedures for Maintaining CGFO Status
 - c. CGFO Program Brochure
 - d. New CGFO's awarded
 - e. CGFO of the Year
- 9. Coordinate with FLC administrative staff to send noncompliance letters as needed
 - a. FLC staff to provide a list of CGFO's who failed to renew by August 15th.
 - b. When a certificate holder is three months late meeting any specific requirement noted below, the FLC will coordinate with the Chairperson and send appropriate letter (from standard template) to CGFO's whose certificates are out of compliance. Specific requirements include the following:
 - Maintaining active or associate membership n FGFOA

- Reporting required CPEs
- Making up CPE deficiencies
- Submitting or successfully passing the Ethics Exam
- Completing the Florida Commission on Ethic's online training when required
- Responding to requests for additional information regarding CPEs reported

- c. After the six month grace period expires, the CGFO's certificate will be placed on suspended status. FLC will coordinate with the Chairperson to send a certified letter informing the CGFO that his/her certificate has been suspending for failing to meet the specific requirement and that if the certificate is not brought into compliance within two years, the certificate will be revoked.
- d. If the CGFO does not comply in the two year period, the FLC will coordinate with the Chairperson and the Committee Board Liaison to request approval of revocation from the FGFOA Board via the committee agenda. The Chairperson should provide the Board the circumstances leading up to this final action including the failure of the certificate holder to respond to the certified letter.

B. Vice Chairperson

1. Assist Chairperson in coordinating Committee activities
2. Draft articles for the FGFOA newsletter

C. Subcommittee Chairpersons

1. Coordinate the Subcommittee meetings
 - a. Establish meeting times and places
 - i. Meetings can be in person or by phone conference calls
 - ii. The FLC arranges conference calls and Go-To-Meeting, if requested

- b. Conduct Subcommittee meetings
 - c. Assist the Committee Chairperson and other Subcommittee Chairpersons
 - d. Motivate and involve all Subcommittee Members
 - 2. Report Subcommittee activities
 - a. Keep Subcommittee Members apprised of Subcommittee activity and progress
 - b. Keep Committee Chairperson apprised of Subcommittee activity and progress
 - c. Participate in periodic meetings between Committee Chair and Subcommittee Chairpersons
 - d. Participate in periodic meetings of the Committee
- D. Members (Can be Active, Associate, Retired, or Student members of FGFOA)
 - 1. Duties
 - 2. Attend meetings
 - a. The first organizational meeting is held at the annual conference
 - b. Subsequent Committee meetings are called by the Committee Chairperson
 - c. Subcommittee meetings are called by the Subcommittee Chair

5. **Florida League Responsibilities**

- A. Pre-reviews CGFO Program applications and will email them to the Applications and Renewals Subcommittee Chairperson and copy the Chairperson
- B. Administers the online renewal process and ethics exam and keeps track of any late renewals. Sends renewals to be reviewed and communicates any late renewals to the Applications and Renewals Subcommittee Chairperson. Sends a list of identification numbers for all renewals to the Applications and Renewals Subcommittee Chairperson so that a random

selection can be made in order for auditing the renewals. Sends letter to CGFO if any further information is needed.

- C. Sends a list of any noncompliant CGFO's by August 15th along with appropriate letter templates to the Chairperson.
- D. Administers registration for the CGFO Program certification reviews and exams
- E. Secures site for fall reviews and exam at the SOGF
- F. Maintains a list of approved instructors for the CGFO review courses
- G. Creates exams from poll of questions provided by the Certification Committee or consultant; sends exams to the Exam and Review Subcommittee Chairperson for final review; mails exams to the proctors; receives exams from proctors and has exams graded; determines the CGFO of the Year and communicates to the Chairperson
- H. Makes any requested changes to the CGFO Program section of the FGFOA website
- I. Posts any articles submitted by the Committee to the quarterly newsletter
- J. Provide meeting space and set up any conference calls or Go-To Meetings for the Committee
- K. Provide any budgeted amounts or constraints to the Chairperson and Board Liaison

6. **Terms**

- A. Members are appointed for a one-year term and are encouraged to continue on the Committee for at least three years to provide the institutional knowledge and experience necessary for successful operation of the committee.

7. **Timeline**

6/15/15 – hold organizational meeting at Annual Conference

7/31/15 – CGFO renewals are due

8/1/15 – Any CGFO renewals after this date must have all documentation

8/7/15 – Newsletter submissions from each subcommittee Chairperson due to the Vice Chairperson

8/14/15 – Newsletter submissions due from the Chairperson to FLC

8/19/15 – Tentative second committee meeting via conference call

8/21/15 – Update from Chair to Board Liaison due

8/28/15 – FGFOA Board Meeting

8/31/15 – Coordination of fall review/exam should be finalized

10/23/15 – Feasibility of spring review sessions finalized

10/23/15 – Feasibility of reviews by webinar finalized

10/26/15 – Tentative third committee meeting via conference call

10/28/14 – Update from Chair to Board Liaison due

11/2/15 – School of Government Finance starts; review sessions begin

11/4/15 – FGFOA Board Meeting

11/6/15 – Fall exam is administered

11/8/15 – Newsletter submissions from each subcommittee Chairperson due to the Vice Chairperson

11/15/15 – Newsletter submissions due from the Chairperson to FLC

12/31/15 – Coordination of spring review/exam should be finalized

2/8/16 – Newsletter submissions from each subcommittee Chairperson due to the Vice Chairperson

2/15/16 – Newsletter submissions due from the Chairperson to FLC

3/28/16 – Tentative spring review starts

4/1/16 – Tentative spring exam date

4/1/16 – Update from Chair to Board Liaison due

4/8/16 – FGFOA Board Meeting

5/9/16 – Newsletter submissions from each subcommittee Chairperson due to the Vice Chairperson

5/16/16 – Newsletter and CGFO of the Year Spotlight article submissions due from the Chairperson to FLC

5/31/16 – Year end report for annual conference

8. **Budget Considerations**

- A. The annual budget provides for expenses associated with committee meetings, such as meals and conference calls.
- B. Any budget for the Spring review sessions and the Reviews by Webinar must be approved by the FGFOA Board of Directors in advance.
- C. Any other expenses must be approved by the FGFOA Board of Directors (other than meal expenses).

9. **Minutes-Reports-Correspondence-Newsletters**

- A. Minutes – The Chair should keep minutes of each meeting and should maintain copies for use by the next chair and committee.
- B. Reports – A committee report is required for each Board meeting and at the direction of the President. The report is transmitted as an agenda item and should include but is not limited to the following items:
 - Progress towards goals from each subcommittee
 - Number of new applications received
 - Number of exam participants
 - Number new CGFO's
 - Number of renewals
 - Results of annual CPE audit
- C. Reports – An Annual Report is required from each committee prior to the Annual Conference. This report should be a summary of the accomplishments of the committee for the year.
- D. Correspondence - should be maintained in the committee notebook.
- E. Newsletters – an article about the progress of the committee is needed for each issue of the Newsletter. The deadlines will be provided at the Committee Chair Orientation.

10. **Special Tasks for This Committee**

- A. Random audit of 25% of total CGFO renewals
- B. Request for Service for consultant to write/review test questions
- C. Feasibility of adding back spring review courses

D. Feasibility of offering review sessions by webinar

11. **General Considerations**

A. Any exceptions to these considerations must be approved by the FGFOA Board of Directors

B. Only Active Members may serve as Committee and Subcommittee Chairs