

**Virginia Court Clerks' Association
Career Development Program for
Circuit Court Clerks and Deputy Clerks
Effective Date: September 1, 2014**

Purpose of the Program

The purposes of this program are:

- To encourage professionalism by improving personal skills, knowledge and abilities of Circuit Court Clerks and Deputy Clerks;
- To implement the Career Development Programs established by the Compensation Board, a recognition and incentive program based upon individual accomplishments and maintenance of specific criteria; and
- To assure uniform professional recognition with other Constitutional Officers by authorizing the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service and the University's School of Continuing and Professional Studies to grant the professional designation of "Master Circuit Court Clerk" and "Master Deputy Circuit Court Clerk".

Purposes of this Document

It is the intent of the Virginia Court Clerks' Association to create a uniform document:

- Setting forth a Career Development Program that incorporates the criteria of the Career Development programs established by the Compensation Board for Circuit Court Clerks and Deputy Clerks;
- To encourage Association members to establish career development plans for their respective offices;
- To monitor and maintain a uniform system of recordkeeping for career development certification with the Compensation Board;
- To select and obtain authorization of relevant educational programs;
- To maintain a uniform recordkeeping and transcript-producing authority; and
- To offer a program for *all* clerks and deputy clerks.

Compare this Document and the Compensation Board Minimum Criteria Plans for clerks and deputy clerks at <http://www.scb.virginia.gov/reports.cfm> .

The Compensation Board's "Minimum Criteria for Clerks of Circuit Court Career Development Programs" and "Minimum Criteria for Deputy Clerks' Career Development Program" are *guidelines only*. Only 117 of 120 clerks and full-time deputy clerk positions approved by the Compensation Board are eligible for salary supplementation.

Employment Status of Deputies

The *Minimum Criteria* document requires the CDP document to contain the following statements verbatim:

“Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this program, nothing herein is intended nor should be construed to contradict or diminish the power and authority of the Clerk with respect to his/her appointees. All Deputy Clerks are, and shall remain, appointees of the Clerk and shall not be considered or construed as employees of either the Clerk or the Locality. Neither the creation nor the operation of this program shall confer on any Deputy Clerk any grievance rights, and no Deputy Clerk shall have the right to be represented by counsel when appearing before any administrators of this program in connection with the operation of this program.”

To assist its Association members in establishing career development programs for their respective offices, the Association has authorized a career development plan that meets the Compensation Board’s minimum criteria, provides a plan for all clerks and deputy clerks regardless of eligibility for the Compensation Board’s salary supplement, establishes a Certification Review Committee to assist clerks in the certifying process for this Plan, and provides a hosting site for education transcript records.

Note: Participation by the clerk in a career development program is encouraged, but it is not required.

Definitions

As used in this document, unless the context clearly shows otherwise, the term or phrase:

Clerk means a duly elected or appointed clerk of the circuit court;

Deputy means a qualified and duly sworn Deputy Clerk and others designated by the Clerk of the Circuit Court;

Association means Virginia Court Clerks’ Association, or “VCCA”;

Compensation Board means the Compensation Board of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Center means the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia

Professional and Advanced Studies Coursework is education in a detailed and intensive curriculum to prepare for an advanced career, i.e. in supervision and/or management; education requiring analysis, problem-solving and research; education focused on learning critical thinking, analysis and theory. *An example of Professional and Advanced Studies Course is coursework offered by the Institute of Court*

Management at the National Center for State Courts, or coursework in the Judicial Administration curriculum at Michigan State University.

Skill Building Coursework is education that enhances or otherwise increases competency and capacity to perform assigned work, or to learn new skills to perform new tasks in the work environment. *An example of a Skill Building Course is coursework to increase proficiency in Microsoft Office applications.*

Career and Technical Studies Coursework is education focused on learning skills to apply to a specific vocation, occupation or employment; education based on manual or practical activities of a specific job. *An example of Career and Technical Studies is vocational training offered by the Supreme Court of Virginia.*

Contact hour is defined as a standard one-hour (at least 50 minutes) classroom period of supervised teaching. The accrediting agency shall determine the method of instruction; nothing herein is intended to prevent distance learning, web-based classes, or the equivalent.

Administration of the Program

Virginia Court Clerks' Association –

The VCCA is the Career Development Program sponsor. The Association shall prescribe the standards circuit court clerks and deputy clerks in Virginia must meet in order to earn the professional designation of either “**Master Circuit Court Clerk**”(M.C.C.C.) for the clerk, or “**Master Deputy Circuit Court Clerk**” (M.D.C.C.C.).

Note: The “Master Circuit Court Clerk” credential and “Master Deputy Circuit Court Clerk” credential is awarded by the University of Virginia’s Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service and the University’s School of Continuing and Professional Studies. The clerk earns this professional designation upon meeting all criteria of the Compensation Board’s Career Development Program, and all requirements of the VCCA Career Development Program.

Compensation Board program criteria also requires the Clerk to achieve and maintain the “Certified Court Manager” designation from the National Center for State Courts.

All records of the Certification Program shall be kept at the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia. All correspondence dealing with the Certification Program should be directed to the designated Center staff member. The Center shall also be the official record keeper, responsible for maintaining accurate, updated records for use by the membership of the Association. The records will remain the property of the Association.

VCCA Certification Review Committee –

The Certification Review Committee is a standing committee of the VCCA, consisting of at least three (3) members appointed by the President of the Association.

This Committee is responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving all applications for VCCA Career Development Program certification and re-certification, and for hearing appeals of decisions on certification and re-certification;
- Assuring that timely and accurate information is provided to the Compensation Board; and
- Determining contact hour credit for accredited coursework. All coursework will be categorized by its nature and purpose, with credit assigned in descending order to coursework classified as **Professional and Advanced Studies Coursework**, **Skill Building Coursework**, or **Career and Technical Studies Coursework**.

Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service –

The Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service shall perform the contractual services of:

- Storing career development program education records for the Association;
- Maintaining a secure and private web portal for program participants to review and verify their respective education transcripts;
- Working with the Certification Review Committee to post timely and accurate information on the portal's web site; and
- Incorporating transcripts from approved education vendors into the master transcript of program participants; and
- Preparing and submitting transcripts of program participants to the Compensation Board or to other recipients, as directed by the Certification Review Committee.
- For these services, the Center shall be paid fees as prescribed in this document.

General Eligibility for Candidates

General Eligibility for candidates for the certification program is as follows:

- **Employment Status. Entry into Program.** The candidate must be a duly elected or appointed circuit court clerk or full-time deputy clerk. Application for enrollment in the VCCA Career Development Program may be made at any time after assuming the required employment status.

- **Selection of Deputy Clerks.** The Clerk selects the deputies from his/her Office to participate in the Deputy Clerk Career Development Program.
- **Minimum Length of Service Required for Certification.** The candidate must have a minimum length of service – (1) A Circuit Court Clerk must have served in this official capacity for an amount of time sufficient to have two completed consecutive audits within his/her term of office. (2) A Deputy Clerk must have a minimum length of service of three (3) years as a deputy clerk or comparable service in the office in which certification is sought.
- **Application for Entry into Program.** The candidate must complete an approved application form with proper documentation, and submit the required fee to the Center.
- **Recommendation of Deputy Clerk.** If the candidate is a deputy clerk, a letter of recommendation must be submitted by the clerk from the locality in which the deputy is employed.
- **Application for Certification.** Once the educational requirements and Compensation Board criteria requirements have been met, the clerk must submit a completed certification application form to the Center and pay the remaining certification fee.

Requirements for Initial Certification

In addition to meeting the general rules and minimum criteria for certification, the candidate must complete the following educational requirements:

Circuit Court Clerks

The Clerk must successfully complete the Court Management Program at the National Center of State Courts, have earned the “Certified Court Manager” credential, and submit a transcript of the coursework.

Circuit Court Deputy Clerks

The Deputy Clerk must achieve a minimum of **Sixty (60)** contact hours of accredited instruction in the specific duties and responsibilities of a Virginia Deputy Circuit Court Clerk, provided by approved education providers.

Accreditation of coursework shall be accomplished by a committee of Circuit Court Clerks and provided for annual review and approval to the Compensation Board in December of each year for coursework to be accomplished in the following calendar year. Excerpt from “Compensation Board Minimum Criteria for Deputy Clerks’ Career Development Program”.

The current Accredited Coursework List is attached to this document as **Exhibit A**.

Required Dates for Certification

November 15th is the cut-off date to meet the initial certification requirements in any given year. There is no time limit to achieve initial certification. Participants may take as long as necessary to complete the initial certification requirements.

Clerks complete initial certification education requirements by successfully completing the Court Management Program at the National Center of State Courts.

Deputy clerks complete education requirements by accruing the required number of contact hours in accredited education. Accredited coursework was first approved by the Compensation Board beginning January 1, 2013. Contact hour earned from that date in approved courses can be credited for initial certification.

On November 15th of each year, the Center generates a list of those clerks and deputy clerks who meet certification requirements. The Certification Review Committee is responsible for reviewing and approving each application for initial certification. Clerks and deputy clerks approved by the Certification Review Committee are considered certified as of November 15 of that year. After approval by the Committee, the list of certified clerks and deputy clerks will be released to the membership of the Association. Appeals concerning decisions of the Certification Review Committee must be made to the Committee within fifteen business days of publication of the list of clerks and deputy clerks. The Committee shall also submit a report annually no later than November 15 to the Compensation Board, providing the certification status of every clerk and deputy clerk qualifying initially or recertifying with the Compensation Board for a salary supplement.

Grandfathered Contact Hours

It is the intention of the Association to allow credit for some, but not all, coursework accredited by the Compensation Board and successfully completed by a career program participant prior to the effective date of this program.

Education credit may be requested by clerks and deputy clerks who have, prior to the effective date of this program, successfully completed education courses based on the core competencies recognized by the National Association for Court Management (https://nacmnet.org/CCCG/cccg_CoreCompetencies.html).

Applications requesting approval of prior coursework, described above, for contact hour credit in the VCCA Certification Program must be submitted to the Certification Review Committee. Transcripts must be provided in order to consider credit requests.

Requirements for Recertification

After initial certification is earned, the Clerk must thereafter earn a minimum of **Fifteen (15)** accredited contact hours and a Deputy Clerk must earn a minimum of **Ten (10)** accredited contact hours of instruction in the twelve (12) months preceding

annual recertification.

Compensation Board Recertification Requirements

Annual recertification is required to comply with the Compensation Board's Career Development Program criteria.

VCCA Career Development Plan Recertification Requirements

Program participants will be required to recertify every three (3) years. To recertify, the Clerk must earn **annually** a minimum of Fifteen (15) accredited contact hours and a Deputy Clerk must earn a minimum of Ten (10) accredited contact hours of instruction. Clerks seeking re-certification in the VCCA Certification Program are required to achieve a 3-year period cumulative contact hour total of forty-five (45) or above; Deputy Clerks are required to achieve a 3-year period cumulative contact hour's total of thirty (30) or above.

Contact hours earned over the minimum tier for each year will carry over to help the participant meet the following year's requirements:

<u>Period</u>	<u>Clerk</u>	<u>Deputy Clerk</u>
	(required contact hours)	
Year 1	15	10
Year 2	30 (cumulative between years 1 & 2)	20
Year 3	45 (cumulative between years 1, 2, & 3)	30

Contact Hour Credit Roll-Over from one Certification Period to Next

Participants are allowed to roll over accumulated hour credits in excess of the minimum requirement from one re-certification period to the next up to 1/3 (33%). For example, if a clerk has earned 60 contact hours of instruction at the end of the recertification period, 5 contact hours of instruction will be carried over to the next recertification period. [the calculation: $60 - 45 = 15$; $15 \div 3 = 5$]

Failure to meet the annual requirements

If a participant does not earn the required minimum number of contact hours for a given year, he/she will be “suspended” from certified status in the VCCA Career Development Program, and will lose annual Compensation Board career development funding.

In order to be reinstated, the participant will need to reach the next tier of hours by November 15 of the next year. For example, if a clerk/deputy has not earned 15/10 contact hours by November 15 of Year 1, he/she would be suspended from certified status. In order to be reinstated, the clerk/deputy would need to have earned 30/20 contact hours by November 15 of Year 2.

Failure to meet the requirements at the end of the 3-year period – “rolling window” reinstatement procedure

If the participant fails to meet the continuing education point’s requirement at the end of the 3-year period, he/she will be suspended from certified status in the VCCA Career Development Program, and will lose Compensation Board career development funding.

The participant will then be subject to a “rolling window” reinstatement procedure. The 3-year re-certification window will automatically become the last three years. As of November 15 of the next year, the participant’s contact hour total for the current year and the 2 years prior will be reviewed. If the participant meets the re-certification requirements at that time, he/she will be considered re-certified and will begin the process of re-certifying again from the beginning. If the participant does not meet the re-certification requirements, the rolling window would then be shifted to the next year, and again, contact hours for the then current year and the previous 2 years will be reviewed.

Note: Once Career Development funding has been lost as a result of certification suspension, it will not be automatically reinstated. The deputy will be placed back in the queue to receive funding as it comes available.

Presentation of Professional Designation Certificates

Once the clerk or deputy clerk has met all of the requirements for initial certification or re-certification, an appropriate certificate shall be presented to him/her from the Association and the Center. Certificates will be presented at the regularly scheduled Virginia Court Clerks Meeting or other approved location following the year of certification.

Application Deadlines and Fees

Application for enrollment in the VCCA Career Development Program may be made at any time after assuming General Eligibility status. Enroll in the program by submitting a completed enrollment form to the Center and paying an enrollment fee of \$100 (Clerk) or \$75 (Deputy Clerk).

Application for certification in any year must be received at the Center by November 15 to ensure adequate time for review by the Certification Review Committee.

Initial Certification	Clerk	Deputy Clerk
Total amount due	\$250.00	\$175.00
Less: Enrollment Fee previously paid	(\$100.00)	(\$75.00)
Net amount due at certification	\$150.00	\$100.00
Re-Certification		
Amount due at certification	\$175.00	\$75.00
Upgrade from Deputy Clerk to Clerk	\$75.00	

EXHIBIT A

ACCREDITED COURSEWORK FOR CY 2014

Accrediting Policies & Credit Assignment

Accrediting Authority

Compensation Board Minimum Criteria for Clerks' Career Development Program, "Staff Development and Training", page 4, and Minimum Criteria for Deputy Clerks' Career Development Program, "Formal Education", page 5:

Accreditation of coursework shall be accomplished by a committee of Circuit Court Clerks and provided for annual review and approval to the Compensation Board in December of each year for coursework to be accomplished in the following calendar year.

The accrediting agency shall determine the method of instruction; nothing herein is intended to prevent distance learning, web-based classes, or the equivalent.

Definition of Contact Hour

Contact hour is defined as a standard one-hour (at least 50 minutes) classroom period of supervised teaching.

Authority vested in the Certification Review Committee

The Certification Review Committee is a standing committee of the VCCA, consisting of at least three (3) members appointed by the President of the Association.

This Committee is responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving all applications for VCCA Career Development Program certification and re-certification, and for hearing appeals of decisions on certification and re-certification;
- Assuring that timely and accurate information is provided to the Compensation Board; and
- Determining contact hour credit for accredited coursework. All coursework will be categorized by its nature and purpose, with credit assigned in descending order to coursework classified as Professional and Advanced Studies Coursework, Skill Building Coursework, or Career and Technical Studies Coursework.

Categories of Coursework and Credit Assigned

Professional and Advanced Studies Coursework – Coursework in this category requires education that is directly attributable to the duties and responsibilities of Virginia circuit court clerks and deputy clerks, and shall focus on one or more of the Core Competencies for Court Managers recognized by the National Association for Court Management -

Link: https://nacmnet.org/CCCG/cccq_CoreCompetencies.html .

Qualifying courses shall receive one (1) contact hour for every standard one-hour classroom period of supervised teaching. The student must pass the course to receive credit. The education provider must provide a transcript as proof of successful completion.

Skill Building Coursework – Coursework in this category requires education that enhances or otherwise increases competency and capacity to perform assigned work, or to learn new skills to perform new tasks in the work environment.

Qualifying Courses may receive up to one (1) contact hour for every standard one-hour classroom period of supervised teaching. The student must pass the course to receive credit. The education provider must provide a transcript as proof of successful completion.

Career and Technical Studies Coursework - Coursework in this category requires education based on any learning that increases skills to perform any specific duty or responsibility in a Virginia circuit court clerk's office.

Coursework in this category is considered basic training. Some coursework may not qualify for contact hour credit. The following criteria are required:

- Only sessions with written instructional materials are approvable.
- The student is required to pass an assessment or test to show competency.

Qualifying Courses may receive up to one (1) contact hour for every standard one-hour classroom period of supervised teaching.

The student must pass the course to receive credit. The education provider must provide a transcript as proof of successful completion.

Distance Learning

Training via distance learning, web-based classes, or the equivalent is allowed by the Compensation Board's minimum criteria document.

For all courses of every category, delivered as distance learning programs:

- Attendees must be given the opportunity to participate in discussions with other attendees and/or the presenter;
- Written materials must be available to participants prior to the broad cast; and
- The presenter must have attendance tracking.

Contact Hour Credit Assigned for Specific Courses Accredited for CY2014

CATEGORY: Professional and Advanced Studies Coursework

(1) National Center for State Courts – Institute for Court Management Certified Court Manager (CCM)

Available Contact Hour Credits-

Credit for each course **sixteen (16) contact hours per course:**

- Court Performance Standards: CourTools
- Fundamental Issues of Caseflow Management
- Managing Court Financial Resources
- Managing Human Resources
- Managing Technology Projects & Technology Resources
- Purposes & Responsibilities of Courts

(2) Michigan State University – Noncredit Certificate in Judicial Administration

Available Contact Hour Credits -

Credit for each course varies:

- Caseflow Management 8 contact hours
- Information Technology Management 6 contact hours
- Human Resources Management 7 contact hours
- Leadership 6 contact hours
- Purposes and Responsibilities of Courts 6 contact hours
- Resources, Budget, and Finance 7 contact hours
- Court and Community Communication 5 contact hours
- Education, Training, and Development 5 contact hours
- Essential Components of Courts 5 Contact hours
- Visioning and Strategic Planning 5 contact hours

CATEGORY: Skill Building Coursework

(1) Universities, Colleges, Regional Learning Centers, and Virginia Cities and Counties offering Employee Development & Training programs to employees of Constitutional Officers.

(2) University of Virginia - Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service – Constitutional Officers' Education

(3) Virginia Continuing Legal Education

All courses must meet requirements for coursework and be pre-qualified by the Certification Review Committee. Contact Hour Credits – Assigned per course.

CATEGORY: Career and Technical Studies Coursework

(1) Supreme Court of Virginia

(2) Virginia court Clerks' Association

All courses must meet requirements for coursework and be pre-qualified by the Certification Review Committee. Contact Hour Credits – Assigned per course.