



CANDIDATE CHRONICLE

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New Exam Format Released

The new version of the Uniform CPA Examination went into effect on April 1, 2017. It focuses on **higher order cognitive skills**.

Mastering higher order skills is essential to becoming a CPA, serving the public, and being successful throughout your career. Task-based simulations in the exam have data and background material that require you to determine what information is, or is not, relevant to the test question. The 2017 exam also has a skills-based framework consistent with the revised Bloom's Taxonomy.

The exam consists of the following sections: Auditing and Attestation (AUD), Business Environment and Concepts (BEC), Financial Accounting and Reporting (FAR), and Regulation (REG). All four sections include task-based simulations and multiple choice questions. Written responses are required in BEC.

To allow you sufficient time to complete the simulations, each section of the exam is four hours in length, with a total testing time of 16 hours. The exam also offers a standardized 15-minute break that occurs midway through each section.

The standardized break does not count against testing time, so you can stretch or have a quick snack. **Optional breaks that occur between testlets, which do count** against your testing time are also allowed, in addition to the standardized break. For more information about the exam, visit aicpa.org/cpaexam or nasba.org/exams/cpaexam.

Three-Month Extension of CPA Exam Credits

An amendment to Board **Rule 511.80 Granting of Credit** allows a **three-month extension of CPA Exam credits** due to the delayed release of exam scores in 2017. The amendment affects applicants who have CPA Exam **credits that will expire between April 1, 2017 and September 30, 2018**. It also provides a three-month extension for applicants who earn CPA Exam **credit as a result of testing between April 1, 2017 and May 31, 2017**. This amendment received final approval at the May 2017 Board meeting.

Score Release Timeline

The following table shows how soon you will get your scores after you take the exam:

Test Window	AICPA / Board of Examiners Review Exam Performance Data / Set Passing Score	Approximate Release Date of Candidate Scores
2017 Q2 April 3 - May 31, 2017	10 weeks*	August 17 (AUD, FAR, REG) August 22 (BEC)
2017 Q3 July 1 - Sept. 10, 2017	10 days	September 19 (if AICPA receives exam data files from Prometric by 11:59 pm EST on Sept. 11) September 25 (if AICPA receives exam data files from Prometric after 11:59 pm EST on Sept. 11**)
2017 Q4 Oct. 1 - Dec. 10, 2017	10 days	December 19 (if AICPA receives exam data files from Prometric by 11:59 pm EST on Dec. 11) December 21 (if AICPA receives exam data files from Prometric after 11:59 pm EST on Dec. 11**)

*New passing score was set during this timeframe.

**The exam data files the AICPA receives after this date will be included in the final target score release date.

For more details about the exam score release timeline, visit aicpa.org/cpaexam.

Exam Fees

When you apply to take a section of the Uniform CPA Exam, you will pay fees to both the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy and the National Association of State Boards of Accountancy. All fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.

TSBPA Exam Fees: \$20 per Exam Section

NASBA Fees by Section:

AUD	\$193.45
BEC	\$193.45
FAR	\$193.45
REG	\$193.45

New Fees Effective November 18, 2017

AUD	\$208.40
BEC	\$208.40
FAR	\$208.40
REG	\$208.40

Increased Future Demand for CPAs

Data from the Social Security Administration shows that roughly 10,000 baby boomers are retiring each day. As more baby boomers retire, there is an increased demand for certified public accountants (CPAs). As businesses today experience complex technological, economic, and social changes the need for CPA skill sets is even greater. All types of businesses and industries are dependent on the unique financial acumen and specialized competencies that CPAs possess.

Employers are seeking candidates who have high ethical standards and the ability to connect data, perform analysis, and provide expertise for better business decision making. Employers also value strong leadership, problem solving, critical thinking, and communications skills. These are all core competencies of the CPA profession.

There is always a demand for CPAs, so besides being an extremely rewarding profession it also provides excellent job security. Additionally, holding the CPA designation is a prestigious honor that will make you stand out from non-licensed individuals and can boost your career. The CPA credential is highly esteemed and internationally recognized. It is possible to significantly increase your salary just a few years after taking the exam. Some employers may not even hire you unless you have an active CPA license. And some firms will cover the cost of CPA Exam preparation and will offer their employees time off to study, and/or a bonus for passing the exam. Obtaining your CPA license shows employers that you are intelligent, experienced, motivated, and committed to your career. It is something to be proud of.

Because there is such a big demand for CPAs, they are well paid and there are lots of opportunities for advancement. You can start your career with a competitive entry-level salary working for a public accounting firm or private company and advance to a senior-level position. Over time, you can even earn a six-figure salary as a chief financial officer, corporate controller, or tax manager. The best opportunities for advancement are available to accountants and auditors who have an accounting degree and a CPA license.



Another wonderful aspect of being a CPA is all of the different career options that are available to you. Holding the CPA designation provides you with a lot of flexibility. You can work in public accounting, private industry, for a startup, the government, a nonprofit, or even start your own business, or work internationally. You may also want to consider pursuing a job in a field you are particularly interested in such as sports, film, music, or criminal investigation. Or maybe you'd enjoy teaching accounting courses at community colleges or universities. CPAs are needed everywhere! Becoming a CPA is probably the greatest way to enhance your accounting career. ■

Fifth-Year Accounting Students Scholarship Program

There's no denying it, sitting for the CPA Exam is costly and time consuming. To assist, the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy (TSBPA) administers a scholarship program for fifth-year accounting students. You may receive up to **\$6,000** with a maximum lifetime award of **\$12,000**. The program was established to aid disadvantaged students needing assistance in financing a fifth year of college. Funds are allocated to participating Texas colleges and universities, whose financial aid offices make the decisions on awarding scholarships to individual students.

Scholarship requirements:

- Be a Texas resident
- Completed 15 hours of accounting
- Be within 30 hours of completing the 150 semester-hour education requirement to take the CPA Exam
- File an Application of Intent with the TSBPA and take the CPA Exam as a Texas candidate
- Become a licensed CPA in Texas

For more information or to apply, visit your Financial Aid Office or Department of Accounting. ■

Supercharge Your Communication Skills

In order to be successful in their careers, CPAs need to be personable and have excellent communication skills. Clients, co-workers, and managers want to work with people they have a personal rapport with and can trust and like. Sometimes, especially when we have looming deadlines and projects piling up, it's easy to keep our heads down and stick to ourselves. However, networking and even just being a good listener can really supercharge your accounting career. Here are a few ways you can be a champion communicator:

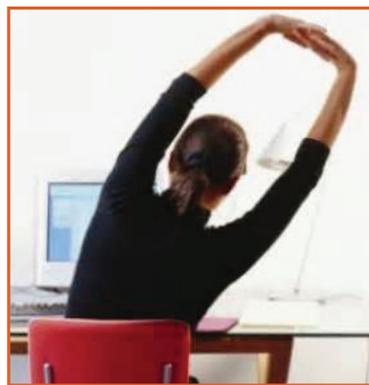
Be present and engaged: Be a good listener when talking to others. Ask people questions about themselves instead of talking about yourself the entire time. Show people you are listening by making eye contact, nodding your head, and making short verbal interjections to let them know you are engaged.

Make time to network: Have lunch with co-workers. Invite colleagues in other departments, instead of just sticking to your immediate work group. Join professional membership associations, such as the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants and the American Institute of CPAs. Your local society chapter might have volunteer opportunities you can get involved in. You can learn about new career opportunities by staying connected with other CPAs.

Be personable: Get to know people better by asking them questions about their families, hobbies, pets, favorite sports teams, etc. The goal is to find commonalities with others and make them feel comfortable around you. Don't forget to smile!

Email etiquette: Try to respond to all of your emails in a timely manner. No one likes to be ignored! If you are swamped, reply to your co-worker with a brief email to let them know you are busy but will get back to them as soon as possible. In many instances, it may be more effective and faster to simply pick up the phone to talk to someone or even walk over to their desk to speak in-person. You may be able to foster positive relationships and avoid confusion this way. People can misunderstand your "email tone" if they can't observe your facial expressions or body language. ■

Worksite Workouts



Whether you are studying for the CPA Exam, or working in an office, it is important to take time for self care. Exercise can help you de-stress and stay focused.

If you find yourself too busy to go outside for walks, or if you'd like to supplement your fitness

routine, try some of these simple exercises you can do at your desk:

- **Abs** - While seated in a chair that swivels, sit upright with your feet hovering over the floor, hold the edge of your desk with your fingers and thumb. Next, use your abdominal muscles to swivel the chair from side to side. Swivel back and forth 15 times.
- **Legs** - Sit in your chair, stretch one leg out straight in front of you and hold it above the floor for two seconds. Then raise it up as high as you can, and hold it again for two seconds. Repeat with each leg 15 times.
- **Arms** - Sitting with your feet flat on the floor, clasp your hands together as if giving yourself a handshake (with one thumb pointing to the floor and your other thumb pointing to the ceiling). Then pull and resist the motion of both arms. Hold for 10 seconds or more, release, and repeat.
- **Hands/wrists** - Standing or seated, extend your arms beside your body, bend your elbows, and wiggle your wrists up into your armpits. Your palms should face out, fingers pointing down toward the hips. As you lift your chest, you will feel the backs of your hands and wrists stretching out. Hold for up to twenty breaths.
- **Shoulders/back** - Interlock your fingers and extend your arms above your head, keeping your fingers locked and your palms facing the ceiling (pictured above). Stretch upwards and then lean your arms and shoulders to each side. Hold each stretch for 10 seconds.
- **Neck** - Gently drop your chin down to your chest and very slowly roll your head from side to side. ■

Important Swearing-In Ceremony Dates

Just a friendly reminder, if you passed the CPA Exam a year or two ago and have not done so already, please apply for your certificate. You may submit an Application for Issuance of the CPA Certificate. This form is not available online and must be requested from the Board. You will also need to send the Board your Ethics Course Completion Certificate, and submit the **Oath of Office** and **Work Experience forms** with your application, which are available on the Board's website. You will also need to pass an exam on the Board's **Rules of Professional Conduct**, which will be emailed to you after you submit your Application for Issuance.

Your complete application with all required forms and fees and fingerprint results must be in the Board's offices prior to **September 11, 2017** to allow time for processing for the **December 2, 2017** ceremony.

If you become a new CPA **between March 27, 2017** and **September 15, 2017** you will be invited to attend the **December 2, 2017 Swearing-In Ceremony**. If you become a new CPA after September 15, 2017 you will be invited to attend the June 23, 2018 Swearing-In Ceremony.

Please feel free to contact the Qualifications team with questions: 512-305-7851, exam@tsbpa.texas.gov. ■

Are You Moving?



Whether you move next door or across the country, you will want to keep the Board informed.

Here's how:

- **Online** under "Online Services" at www.tsbpa.texas.gov
- **Email:** exam@tsbpa.texas.gov
- **Phone:** 512-305-7851

Attention: Exam Candidates and Accounting Students

If you are dealing with alcohol or drug dependency problems or mental health issues, you can get help from the Accountants Confidential Assistance Network (ACAN). ACAN volunteers are CPAs who have had first-hand experience with these same issues and who understand what you are dealing with. Don't hesitate to get the help you need. All communications are confidential.

**For help, call
1-866-766-2226**

Administered by the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants and Funded in Part by the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy.



Additional Volunteers Needed

ACAN needs volunteers across the state. If you are in recovery and interested in volunteering, please call 1-866-766-2226.

Legal Notice:

The identity and communications and the fact of membership of anyone attending this group are confidential and protected under penalty of law under *Chapter 467* of the *Texas Health and Safety Code*.

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The Candidate Chronicle is published for CPA Exam candidates in Texas by the Texas State Board of Public Accountancy

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